



### LABOUR FORCE EXPERIENCE, AUSTRALIA, DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1983 (PRELIMINARY)

**PHONE INQUIRIES** *for more information about these statistics*—contact Mr Geoff Winter on Canberra (062) 52 6661 or any of our State offices.

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#### MAIN FEATURES

*Note: Survey estimates are subject to sampling variability, as explained in paragraph 16 below.*

Of the civilian population aged 15 and over at February 1983, 82.4 per cent of males (4,605,600) and 54.3 per cent of females (3,080,000) were in the labour force at some time during the year ending February 1983.

While 48.7 per cent of all married females worked at some time during the year, only 30.6 per cent worked for 49 weeks or more. By contrast, 81.3 per cent of married males worked at some time, 69.9 per cent for 49 weeks or more.

Of those in the labour force at some time during the period, 19.1 per cent (1,471,200 persons) spent some time looking for work compared to 17.1 per cent in the year ending February 1982. The average time spent looking for work varied from 18.6 weeks for 15-19 year olds to 25.6 weeks for persons aged 55 years and over.

3,577,800 persons (31.8 per cent of the population) spent the whole year neither working nor looking for work.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTES

##### Introduction

In association with the February 1983 labour force survey conducted throughout Australia, persons aged fifteen years and over were asked about their labour force experience during the year up to the end of the week prior to interview in February 1983. Information sought includes the length of time they were working, looking for work or not in the labour force, the number of spells during which they were looking for work and other aspects of labour force experience.

2. During the two weeks beginning Monday 7 February, 1983, specially trained interviewers asked the questions of a sub-sample of 51,000 of the 71,000 respondents in the February labour force survey.

3. Results of similar surveys, the first conducted in February 1969, have been published in *Labour Force Experience, Australia* (6206.0).

4. This publication contains only a summary of the results of the survey. Estimates shown are preliminary and may be revised. Further information which will be published as soon as possible is available on request.

##### Scope

5. The survey includes all civilians aged fifteen years and over except:

- (a) certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from census and estimated populations;
- (b) overseas residents in Australia;
- (c) dependants of non-Australian defence forces personnel stationed in Australia;
- (d) students boarding at school, some patients in hospitals and sanatoria and inmates of jails, reformatories etc.

6. The estimates relate to persons covered by the survey in February 1983. Because of emigration, deaths and other exits not all persons with labour force experience during the period were covered. Labour force experience may relate to experience outside Australia.

##### Definitions

7. It is impractical to obtain information relating to a whole year which is strictly comparable with that obtained in the monthly labour force survey for which the reference period is one week. The definitions used in determining the labour force status of persons in the monthly survey depend on a detailed set of questions asked about a person's labour force activity during the reference period. For the survey of labour force experience, a person is assigned to a labour force category for each of the weeks in the year on the basis of a more limited set of questions. It is for this reason that the terms *worked* and *looked for work* are used in this survey rather than the rigidly defined terms *employed* and *unemployed* used in the monthly labour force survey.

8. The *labour force* comprises all persons who, during any week, are working or looking for work as defined in paragraphs 9 and 10.

9. Persons are classified as *working* for those weeks they reported having either worked or being on paid leave. Periods of one week or more on strike or time off without pay are excluded.

10. Persons are classified as *looking for work* for those weeks they reported as being out of work and looking for a job.

11. Persons *out of the labour force* are those who, during any week, are neither working nor looking for work as defined in paragraphs 9 and 10.

12. For the purposes of the survey, a *job* is defined as:

- (a) employment as a wage or salary earner (or unpaid family helper) by a particular employer, in a particular locality; or
- (b) self-employment (with or without employees) in a particular locality.

13. *Locality*. In capital cities and major towns each suburb is considered to be a different locality.

#### Discontinuity in the series

14. The estimates in this publication are not strictly comparable with those obtained from previous surveys. The reference period for the February 1980 and prior surveys was the previous calendar year (e.g. 1 January to 31 December 1979). The reference period for the February 1981 and 1982 surveys was from the beginning of the previous February to the end of the week prior to interview. As interviews were conducted over the second and third week of February, the reference period could extend to 54 weeks. For the February 1983 survey the reference period is the 52 weeks up to the end of the week prior to interview. Due to the change in the reference period timing, some estimates, particularly those for groups who enter the labour force during the earlier months of the year (e.g. 15 to 19 year olds) will also be affected from February 1981 survey onwards.

