

THE LABOUR FORCE, MAY 1974 PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

MAIN FEATURES

- In May 1974 61.4 per cent of all civilians aged 15 years and over were in the labour force. For males the proportion was 81.8 per cent, for females 41.4 per cent.
- The estimated number of unemployed persons (including those looking for part-time work) was 95,300 representing 1.6 per cent of the labour force (1.7 per cent on a seasonally adjusted basis).

Introduction

This statement contains preliminary estimates of the civilian labour force for May 1974 and estimates for the previous five quarters. The estimates are derived from the results of the population surveys conducted in February, May, August and November each year throughout Australia. The quarterly bulletin *The Labour Force* (Reference No. 6.20), which gives information in greater detail, will be published shortly.

The population survey

2. The survey is based on a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (about 27,000 houses, flats, etc.) and non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, etc.), and covers about two-thirds of one per cent of the population of Australia. The information is obtained each quarter from the occupants of selected dwellings by carefully chosen and specially trained interviewers.

3. The interviews are carried out during a period of four weeks, so that there are four survey weeks in each of the months to which the survey relates. These four survey weeks are chosen so as to fall within the limits of the calendar month or with minimum encroachment into the adjacent months.

Scope

4. The estimates relate to all persons aged fifteen years and over except members of the permanent armed forces, national servicemen enlisted in the Regular Army Supplement and certain diplomatic personnel customarily excluded from census and estimated populations.

Classification of the labour force

5. The labour force category to which a person is assigned depends on his actual activity (i.e. whether working, looking for work, etc.) during a specified week known as 'survey week', which is the week immediately preceding that in which the interview takes place. Definitions of the principal categories appearing in this statement are given in the quarterly bulletins.

Reliability of the estimates

6. Since the estimates in this statement are based on a sample, they may differ from the figures that would have been obtained from a complete census using the same questionnaires and procedures. 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, and not the whole population, was enumerated. The smaller the estimate the higher is the relative standard error: for example, the relative standard error of an estimate of 2,000,000 is approximately 0.5 per cent (10,000) while that of an estimate of 20,000 is approximately 8 per cent (1,600). There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained from a comparable enumeration, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors. More information on this topic, together with a table of estimated standard errors, is given in the quarterly bulletin *The Labour Force*.

Discontinuity of the series

7. The survey period for February 1974 was later than for February 1973. Consequently, the number of persons who had returned to schools and universities, etc., by the time of the survey might be expected to be greater in 1974 than in 1973, thus reducing the proportion of the population fifteen years of age and over recorded as being in the labour force. The exact effect is not known but is estimated to be about 20,000 persons.

NOTE. Any discrepancies between totals and sums of components in tables are due to rounding.

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

Month	Employed (b) (c)			Unemployed (b)				Total labour force (b)					Not in labour force (b) (¹ 000)	Civilian population aged 15 and over (a) (¹ 000)
	Agri- culture (d) (¹ 000)	Other industries (d) (¹ 000)	Total (¹ 000)	Number		Per cent of labour force (e)		Number		Per cent of population (g)				
				Original (¹ 000)	Seasonally adjusted (f) (¹ 000)	Original	Seasonally adjusted	Original (¹ 000)	Seasonally adjusted (f) (¹ 000)					
MALES														
1973 -Feb.	311.2	3,452.2	3,763.4	67.9	60.6	1.8	1.6	3,831.3	3,808.8	82.6	806.8	4,638.1		
May	309.4	3,453.7	3,763.1	50.7	52.9	1.3	1.4	3,813.8	3,812.3	82.0	839.0	4,652.8		
Aug.	316.3	3,464.7	3,781.1	41.0	47.8	1.1	1.2	3,822.1	3,839.9	82.0	839.9	4,662.0		
Nov. (h)	310.2	3,489.1	3,799.3	54.3	50.8	1.4	1.3	3,853.6	3,859.8	82.1	837.8	4,691.4		
1974 -Feb. (i)	305.5	3,530.8	3,836.3	56.7	50.3	1.5	1.3	3,893.0	3,870.4	82.4	831.6	4,724.5		
May	307.4	3,523.1	3,830.5	45.3	46.3	1.2	1.2	3,875.8	3,874.3	81.8	863.9	4,739.7		
MARRIED WOMEN														
1973 -Feb.	59.4	1,068.4	1,127.8	39.3	n.a.	3.4	n.a.	1,167.1	1,173.4	37.2	1,971.2	3,138.4		
May	54.5	1,099.9	1,154.4	25.9	n.a.	2.2	n.a.	1,180.3	1,189.0	37.3	1,980.8	3,161.1		
Aug.	58.5	1,114.5	1,173.0	21.5	n.a.	1.8	n.a.	1,194.5	1,199.6	38.0	1,947.8	3,142.3		
Nov. (h)	60.7	1,151.4	1,212.1	19.5	n.a.	1.6	n.a.	1,231.5	1,211.3	39.0	1,925.3	3,156.8		
1974 -Feb. (i)	58.2	1,158.7	1,216.9	32.4	n.a.	2.6	n.a.	1,249.4	1,255.5	39.3	1,933.7	3,183.1		
May	48.4	1,195.2	1,243.6	25.6	n.a.	2.0	n.a.	1,269.2	1,278.8	39.4	1,949.4	3,218.6		
ALL FEMALES														
1973 -Feb.	70.7	1,763.0	1,833.7	75.6	60.0	4.0	3.2	1,909.4	1,898.1	40.5	2,807.5	4,716.9		
May	65.0	1,772.8	1,837.8	49.5	54.5	2.6	2.9	1,887.3	1,900.2	39.9	2,839.9	4,727.2		
Aug.	69.0	1,796.3	1,865.3	40.6	48.7	2.1	2.5	1,905.9	1,923.2	40.3	2,826.9	4,732.8		
Nov. (h)	71.8	1,845.4	1,917.2	51.3	51.0	2.6	2.6	1,968.5	1,949.6	41.3	2,802.2	4,770.7		
1974 -Feb. (i)	68.0	1,865.8	1,933.8	63.7	50.6	3.2	2.5	1,997.5	1,984.7	41.6	2,800.7	4,798.2		
May	59.2	1,882.7	1,941.9	50.0	55.5	2.5	2.8	1,991.8	2,006.0	41.4	2,822.3	4,814.1		
PERSONS														
1973 -Feb.	382.0	5,215.2	5,597.2	143.5	121.5	2.5	2.1	5,740.7	5,707.7	61.4	3,614.3	9,355.0		
May	374.4	5,226.5	5,600.9	100.2	106.3	1.8	1.9	5,701.1	5,710.4	60.8	3,678.9	9,380.0		
Aug.	385.3	5,261.0	5,646.3	81.6	96.1	1.4	1.7	5,728.0	5,764.0	61.0	3,666.8	9,394.8		
Nov. (h)	382.0	5,334.5	5,716.5	105.6	101.9	1.8	1.8	5,822.1	5,810.0	61.5	3,640.0	9,462.1		
1974 -Feb. (i)	373.5	5,396.6	5,770.1	120.4	101.7	2.0	1.7	5,890.5	5,855.9	61.9	3,632.3	9,522.7		
May	366.6	5,405.8	5,772.4	95.3	100.9	1.6	1.7	5,867.7	5,877.8	61.4	3,686.2	9,553.8		

