

TIME USE ON RECREATION AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES AUSTRALIA

EMBARGO: 11.30AM (CANBERRA TIME) TUES 11 MAY 2010

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INQUIRIES

For further information about these and related statistics, contact the National Information and Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

NOTES

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

This report presents selected results from the 2006 Time Use Survey (TUS) on how people choose to spend their time, with a focus on activities conducted during free time, in particular, sport and outdoor activities.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The 2006 Time Use Survey was conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) across all States and Territories and collected information from people aged 15 years and over. This is the third Time Use Survey conducted by the ABS, with the previous surveys being conducted in 1992 and 1997.

As with previous iterations, the 2006 TUS collected information on how people used their time over a two day period.

Explanatory Notes on the 2006 Time Use Survey can be found in *How Australians Use Their Time*, 2006 (cat. no. 4153.0). These Explanatory Notes contain information on the scope of the survey, sample design, data collection, weighting and reliability of estimates. The publication also includes a Technical Note that provides information on data reliability.

AVERAGES

For time spent on an activity, all minutes stated are averaged over the seven days of the week and the whole specified population group.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABS Australian Bureau of Statistics

TUS Time Use Survey

Brian Pink

Australian Statistician

INTRODUCTION

TIME USE SURVEYS

This publication presents summary data on how people choose to spend their time, with a focus on activities conducted during free time, that is, the time allocated to social and community interaction and recreation and leisure activities.

Within this publication there will be a particular focus on time spent on sport and outdoor activity. This category contains a broad range of recreational and physical activities including participation in organised and informal sport, exercise, walking and bush walking, fishing, holiday travel, driving for pleasure and sightseeing, camping, bird watching and simply sitting outside and enjoying nature. For a full list of activities which are included in this item please refer to the Glossary published in the *Time Use Survey: User Guide*, 2006 (cat. no. 4150.0).

The third Time Use Survey (TUS) was conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 2006 and collected information about how Australians aged 15 years and over used their time over a two day period. The aim of the survey was to measure people's daily activity patterns and to provide profiles of how different people balance work, family, leisure and wider community obligations. Comparisons have also been made with results from the 1997 TUS in order to identify changes over time.

Participants in the 2006 TUS completed a detailed diary for two separate days. They recorded what they were doing against a timeline of five minute intervals covering 24 hours from 12:00am. They were asked to record their primary (or main) activity as well as one other activity they were doing at the same time (if applicable); for whom the activity was done; who else was there; and where the activity took place. The other activity was recorded as the secondary activity. For example, someone may have reported caring for children (primary activity) while listening to a CD (secondary activity). This publication will focus on people's primary activities only.

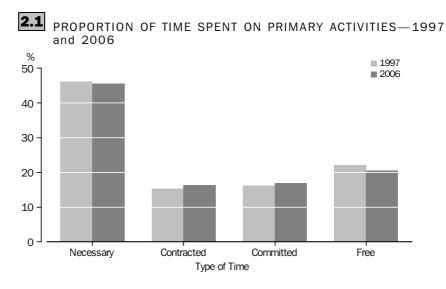
The TUS identifies four time domains in which people spend their time:

- Necessary time includes activities which are performed for personal survival, such as sleeping, eating and personal hygiene.
- Contracted time includes activities such as paid work and regular education where there are explicit contracts which control the periods of time in which the activities are performed.
- Committed time includes activities to which a person has committed themselves because of previous social or community interactions, such as establishing a household or volunteering. The consequent housework, other household management activities, child care, shopping or provision of help to others are all examples of committed time activities.
- Free time is the amount of time left when the previous three types of time have been taken out of a person's day. Free time includes activities associated with social and community interaction and recreation and leisure.

This publication will use data from the 1997 and 2006 Time Use Surveys. For time spent on an activity, all minutes stated are averaged over the seven days of the week and the whole specified population group; all percentages show the proportion of the day spent on them. Additional data from this survey is published in *How Australians Use Their Time*, 2006 (cat. no. 4153.0).

