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## PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE, AUSTRALIA, MARCH 1982 (PRELIMINARY)

|                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| PHONE INQUIRIES | for more information about these statistics - contact Ms Susan Purcell on Canberra (062) 52 6503 or any of our State offices.<br><br>other inquiries including copies of publications - contact Information Services on Canberra (062) 52 6627 or in any of our State offices. |
| MAIL INQUIRIES  | write to Information Services, ABS, P.O. Box 10, Belconnen, A.C.T. 2616 or any of our State offices.                                                                                                                                                                           |

### MAIN FEATURES

Note: Survey estimates are subject to sampling variability, as explained in paragraph 12 below.

In March 1982 an estimated 2,762,000 persons aged 15 to 64 years were neither employed nor actively looking for work. Of these:

659,500 persons (529,300 females) or 5.9 per cent of the population (females 9.3 per cent) want a job now. Of these:

425,300 persons (352,100 females) say they could start work within the next four weeks if offered a job.

164,200 persons have had a job in the last 12 months.

154,100 persons have looked for work in the last 12 months.

77,400 persons are discouraged job seekers (see paragraph 8.)

### EXPLANATORY NOTES

#### Introduction

Over the two weeks commencing on Monday 8 March 1982, a survey supplementary to the labour force survey (conducted throughout Australia each month) sought information from persons not in the labour force aged 15 to 64 years; in particular, questions were asked on whether they would like a job and, if so, their reasons for not actively looking for work.

2. Interviewers, carefully chosen and specially trained, obtained information from the occupants of dwellings selected via a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (about 30,000 houses, flats, etc.) and non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, etc.) covering about two thirds of one per cent of the population of Australia.

3. 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. Results of similar surveys, the first conducted in November 1975, have been published in Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia (6220.0).

#### Scope

4. The survey includes persons not in the labour force aged 15 to 64 years except:

- (a) certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from census and estimated population;
- (b) overseas visitors holidaying in Australia;
- (c) dependants of non-Australian defence forces personnel stationed in Australia;
- (d) persons who had actively looked for work but were unable to start a job in the survey week for reasons other than their own temporary illness or injury;

- (e) persons who have a job but, up to the end of survey week, have been away from work without pay for 4 weeks or longer, and;
- (f) boarding school students, persons permanently unable to work, some patients in hospitals and sanatoria and inmates of jails, reformatories etc.

Table 1 illustrates the group within the civilian population covered by this survey.

#### Definitions

5. Definitions of the principal labour force categories appearing in this publication are given in The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0).

6. Persons who want a job are those who:

- (a) in the four weeks before the interview week had not looked for work but in the survey answer 'yes' or 'maybe' to the question 'Even though you have not been looking for work would you like a full-time or part-time job now?',

or (b) although claiming to have looked for work in the four weeks before the interview week, had not taken active steps to find work.

7. Active steps to find work include checking or registering with the Commonwealth Employment Service or other employment agencies, telephoning, writing or applying in person to an employer, answering a newspaper advertisement for a job, advertising or tendering for work, contacting friends or relatives and looking on factory or employment service notice boards.

8. Discouraged. Comprises persons who want a job but are not actively looking for work because they believe they would not be able to find a job for any of the following reasons: considered by employers to be too young or too old;

have language or racial difficulties; lack the necessary training, skills or experience; no jobs in their locality or line of work. This definition has been revised since March 1979. See paragraphs 10 and 11 for the effect of the change.

9. Highest ranked reason. Reasons for not actively looking for work have been ranked in the order of priority shown in Table 4; where more than one reason was given, only the higher or highest ranked has been included in the estimates.

#### Discontinuities in the series

10. Estimates for March 1979 and earlier periods are not strictly comparable with those obtained from later surveys because the definition of persons who want a job has been widened to include those persons referred to in paragraph 6(b), i.e. persons who, although claiming to have looked for work in the four weeks before the interview week, had not taken active steps (as defined above) to find employment. Estimates of the numbers of such persons for earlier surveys, including those defined as discouraged, are shown in previous issues of Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia (6220.0)

11. This survey excludes persons who have a job but, up to the end of survey week, have been away from work without pay for 4 weeks or longer (see paragraph 4(e)). For all other surveys of Persons Not in the Labour Force, except the September 1980 survey, such persons were included in the survey and asked appropriate questions.