15. In the February 1982 survey persons who answered that they had been in their current job for a year or longer but who also reported having actually worked for less than the whole period were not counted as out of the labour force for the remainder of the period. In all other years these persons were counted as out of the labour force for that time. In consequence, the February 1982 estimate of persons out of the labour force during all or part of the period is 512,300 persons (249,100 males and 263,200 females) less than the figures which would have been obtained with the procedures used in other years.

#### Reliability of the estimates

16. Estimates in this publication are subject to two sources of error:

- (a) *sampling error*: since the estimates are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings they are subject to sampling variability; that is they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the *standard error*. More information about this topic will be found in *The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0). A table of estimated standard errors for this survey follows these notes. Estimates with a standard error of more than about 25 per cent have not been shown in this publication, as the degree of sampling variability would seriously detract from their value for most reasonable uses. Although figures for these small components can, in some cases, be derived by subtraction they should not be regarded as reliable.
- (b) *non-sampling error*: inaccuracies may occur because of imperfections in reporting by interviewers and respondents and errors made in the coding and processing of data. These inaccuracies may occur in any enumeration, whether it be a full count or a sample. Every effort is made to reduce the non-sampling error to a minimum by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers and efficient operating procedures.

#### Related publications

17. Other ABS publications which may be of interest include:

*The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0)—issued monthly  
*Labour Force Experience, Australia, February 1981* (6206.0)

*Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia* (6220.0)  
 issued March and September

*Characteristics of Persons Looking for Work, Australia, July 1982* (6222.0)

*Labour Mobility, Australia, February 1982* (6209.0)

18. Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Publications Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Publications Advice are available from any ABS office.

#### Symbols and other usages

- \* subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraph 16 above.

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

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## STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES

Size of estimate (Persons)	Approximate standard error of estimates		Size of estimate (Persons)	Approximate standard error of estimates	
	Persons	Per cent of estimate		Persons	Per cent of estimate
4,500	1,100	24.9	200,000	5,900	2.9
6,000	1,300	21.5	500,000	8,250	1.6
10,000	1,650	16.5	1,000,000	10,400	1.0
20,000	2,250	11.3	2,000,000	13,000	0.7
50,000	3,400	6.8	5,000,000	17,050	0.4
100,000	4,500	4.5			

TABLE 1. CIVILIAN POPULATION(a), FEBRUARY 1983: LABOUR FORCE EXPERIENCE DURING THE YEAR  
ENDING FEBRUARY 1983  
( ' 000)

Employment status	Married males	All males	Married females	All females	Persons
<b>Civilian population</b>	<b>3,693.8</b>	<b>5,587.7</b>	<b>3,682.3</b>	<b>5,675.7</b>	<b>11,263.4</b>
<i>In the labour force at some time during the year</i>	3,061.4	4,605.6	1,923.9	3,080.0	7,685.6
For 1 and under 4 weeks	*	30.4	61.8	101.6	132.0
4 and under 13 weeks	21.0	126.1	127.7	231.7	357.8
13 and under 26 weeks	32.9	82.5	124.9	179.8	262.3
26 and under 39 weeks	51.3	117.3	163.2	224.4	341.7
39 and under 49 weeks	126.5	214.2	210.8	294.7	508.9
49 and under 52 weeks	102.9	156.6	81.3	121.4	277.9
52 weeks	2,723.4	3,878.6	1,154.2	1,926.5	5,805.0
<i>Worked at some time during the year</i>	3,003.3	4,411.9	1,793.6	2,809.0	7,220.9
Of weeks worked—					
All were full time	2,815.6	3,997.6	921.3	1,647.2	5,644.8
More full time than part time	88.1	157.7	78.0	130.9	288.6
All were part time	78.5	207.9	746.8	953.0	1,160.9
More part time than full time	21.0	48.7	47.5	77.9	126.6
Weeks worked—					
1 and under 4 weeks	6.1	44.7	43.6	79.1	123.8
4 and under 13 weeks	34.3	129.2	107.7	187.9	317.0
13 and under 26 weeks	57.9	137.6	124.5	189.9	327.5
26 and under 39 weeks	116.8	237.5	168.7	257.8	495.3
39 and under 49 weeks	206.5	351.5	221.9	332.6	684.1
49 and under 52 weeks	111.9	170.2	77.2	119.6	289.8
52 weeks	2,469.7	3,341.3	1,050.0	1,642.2	4,983.4
<i>Looked for work at some time during the year</i>	332.8	801.4	298.2	669.8	1,471.2
One spell of looking for work	260.3	609.5	235.2	533.1	1,142.6
Two spells	50.8	132.4	33.1	85.5	217.9
Three spells	8.4	26.8	13.6	24.1	50.9
Four or more spells	13.2	32.7	16.2	27.1	59.8
<i>Out of the labour force for the whole year</i>	632.4	982.2	1,758.3	2,595.6	3,577.8