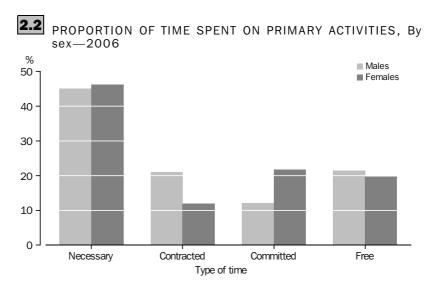
CHANGES SINCE 1997

There has been little change in how people spent their time between the two survey periods. In 1997 and 2006, Australians spent the largest part of their day (both 46%) on necessary time activities. In 2006 people spent 16% (compared with 15% in 1997) on contracted time activities, 17% (compared with 16%) on committed time activities and 21% (compared with 22%) on free time activities.



SEX

Men and women spend their day in different ways. On average, in 2006 men spent almost twice as much time as women on contracted time activities (21% compared with 12%), while women spent nearly twice as much time as men on committed time activities (22% compared with 12%). Men and women spent a similar amount of time on necessary time activities (45% compared with 46%) and free time activities (21% compared with 20%).



TIME SPENT ON FREE TIME ACTIVITIES

CHANGES SINCE 1997

Free time is the time allocated to social and community interaction and recreation and leisure. In 2006, 85% of people's free time was spent on recreation and leisure with the remaining time spent on social and community interaction. Examples of recreation and leisure activities include playing sport, walking, participating in games or hobbies, reading and watching television. Participation in social and community interaction includes attending a concert, visiting a library or amusement park, attending sports events and participating in religious ceremonies.

There was little change in time spent on social and community interaction activities between 1997 and 2006, with the average time reducing only slightly from 45 minutes a day to 43 minutes a day.

There was a much more noticeable change in the amount of time people spent on recreation and leisure activities, which was 4 hours and 13 minutes a day in 2006, 15 minutes less than in 1997. The greatest decreases were reported in time spent on sport and outdoor activities at 21 minutes a day (6 minutes less than 1997), talking (including phone) or writing/reading own correspondence at 30 minutes a day (5 minutes less than 1997) and games, hobbies arts and crafts at 13 minutes a day (4 minutes less then 1997). Interestingly, time spent on audio/visual media activities, as the most popular recreation and leisure activity reported, increased by 8 minutes a day from 2 hours and 10 minutes a day in 1997 to 2 hours and 18 minutes a day in 2006.

WEEKDAY/WEEKEND

Not surprisingly, the average time people spent on free time activities increased on the weekend when compared with weekdays. In 2006 men spent 6 hours and 43 minutes and women spent 5 hours and 46 minutes on free time activities per day on the weekend.

Accordingly, the average amount of time that people spent on recreational and leisure activities also increased on the weekend compared with weekdays, with men spending more time (5 hours and 32 minutes a day) on the weekend on recreation and leisure activities than women (4 hours and 33 minutes a day).

WEEKDAY/WEEKEND continued

3.1 AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON FREE TIME ACTIVITIES, By weekday/weekend and sex—2006

	MALES		FEMALES	
	Weekday	Weekend	Weekday	Weekend
	Minutes per day	Minutes per day	Minutes per day	Minutes per day
Socialising Visiting entertainment venues(a) Attendance at sports event Religious activities(b) Community participation	6 2 *1 *2 8	20 8 6 8 7	7 4 — 4 11	19 8 4 10 9
Associated travel Social and Community interaction(c)	7 27	22 71	9	21 73
Sport and outdoor activity Games, hobbies, arts, crafts	20 13 19	37 18 25	16 11 23	21 15 29
Reading Audio/visual media Other free time Talking and correspondence(d) Associated travel	19 144 20 21 5	181 29 31	117 16 34 4	134 24 43 6
Recreation and Leisure(c) Total free time	243 270	332 403	223 259	273 346

^{*} estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

The main contributors to the increase in time spent on free time activities on the weekend were audio/visual media activities, sport and outdoor activity and talking. For men, the amount of time spent on sport and outdoor activity increased by 17 minutes per day on the weekend and for women by 5 minutes per day compared with time spent during the week. Men spent more time on the weekend on audio/visual media activities compared with women (3 hours and 1 minute per day compared with 2 hours and 14 minutes per day respectively) and also on sport and outdoor activity (37 minutes compared with 21 minutes).

nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

⁽a) Includes cultural venues

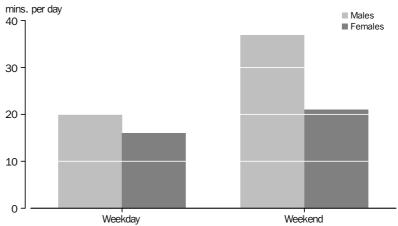
⁽b) Includes ritual ceremonies

⁽c) Includes additional activities not separately included.