#### Reliability of the estimates

12. 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 is shown below. Estimates with a standard error of more than about 27 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 only 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

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

The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0) - issued monthly

Labour Force Experience, Australia, February 1980 to February 1981 (6206.0)

Persons Not in the Labour Force, Australia, March 1981 (6220.0)

Persons Looking for Work, Australia, June 1981 (6222.0)

14. 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 12 above.  
 . . not applicable.

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

R.J. CAMERON  
 Australian Statistician

#### STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES

| Size of estimate<br>(Persons) | Approximate standard error<br>of estimates |                         | Size of estimate<br>(Persons) | Approximate standard error<br>of estimates |                         |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
|                               | Persons                                    | Per cent<br>of estimate |                               | Persons                                    | Per cent<br>of estimate |
| 3,000                         | 800                                        | 26.7                    | 100,000                       | 3,900                                      | 3.9                     |
| 4,500                         | 970                                        | 21.6                    | 200,000                       | 5,100                                      | 2.6                     |
| 5,000                         | 1,000                                      | 20.0                    | 300,000                       | 6,000                                      | 2.0                     |
| 6,000                         | 1,100                                      | 18.0                    | 500,000                       | 7,200                                      | 1.4                     |
| 10,000                        | 1,400                                      | 14.0                    | 1,000,000                     | 9,100                                      | 0.9                     |
| 20,000                        | 2,000                                      | 10.0                    | 2,000,000                     | 11,000                                     | 0.6                     |
| 50,000                        | 2,900                                      | 5.8                     | 5,000,000                     | 15,000                                     | 0.3                     |

TABLE 1. RELATIONSHIP OF PERSONS INCLUDED IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY SURVEY  
TO THE CIVILIAN POPULATION AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER, MARCH 1982

|                                                     | Number ('000) |         |          | Per cent of total |         |         |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------|----------|-------------------|---------|---------|
|                                                     | Males         | Females | Persons  | Males             | Females | Persons |
| Civilian population aged 15 years and over          | 5,545.4       | 5,680.0 | 11,225.5 | 100.0             | 100.0   | 100.0   |
| Employed                                            | 4,091.8       | 2,369.3 | 6,461.1  | 73.8              | 41.7    | 57.6    |
| Unemployed                                          | 238.1         | 221.6   | 459.7    | 4.3               | 3.9     | 4.1     |
| Not in the labour force                             | 1,215.6       | 3,089.2 | 4,304.7  | 21.9              | 54.4    | 38.3    |
| Aged 65 years and over                              | 560.2         | 831.0   | 1,391.1  | 10.1              | 14.6    | 12.4    |
| Aged 15 to 64 years                                 | 655.4         | 2,258.2 | 2,913.6  | 11.8              | 39.8    | 26.0    |
| Inmates of institutions, etc.(a)                    | 60.3          | 35.7    | 96.0     | 1.1               | 0.6     | 0.9     |
| Had actively looked for work but unable to start(a) | 14.3          | 19.5    | 33.8     | 0.3               | 0.3     | 0.3     |
| Had a job but away without pay(a)(b)                | 4.3           | 17.5    | 21.8     | 0.1               | 0.3     | 0.2     |
| PERSONS INCLUDED IN THE SUPPLEMENTARY SURVEY        | 576.5         | 2,185.5 | 2,762.0  | 10.4              | 38.5    | 24.6    |
| Persons who do not want a job                       | 446.3         | 1,656.2 | 2,102.5  | 8.0               | 29.2    | 18.7    |
| Would not like a job now                            | 442.0         | 1,634.7 | 2,076.7  | 8.0               | 28.8    | 18.5    |
| Does not know whether would like a job              | 4.3           | 21.5    | 25.8     | 0.1               | 0.4     | 0.2     |
| Persons who want a job(c)                           | 130.2         | 529.3   | 659.5    | 2.3               | 9.3     | 5.9     |
| Have taken steps (non-active) to find a job         | 10.5          | 35.9    | 46.4     | 0.2               | 0.6     | 0.4     |
| Have taken no steps to find a job                   | 119.8         | 493.4   | 613.2    | 2.2               | 8.7     | 5.5     |
| Yes, would like a job now                           | 100.2         | 396.9   | 497.0    | 1.8               | 7.0     | 4.4     |
| Maybe, would like a job now                         | 19.6          | 96.5    | 116.1    | 0.4               | 1.7     | 1.0     |
| Discouraged(c)                                      | 9.1           | 68.2    | 77.4     | 0.2               | 1.2     | 0.7     |
| Had other reasons for not actively looking for work | 121.1         | 461.1   | 582.2    | 2.2               | 8.1     | 5.2     |