(a) Non-institutional population aged 15 years and over.

**TABLE 2. PERSONS IN THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1983:  
PROPORTION OF POPULATION(a)  
(per cent)**

	<i>Age group (years)</i>								<i>Total</i>
	<i>15-19</i>	<i>20-24</i>	<i>25-34</i>	<i>35-44</i>	<i>45-54</i>	<i>55-59</i>	<i>60-64</i>	<i>65 and over</i>	
Married males	*	99.4	99.0	97.8	95.3	86.3	60.7	13.5	82.9
All males	75.8	97.6	98.4	97.1	94.0	84.1	59.4	12.9	82.4
Married females	73.4	69.6	63.2	67.0	53.7	34.2	15.8	4.4	52.2
All females	72.4	81.7	66.8	67.7	54.7	36.0	16.7	3.8	54.3
<b>Persons</b>	<b>74.1</b>	<b>89.7</b>	<b>82.5</b>	<b>82.7</b>	<b>74.9</b>	<b>59.9</b>	<b>37.2</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>68.2</b>

(a) Persons in each group as a proportion of the total non-institutional civilian population in the same group at the time of the survey.

**TABLE 3. PERSONS WHO WORKED AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1983:  
NUMBER OF JOBS(a) HELD DURING THE YEAR  
( ' 000)**

	<i>Number of jobs held during the year</i>				<i>Total</i>
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4 or more</i>	
Married males	2,611.3	296.6	57.9	37.6	3,003.3
All males	3,723.9	486.9	109.6	91.5	4,411.9
Married females	1,609.4	140.9	27.3	16.0	1,793.6
All females	2,423.9	282.0	62.3	40.9	2,809.0
<b>Persons</b>	<b>6,147.8</b>	<b>768.9</b>	<b>171.8</b>	<b>132.4</b>	<b>7,220.9</b>
<i>Age group (years)—</i>					
15-19	601.5	116.8	29.0	22.7	770.1
20-24	827.7	172.5	50.1	40.0	1,090.3
25-34	1,566.2	235.2	54.7	43.9	1,900.1
35-44	1,442.7	151.9	25.6	14.9	1,635.1
45-54	980.4	64.8	8.2	7.9	1,061.3
55-59	407.8	17.8	*	*	429.3
60-64	216.2	8.1	*	*	227.6
65 and over	105.1	*	*	*	107.1

(a) Excludes second jobs of multiple jobholders.

**TABLE 4. PERSONS WHO LOOKED FOR WORK AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1983 AS A PROPORTION  
OF PERSONS IN THE LABOUR FORCE AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR  
(Per cent)**

<i>Age group (years)</i>	<i>Married</i>			<i>Not married</i>			<i>Total</i>		
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
15-19	*	40.4	43.8	40.4	45.5	42.8	40.6	45.3	42.8
20-24	22.5	25.6	24.3	31.9	29.5	30.9	29.8	28.0	29.0
25-34	13.5	19.1	15.8	23.4	24.4	23.8	16.1	20.3	17.8
35-44	9.8	14.0	11.5	18.6	22.5	20.4	10.7	15.1	12.5
45-54	8.4	8.8	8.6	18.3	18.3	18.3	9.5	10.4	9.8
55 and over	7.6	4.5	6.9	11.4	7.0	9.3	8.1	5.2	7.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>15.5</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>30.3</b>	<b>32.1</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>21.7</b>	<b>19.1</b>