⁽d) Includes talking on phone or reading/writing own correspondence.

WEEKDAY/WEEKEND continued





SEX

The average time spent on free time activities differed between men and women. In 2006 men spent 5 hours and 8 minutes a day on free time activities (down 20 minutes from 1997) compared with women who spent 4 hours and 44 minutes on free time activities (also down 20 minutes from 1997).

In 2006, women spent 6 minutes more a day on social and community interaction (46 minutes) compared with men (40 minutes a day). The average amount of time spent on social and community interaction by men and women decreased only slightly by 2 minutes a day and 1 minute a day respectively between 1997 and 2006.

Overall, men spent 31 minutes more a day on recreation and leisure activities in 2006 compared with women (4 hours and 28 minutes for men and 3 hours and 57 minutes for women). Men spent more time than women participating in most recreation and leisure activities, in particular sport and outdoor activity (25 minutes a day compared with 17 minutes a day), while women spent more time than men reading (25 minutes a day compared with 21 minutes) and talking (36 minutes a day compared with 24 minutes). Between 1997 and 2006 the amount of time men spent on sport and outdoor activity reduced more noticeably than for women (8 minutes less a day for men and 3 minutes less a day for women). The amount of time men spent on audio/visual media activities increased more than for women (11 minutes more compared with 4 minutes more respectively).

SEX continued

3.3 AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON FREE TIME ACTIVITIES, By sex—1997 and 2006

	1997			2006		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	Minutes per day	Minutes per day	Minutes per day	Minutes per day	Minutes per day	Minutes per day
Socialising	11	11	11	10	10	10
Visiting entertainment venues(a)	5	6	5	4	5	5
Attendance at sports event	2	1	2	2	2	2
Religious activities(b)	4	5	5	4	6	5
Community participation	7	9	8	8	10	9
Associated travel	12	13	13	11	13	12
Social and Community interaction(c)	42	47	45	40	46	43
Sport and outdoor activity	33	20	27	25	17	21
Games, hobbies, arts, crafts	18	15	17	14	12	13
Reading	24	26	25	21	25	23
Audio/visual media Attendance at recreational	143	118	130	154	122	138
courses	1	1	1	_	*1	1
Other free time	23	20	21	23	18	20
Talking and correspondence(d)	27	44	35	24	36	30
Associated travel	11	7	9	6	5	5
Recreation and Leisure(c)	283	254	268	268	237	253
Total free time	328	304	316	308	284	296

- * estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution
- nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)
- (a) Includes cultural venues
- (b) Includes ritual ceremonies
- (c) Includes additional activities not separately included.
- (d) Includes talking on phone or reading/writing own correspondence.

Time spent on social and community interaction varies between men and women in different age groups. People aged 15-24 years spend more time each day (49 minutes) on these activities than any other age group.

Men and women aged 65 years and over spent more time on recreation and leisure activities (6 hours and 19 minutes and 5 hours and 50 minutes a day respectively) than any of the other age groups. People aged 25-44 years only spent around half this time (3 hours and 40 minutes for men and 3 hours and 1 minute a day for women).

For all age groups, audio/visual activities account for over half of the time spent on recreation and leisure activities. People aged 65 years and over spent the most time on this activity with 3 hours and 11 minutes a day followed by people aged 15-24 years, with 2 hours and 33 minutes. People aged 25-44 years spent the least amount of time on audio/visual media activities.

For both sexes, time spent reading increased with age. For both men and women in the youngest age group (15-24 years), the average time spent on reading was 8 minutes and 12 minutes a day respectively. Women aged 65 and over spent 54 minutes a day compared with men in the same age group who spent 52 minutes a day.