(a) For full description see Explanatory notes, paragraph 4. (b) See Explanatory notes, paragraph 11. (c) For definition see Explanatory notes.

TABLE 2. PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE WHO WANT A JOB : TIME SINCE LAST JOB(a), IF ANY, AND WHETHER LOOKED FOR WORK IN THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS, MARCH 1982  
(1'000)

| Time since last job, if any   | Has looked for work in the last 12 months |                  |                   |                    |       | Has not looked for work in the last 12 months | Not asked as has a job to go to | Total |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|
|                               | Within last 4 weeks                       | 5 to 7 weeks ago | 8 to 12 weeks ago | 13 to 52 weeks ago | Total |                                               |                                 |       |
| Has never had a job           | 10.8                                      | 4.6              | 7.1               | 5.1                | 27.6  | 62.3                                          | *                               | 91.5  |
| Has had a job                 | 55.7                                      | 18.7             | 24.0              | 27.4               | 125.8 | 425.6                                         | 16.6                            | 568.0 |
| Worked in the last year(b)    | 21.4                                      | 5.5              | 8.4               | 3.9                | 39.2  | 111.9                                         | 13.1                            | 164.2 |
| Within the last 6 months      | 14.9                                      | *                | 4.7               | *                  | 23.1  | 76.0                                          | 11.4                            | 110.5 |
| 6 to 12 months ago            | 6.5                                       | *                | 3.7               | 3.2                | 16.1  | 35.9                                          | *                               | 53.7  |
| Worked 1 to 3 years ago       | 15.8                                      | 5.4              | 7.3               | 8.4                | 36.9  | 87.0                                          | *                               | 125.9 |
| Worked 3 to 10 years ago      | 13.8                                      | 6.0              | 5.4               | 10.9               | 36.1  | 146.7                                         | *                               | 184.3 |
| Worked more than 10 years ago | 4.7                                       | *                | 3.0               | 4.1                | 13.6  | 79.9                                          | *                               | 93.6  |
| Total                         | 66.5                                      | 23.3             | 31.1              | 32.5               | 153.4 | 488.0                                         | 18.2                            | 659.5 |

(a) Paid employment, full time or part time, for two weeks or more in any job or business. (b) Persons who have had a job in the last twelve months were asked whether they had looked for work since that job.

TABLE 3. PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE WHO WANT A JOB : REASON FOR NOT ACTIVELY LOOKING FOR WORK(a) AND AGE, MARCH 1982  
(1'000)

| Highest ranked reason for not actively looking for work | Age group (years) |       |       |       |       |       |       | Total |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|                                                         | 15-19             | 20-24 | 25-34 | 35-44 | 45-54 | 55-59 | 60-64 |       |
| Has a job to go to                                      | 3.9               | 3.3   | 5.1   | 3.7   | *     | *     | *     | 18.2  |
| Personal considerations                                 | 96.6              | 22.7  | 32.6  | 34.6  | 36.4  | 19.8  | 12.5  | 255.2 |
| Family considerations                                   | 6.7               | 32.1  | 103.5 | 62.4  | 26.3  | 6.7   | *     | 240.2 |
| Discouraged(b)                                          | 6.7               | 4.7   | 14.0  | 17.4  | 19.1  | 8.7   | 6.7   | 77.4  |
| Considered too young or too old                         | *                 | *     | *     | *     | 8.1   | 6.1   | 4.7   | 22.9  |
| No jobs in locality or line of work                     | 4.0               | 3.3   | 10.8  | 13.0  | 8.6   | *     | *     | 43.2  |
| No jobs in suitable hours                               | *                 | *     | 4.2   | 4.9   | *     | *     | *     | 12.4  |
| Other reasons                                           | 4.7               | 4.8   | 10.0  | 11.0  | 8.5   | 3.1   | 3.4   | 45.5  |
| No reason given                                         | *                 | —     | 4.1   | 3.1   | *     | *     | *     | 10.7  |
| Total                                                   | 120.4             | 70.2  | 171.2 | 137.0 | 95.4  | 39.6  | 25.7  | 659.5 |

(a) Highest ranked reason only. See Explanatory notes, paragraph 9. (b) Includes all reasons given in Explanatory notes, paragraph 8.