(a) For a note on persons excluded see paragraph 4. (b) For definitions see *The Labour Force*, (Reference No. 6.20) February 1974 page 2, paragraphs 8 to 12. (c) Employed includes employers and self-employed in addition to wage and salary earners. For monthly statistics of wage and salary earners see *Employment and Unemployment* (Reference No. 6.4). (d) Classified according to ASIC. (e) The unemployed as a percentage of the civilian labour force. (f) For details of the methods used in seasonally adjusting these series see *Seasonally Adjusted Indicators*, 1974 (Reference No. 1.10). (g) The labour force (original) in each group as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 years and over in the same group (labour force participation rate). (h) Affected by industrial dispute. (i) See paragraph 7.

n.a. Not available.

TABLE 2. - EMPLOYED PERSONS (a), MAY 1974

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Married women</i>	<i>Other females (b)</i>	<i>All females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
NUMBER ('000)					
Full-time workers (a)	3,694.8	784.7	597.1	1,381.8	5,076.6
Part-time workers (a)	135.7	458.9	101.2	560.1	695.8
Total	3,830.5	1,243.6	698.3	1,941.9	5,772.4
AVERAGE HOURS WORKED (c)					
Agriculture	51.9	29.0	35.1	30.1	48.4
Manufacturing	40.2	33.6	37.5	34.6	38.7
Construction	40.2	21.7	35.1	23.7	39.3
Wholesale and retail trade	42.3	31.7	33.2	32.3	38.1
Community services	35.3	25.3	32.3	28.0	30.8
All industries	40.7	29.5	33.6	31.0	37.4

(a) See footnote (b), Table 1. (b) Never married, widowed and divorced. (c) Averages have been calculated using actual hours worked during survey week, not hours paid for. All employed persons, including those who did not work during survey week, have been included in the calculations. When recording hours worked, fractions of an hour are disregarded. This procedure results in a slight lowering of the average hours figures. The figures may be affected by public holidays, leave, absenteeism; temporary absence from work due to sickness, accidents and industrial disputes; and work stoppages due to bad weather; plant breakdown, etc.

TABLE 3. - UNEMPLOYED PERSONS (a), MAY 1974

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Married women</i>	<i>Other females (b)</i>	<i>All females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
NUMBER ('000)					
Aged 15-19 years	10.3	*	17.4	18.0	28.3
Aged 20 years and over	35.0	25.0	7.0	31.9	67.0
All unemployed persons	45.3	25.6	24.4	50.0	95.3
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (c) (Per cent)					
Aged 15-19 years	2.9	*	5.8	5.5	4.1
Aged 20 years and over	1.0	2.0	1.7	1.9	1.3
All unemployed persons	1.2	2.0	3.4	2.5	1.6

(a) See footnote (b), Table 1. (b) Never married, widowed and divorced. (c) The number of unemployed in each group as a percentage of the labour force in the same group.

* Less than or based on a figure less than 4,000. See *The Labour Force* (Reference No. 6.20) February 1974 page 21, paragraph 10.

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NOTE. Inquiries concerning these statistics may be made in Canberra by telephoning Mr D. Power on 63 9111 extension 2346 or, in each State capital, by telephoning the office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.