AGE

3.4 AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON FREE TIME ACTIVITIES, By age and sex—2006

	15–24	25–44	45–64	65 and over	Total
	Minutes	Minutes	Minutes	Minutes	Minutes
	per day	per day	per day	per day	per day
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •		• • • • •	• • • • •	• • • • •	
N	1ALES				
Socialising	15	9	8	12	10
Visiting entertainment venues(a)	5	4	3	4	4
Attendance at sports event	*2	2	3	**1	2
Religious activities(b)	*4	4	4	*4	4
Community participation	5	7	9	9	8
Associated travel	13	11	11	12	11
Social and Community interaction(c)	45	37	38	42	40
Sport and outdoor activity	30	20	22	36	25
Games, hobbies, arts, crafts	30	11	10	15	14
Reading	8	12	24	52	21
Audio/visual media	163	127	154	211	154
Other free time	24	20	20	31	23
Talking and correspondence(d)	25	23	23	27	24
Associated travel	9	5	6	7	6
Recreation and Leisure(c)	291	220	261	379	268
Total free time	335	257	299	421	308
FE	MALES				
Socialising	13	8	10	14	10
Visiting entertainment venues(a)	10	5	5	4	5
Attendance at sports event	*2	2	1	_	2
Religious activities(b)	*5	4	6	9	6
Community participation	8	10	12	10	10
Associated travel	16	12	12	12	13
Social and Community interaction(c)	53	42	46	49	46
Sport and outdoor activity	21	14	17	20	17
Games, hobbies, arts, crafts	11	6	13	26	12
Reading	12	14	28	54	25
Audio/visual media					400
	142	94	116	173	122
Other free time		94 14	116 18	173 29	122 18
Other free time Talking and correspondence(d)	142				
	142 18	14	18	29	18
Talking and correspondence(d)	142 18 35	14 34	18 37	29 41	18 36

^{*} estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

^{**} estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

nil or rounded to zero (including null cells)

⁽a) Includes cultural venues.

⁽b) Includes ritual ceremonies.

⁽c) Includes additional activities not separately included.

⁽d) Includes talking on phone or reading/writing own correspondence.

3.4 AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON FREE TIME ACTIVITIES, By age and sex—2006 continued

				65 and	
	15–24	25–44	45–64	over	Total
	Minutes	Minutes	Minutes	Minutes	Minutes
	per day				
DE	RSONS				
FL	NSUNS				
Socialising	14	9	9	13	10
Visiting entertainment venues(a)	7	4	4	4	5
Attendance at sports event	2	2	2	*1	2
Religious activities(b)	4	4	5	7	5
Community participation	6	9	10	10	9
Associated travel	14	11	12	12	12
Social and Community interaction(c)	49	40	42	46	43
Sport and outdoor activity	26	17	19	27	21
Games, hobbies, arts, crafts	21	8	11	21	13
Reading	10	13	26	53	23
Audio/visual media	153	110	135	191	138
Other free time	21	17	19	30	20
Talking and correspondence(d)	30	29	30	34	30
Associated travel	8	5	5	5	5
Recreation and Leisure(c)	270	200	248	363	253
Total free time	319	240	290	409	296

^{*} estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

AGE continued

People aged 15-24 years spent a similar amount of time as people aged 65 years and over on sport and outdoor activities (26 and 27 minutes per day respectively). Given the wide range of activities contained within the sport and outdoor activity data item, encompassing both high and low intensity physical activities, and also time spent on more leisurely pursuits such as driving for pleasure, enjoying nature and sightseeing, it is likely that the mix of activities making up time spent on sport and outdoor activities differs for each age group.

People aged 25-44 years spent the least amount of time on sport and outdoor activities (17 minutes). Men spent more time than women in all age groups on sport and outdoor activities with the greatest difference (16 minutes) being between men and women aged 65 years and over.

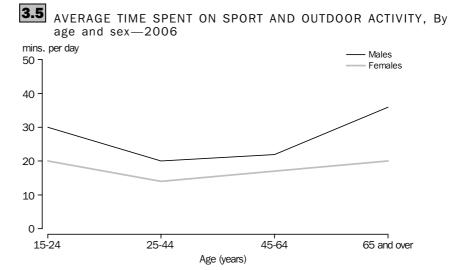
⁽a) Includes cultural venues.

⁽b) Includes ritual ceremonies.

⁽c) Includes additional activities not separately included.

⁽d) Includes talking on phone or reading/writing own correspondence.

AGE continued



FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD TYPES

The amount of free time available to a person depended on the type of household to which they belonged, with people in family households being more likely to have less free time compared with those in other households. Family and household types are classified into categories as detailed in the Glossary published in the *Time Use Survey: User Guide*, 2006 (cat. no. 4150.0).

Other factors may also affect the amount of free time available to a person. Parents with dependent children had less free time than people who live alone (3 hours and 55 minutes compared with 6 hours). People who live alone had more free time than people in other types of households and spent most of this time on audio/visual media activities (2 hours and 46 minutes a day), reading (40 minutes a day), talking on the phone (35 minutes a day).