TABLE 4. PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE WHO WANT A JOB : REASON FOR NOT ACTIVELY LOOKING FOR WORK (a) AND WHETHER COULD START WORK (b), MARCH 1982  
( '000)

| Highest ranked reason for not actively looking for work | Females          |                      |              |       | Persons          |                      |              |       |
|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------|------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------|
|                                                         | Could start work | Could not start work | Did not know | Total | Could start work | Could not start work | Did not know | Total |
| Has a job to go to(c)                                   | ..               | ..                   | ..           | 10.5  | ..               | ..                   | ..           | 18.2  |
| Personal considerations                                 | 99.9             | 49.6                 | 10.4         | 159.9 | 151.4            | 88.4                 | 15.4         | 255.2 |
| Family considerations                                   | 145.7            | 72.4                 | 18.5         | 236.6 | 147.7            | 73.9                 | 18.7         | 240.2 |
| Discouraged                                             | 61.0             | 4.0                  | 3.2          | 68.2  | 69.0             | 5.0                  | 3.4          | 77.4  |
| Considered too young or too old                         | 16.9             | *                    | *            | 19.8  | 19.4             | *                    | *            | 22.9  |
| Language or racial difficulties                         | 3.4              | *                    | *            | 3.5   | 4.2              | *                    | *            | 4.5   |
| Lacked necessary training, experience                   | 5.9              | *                    | *            | 6.4   | 6.2              | *                    | *            | 6.7   |
| No jobs in locality or line or work                     | 34.8             | *                    | *            | 38.5  | 39.2             | *                    | *            | 43.2  |
| No jobs in suitable hours                               | 10.8             | *                    | *            | 12.3  | 10.9             | *                    | *            | 12.4  |
| Other reasons                                           | 28.1             | 4.9                  | *            | 33.4  | 38.2             | 6.7                  | *            | 45.5  |
| No reason given                                         | 6.6              | *                    | *            | 8.5   | 8.1              | *                    | *            | 10.7  |
| Total                                                   | 352.1            | 132.4                | 34.4         | 529.3 | 425.3            | 175.4                | 40.7         | 659.5 |

(a) Highest ranked reason only. See Explanatory notes, paragraph 9. (b) In the next 4 weeks. (c) Not asked whether they could start work.

TABLE 5. PERSONS NOT IN THE LABOUR FORCE WHO WANT A JOB : WHETHER COULD START WORK (a), MARCH 1982

|                                      | Males  | Females | Persons | Males      | Females    | Persons    |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|------------|------------|------------|
|                                      | ('000) | ('000)  | ('000)  | (per cent) | (per cent) | (per cent) |
| Could start work                     | 73.3   | 352.1   | 425.3   | 56.3       | 66.5       | 64.5       |
| Could not start work                 | 43.0   | 132.4   | 175.4   | 33.0       | 25.0       | 26.6       |
| Because of own illness, injury       | 20.0   | 19.2    | 39.2    | 15.3       | 3.6        | 5.9        |
| Personal or family reasons           | *      | 85.9    | 87.9    | *          | 16.2       | 13.3       |
| Attending an educational institution | 18.8   | 20.5    | 39.3    | 14.4       | 3.9        | 6.0        |
| Attending school                     | 14.5   | 14.0    | 28.6    | 11.2       | 2.6        | 4.3        |
| Other reasons                        | *      | 6.7     | 9.0     | *          | 1.3        | 1.4        |
| Did not know whether could start     | 6.3    | 34.4    | 40.7    | 4.8        | 6.5        | 6.2        |
| Not asked as had a job to go to      | 7.7    | 10.5    | 18.2    | 5.9        | 2.0        | 2.8        |
| Total                                | 130.2  | 529.3   | 659.5   | 100.0      | 100.0      | 100.0      |

(a) See footnote (b) to Table 4.