**TABLE 5. PERSONS WHO LOOKED FOR WORK AT SOME TIME DURING THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1983 : NUMBER OF SPELLS AND WEEKS SPENT LOOKING FOR WORK DURING THE YEAR**

	Age group (years)						Total
	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55 and over	
	— '000—						
One spell—							
Males	152.1	135.8	145.4	83.6	56.3	36.4	609.5
Females	164.0	115.6	130.2	81.7	32.6	8.9	533.1
Persons	316.1	251.4	275.7	165.3	88.8	45.3	1,142.6
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	17.6	21.4	18.6	20.2	21.9	26.9	19.8
Median duration(a)	10.4	14.0	11.2	12.2	15.6	26.0	12.0
	— '000—						
Two spells—							
Males	32.1	39.2	29.6	18.5	7.6	5.4	132.4
Females	27.6	22.2	20.2	9.1	5.2	*	85.5
Persons	59.6	61.4	49.8	27.6	12.8	6.7	217.9
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	24.0	22.5	21.3	22.2	21.5	25.4	22.6
Median duration(a)	23.4	21.5	19.7	20.1	20.9	26.4	21.5
	— '000—						
Three or more spells—							
Males	12.3	17.4	15.8	6.5	*	*	59.5
Females	9.6	10.5	14.4	12.4	*	*	51.2
Persons	21.9	27.9	30.2	18.9	6.5	5.3	110.7
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	18.6	20.7	19.1	17.0	21.5	14.1	18.9
Median duration(a)	14.9	9.9	9.1	14.0	19.9	11.9	15.7
	— '000—						
<b>Total—</b>							
<b>Males</b>	<b>196.4</b>	<b>192.4</b>	<b>190.8</b>	<b>108.6</b>	<b>67.3</b>	<b>45.9</b>	<b>801.4</b>
<b>Females</b>	<b>201.2</b>	<b>148.3</b>	<b>164.8</b>	<b>103.2</b>	<b>40.8</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>669.8</b>
<b>Persons</b>	<b>397.6</b>	<b>340.7</b>	<b>355.7</b>	<b>211.8</b>	<b>108.1</b>	<b>57.3</b>	<b>1,471.2</b>
	—weeks—						
Average duration(a)	18.6	21.6	19.1	20.2	21.8	25.6	20.1
Median duration(a)	11.7	16.3	12.4	13.0	16.7	21.8	13.2

(a) Of total weeks spent looking for work during the year

**TABLE 6. PERSONS OUT OF THE LABOUR FORCE DURING ALL OR PART OF THE YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 1983 : LENGTH OF TIME OUT OF THE LABOUR FORCE ('000)**

	Weeks out of the labour force							Total
	1 and under 4	4 and under 13	13 and under 26	26 and under 39	39 and under 49	49 and under 52	52	
<b>Males</b>	156.6	200.8	109.4	93.4	136.4	30.4	982.2	1,709.2
Married	102.9	118.4	51.4	38.5	23.3	*	632.4	970.4
Not married	53.7	82.4	58.0	54.9	113.1	26.9	349.8	738.8
<b>Females</b>	121.4	273.4	191.9	206.9	258.4	101.6	2,595.6	3,749.2
Married	81.3	195.1	138.4	151.3	141.7	61.8	1,758.3	2,528.1
Not married	40.1	78.3	53.5	55.5	116.7	39.8	837.3	1,221.1
<b>Persons</b>	<b>277.9</b>	<b>474.3</b>	<b>301.3</b>	<b>300.3</b>	<b>394.8</b>	<b>132.0</b>	<b>3,577.8</b>	<b>5,458.4</b>
Age group (years)—								
15-19	29.8	57.8	45.7	61.8	162.4	49.7	324.3	731.5
20-24	47.1	73.1	49.9	43.0	57.1	13.3	134.8	418.2
25-34	81.6	124.6	84.6	78.0	77.2	29.6	424.4	899.9
35-44	64.4	103.0	54.4	49.9	46.1	19.2	355.4	692.4
45-54	32.6	60.8	27.3	31.9	23.6	10.6	369.0	555.6
55-59	11.9	25.8	16.0	15.9	8.9	*	295.5	377.7
60-64	6.5	17.7	15.7	11.2	11.3	*	396.2	460.9
65 and over	*	11.6	7.7	8.7	8.2	*	1,278.3	1,322.2