3.6 AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON FREE TIME ACTIVITIES, By living situation—2006

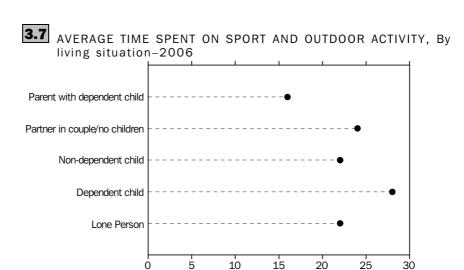
	Parent with dependent child	Partner in couple family with no children	Non-dependent child	Dependent child	Lone Person	Other	All living conditons
Socialising	8	11	17	12	12	11	10
Visiting entertainment venues(a)	3	4	6	9	5	7	5
Attendance at sports event	3	*1	*2	*2	*1	*2	2
Religious activities(b)	5	4	**6	5	5	*5	5
Community participation	10	10	9	8	8	5	9
Associated travel	10	12	15	12	14	18	12
Social and Community interaction(c)	38	43	54	48	46	48	43
Sport and outdoor activity	16	24	22	28	22	23	21
Games/hobbies/arts/crafts	7	15	23	24	17	17	13
Reading	16	32	12	12	40	23	23
Audio/visual media	109	152	158	162	166	152	138
Other free time	15	23	26	15	27	34	20
Talking and correspondence(d)	28	33	27	30	35	28	30
Associated travel	4	6	8	9	6	6	5
Recreation and Leisure(c)	196	286	277	283	314	285	253
Total free time	235	328	332	331	360	333	296

estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

- (a) Includes cultural venues
- (b) Includes ritual ceremonies
- (c) Includes additional activities not separately included.
- (d) Includes talking on phone or reading/writing own correspondence.

FAMILY AND HOUSEHOLD TYPES continued

Dependent children (all persons aged 15 years and under or aged 15-24 years and in full-time study with a parent living in the same household) spent the most time (28 minutes a day) on sport and outdoor activities. This was followed by people in a couple family with no children (24 minutes). Parents with dependent children spent the least amount of time on sport and outdoor activities (16 minutes).



minutes per day

^{**} estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

LABOUR FORCE STATUS

Employed people spent less time on free time activities than those who were not employed (those who were unemployed or not in the labour force). Part-time employed people spent more time on social and community interaction than full-time employed people (49 minutes a day compared with 38 minutes a day). Unemployed people spent more time socialising (14 minutes a day) compared with full-time employed people who only spent 9 minutes a day.

3.8 AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON FREE TIME ACTIVITES, By labour force status—2006

	Employed full-time	Employed part-time	Total employed	Unemployed	Not in the labour force
	Minutes	Minutes	Minutes	Minutes	Minutes
	per day	per day	per day	per day	per day
Socialising	9	11	9	14	12
Visiting entertainment venues(a)	4	6	5	*5	4
Attendance at sports event	2	2	2	**1	1
Religious activities(b)	3	5	4	**5	6
Community participation	8	10	9	*9	10
Associated travel	11	14	12	13	12
Social and Community interaction(c)	38	49	42	47	45
Sport and outdoor activity	18	18	18	28	26
Games, hobbies, arts, crafts	8	11	9	25	20
Reading	13	18	14	20	39
Audio/visual media	112	120	115	192	176
Other free time	18	18	18	29	25
Talking and correspondence(d)	23	35	27	36	36
Associated travel	5	6	5	7	6
Recreation and Leisure(c)	197	227	207	340	329
Total free time	235	276	249	387	373

^{*} estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

On average, employed persons spent much less time on recreation and leisure activities (3 hours and 27 minutes a day) than the unemployed (5 hours and 40 minutes a day) and those not in the labour force (5 hours and 29 minutes). More than half of the time spent by people for all labour force categories was on audio/visual media activities with the unemployed spending the most time on this activity (3 hours and 12 minutes a day). Those who were not employed spent more time on sport and outdoor activity than people who were employed, with unemployed people spending 10 minutes more per day and those not in the labour force spending 6 minutes more per day on these activities.

^{**} estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

⁽a) Includes cultural venues

⁽b) Includes ritual ceremonies

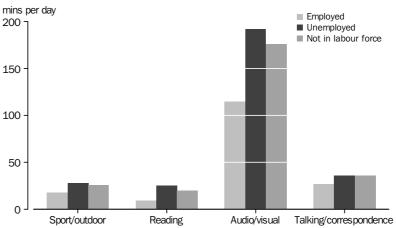
⁽c) Includes additional activties not separately included.

⁽d) Includes talking on phone or reading/writing own correspondence.

LABOUR FORCE STATUS

continued

3.9 AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON SELECTED RECREATION AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES, By labour force status-2006



LOCATION

People in South Australia and Queensland reported the most available free time (5 hours and 9 minutes and 5 hours and 7 minutes a day respectively). People in Western Australia had the least amount of free time (4 hours and 42 minutes a day).

People in Victoria and South Australia spent more time socialising than those in other states (both 12 minutes a day). The least amount of time spent on socialising was by people in Tasmania (9 minutes a day).

Those living in Queensland and South Australia spent more time on recreation and leisure activities than the other states (both 4 hours and 26 minutes a day). Western Australia recorded the least amount of free time (4 hours a day) spent on recreation and leisure activity. South Australians also spent more time on audio/visual media activities than people in any other state with 2 hours and 30 minutes a day compared with Western Australia who reported the least amount of time spent on audio/visual activities (2 hours and 7 minutes a day). Queenslanders spent the most time on sport and outdoor activity (25 minutes a day) with South Australians and Victorians spending least amount of time (both 19 minutes a day).

3.10 AVERAGE TIME SPENT ON FREE TIME ACTIVITIES, By state—2006

	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Australia(a)
	Minutes per day	Minutes per day	Minutes per day	Minutes per day	Minutes per day	Minutes per day
Socialising	9	12	11	12	10	10
Visiting entertainment venues(b)	5	5	5	**4	*4	5
Attendance at sports event	1	2	2	*2	*3	2
Religious activities(c)	6	4	3	*3	*4	5
Community participation	9	9	9	7	10	9
Associated travel	12	13	11	13	11	12
Social and Community interaction(d)	44	45	41	42	42	43
Sport and outdoor activity	21	19	25	19	22	21
Games, hobbies, arts, crafts	12	15	15	*15	10	13
Reading	22	25	24	22	22	23
Audio/visual media	135	141	142	150	127	138
Other free time	21	17	24	20	23	20
Talking and correspondence(e)	31	29	29	34	29	30
Associated travel	6	5	6	5	6	5
Recreation and Leisure(d)	248	251	266	266	240	253
Total free time	292	296	307	309	282	296

^{*} estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% (b) Includes cultural venues and should be used with caution (c) Includes ritual ceremonies

** estimate has a relative standard error greater than (d) Includes additional activities not separately included.

Australian Capital Territory.

^{50%} and is considered too unreliable for general use
(a) Includes Tasmania, Northern Territory and the correspondence.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

- **1** This publication presents statistics compiled from data, collected by both computer assisted personal interview and respondent diary completion, in the 2006 Time Use Survey (TUS). The 2006 survey was the third national time use survey conducted in Australia. Previous time use surveys were conducted in 1992 and 1997.
- **2** Time use surveys collect detailed information on the daily activity patterns of people in Australia. The information is used to examine how people allocate time to activities such as paid and unpaid work and to analyse such issues as gender equality, care giving and balancing family and other responsibilities.
- **3** Further Explanatory Notes on the 2006 Time Use Survey can be found in *How Australians Use Their Time*, 2006 (cat. no. 4153.0). These Explanatory Notes contain information on the scope of the survey, sample design, data collection, data processing, weighting, bench marking and reliability of estimates.
- **4** The *Time Use Survey: User Guide, 2006* (cat. no. 4150.0) is an essential reference tool for understanding data released from the 2006 TUS. It describes the definitions, concepts, methodology and estimation procedures used in the TUS. The questionnaires, diary and output data item list are also available as part of this publication.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

- 5 Other ABS publications which may be of interest include: How Australians Use Their Time, 2006 (cat. no. 4153.0) Time Use Survey: User Guide, 2006 (cat. no. 4150.0) Time Use Survey, Australia, Confidentialised Unit Record File, 2006 (cat. no. 4152.0.55.001).
- **6** The ABS National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics' 'Topics @ a Glance' page also contains a wealth of information and useful references on culture and recreation statistics. This site can be accessed through the ABS website http://www.abs.gov.au (Topics @ a Glance Culture and Recreation).

FOR MORE INFORMATION .

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