TABLE 6. DISCOURAGED JOBSEEKERS AGED 15 TO 64 YEARS: SUMMARY OF CHARACTERISTICS, MARCH 1982

|                                                 | Females | Persons | Females    | Persons    |
|-------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|------------|------------|
|                                                 | ('000)  | ('000)  | (per cent) | (per cent) |
| TOTAL                                           | 68.2    | 77.4    | 100.0      | 100.0      |
| Marital status -                                |         |         |            |            |
| Married                                         | 53.2    | 57.2    | 77.9       | 73.9       |
| Not married                                     | 15.1    | 20.2    | 22.1       | 26.1       |
| Age (years) -                                   |         |         |            |            |
| 15-19                                           | 4.2     | 6.7     | 6.1        | 8.7        |
| 20-24                                           | 3.8     | 4.7     | 5.6        | 6.0        |
| 25-34                                           | 12.8    | 14.0    | 18.8       | 18.1       |
| 35-44                                           | 16.7    | 17.4    | 24.5       | 22.5       |
| 45-54                                           | 18.5    | 19.1    | 27.1       | 24.7       |
| 55-64                                           | 12.2    | 15.4    | 17.9       | 19.9       |
| Place of residence(a) -                         |         |         |            |            |
| New South Wales                                 | 25.6    | 29.0    | 37.5       | 37.4       |
| Victoria                                        | 17.7    | 19.7    | 25.9       | 25.5       |
| Queensland                                      | 8.7     | 10.4    | 12.7       | 13.5       |
| South Australia                                 | 4.9     | 5.8     | 7.2        | 7.5        |
| Western Australia                               | 7.4     | 8.4     | 10.9       | 10.8       |
| Tasmania                                        | 3.0     | 3.1     | 4.4        | 4.0        |
| Six State capital cities                        | 39.5    | 44.1    | 57.9       | 56.9       |
| Other areas(b)                                  | 28.7    | 33.3    | 42.1       | 43.1       |
| Birthplace -                                    |         |         |            |            |
| Australia                                       | 43.4    | 49.5    | 63.6       | 64.0       |
| Main English-speaking countries                 | 12.1    | 12.9    | 17.8       | 16.6       |
| Other countries                                 | 12.7    | 15.0    | 18.6       | 19.4       |
| Whether looked for work in the last 12 months - |         |         |            |            |
| Had not looked for work                         | 40.4    | 45.3    | 59.2       | 58.5       |
| Had looked for work                             | 27.9    | 32.1    | 40.8       | 41.5       |
| Less than 5 weeks ago                           | 11.0    | 12.6    | 16.1       | 16.3       |
| 5 and less than 8 weeks ago                     | 5.2     | 6.2     | 7.6        | 8.1        |
| 8 and less than 13 weeks ago                    | 5.6     | 6.4     | 8.2        | 8.3        |
| 13 and less than 52 weeks ago                   | 6.1     | 6.9     | 8.9        | 8.9        |
| Had never had a regular job                     | 4.8     | 6.5     | 7.0        | 8.3        |
| Had had a regular job                           | 63.5    | 70.9    | 93.0       | 91.7       |
| Time since last regular job -                   |         |         |            |            |
| Under 1 year                                    | 12.5    | 16.1    | 18.3       | 20.8       |
| 1 year and under 3 years                        | 13.9    | 15.8    | 20.4       | 20.4       |
| 3 years and under 10 years                      | 22.5    | 24.4    | 33.0       | 31.6       |
| 10 years and under 20 years                     | 10.0    | 10.0    | 14.7       | 13.0       |
| 20 years and over                               | 4.5     | 4.5     | 6.7        | 5.9        |
| Availability to start work -                    |         |         |            |            |
| Could start work                                | 61.0    | 69.0    | 89.4       | 89.1       |
| Could not start work                            | 4.0     | 5.0     | 5.9        | 6.4        |
| Did not know whether could start work           | 3.2     | 3.4     | 4.7        | 4.4        |

(a) For standard errors of State estimates, see Table A, Technical note, The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0).

(b) Includes the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory.