

THE LABOUR FORCE, NOVEMBER 1977 (PRELIMINARY)

INQUIRIES

If you want to know more about these statistics ring Mr J. Tayler, Canberra 526512 or our State Office, or write to Information Services, ABS, P.O. Box 10, Belconnen, A.C.T. 2616

For copies of this publication contact Information Services, Canberra 526627 or State offices.

MAIN FEATURES

- In November 1977 the estimated total civilian labour force was 6,179,200 (employed 5,864,900, unemployed 314,300).
- The estimated number of unemployed persons looking for full-time work was 265,300. A further 49,000 were looking for part-time work.
- In the twelve months to November 1977, employed persons increased by 35,300 and unemployed persons by 59,700.
- For reasons set out in paragraphs 10 to 13, publication of seasonally adjusted unemployment estimates has been suspended.

4. A new sample based on the 1976 Census will be used in the February 1978 survey; at the same time a revised questionnaire will be introduced. In order that any effects of these changes can be assessed, an additional survey was undertaken in November 1977, using the new sample and questionnaire, at the same time as the normal survey was undertaken. Data from the additional survey will be processed shortly and results analysed to assess the effects of the innovations. The population survey normally covers about two-thirds of one per cent of the population of Australia. Because of the difficulties of running two surveys concurrently, the sample size of both November surveys was reduced to one-half of one per cent of the population. This reduction in sample size has slightly increased the sampling variability of the estimates, on average by about 15 per cent. See paragraph 8 below for further details.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This publication contains preliminary estimates of the civilian labour force for November 1977 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* (Catalogue No. 6203.0. Previously Ref. No. 6.20), which gives information in greater detail, will be published shortly.

2. Preliminary unemployment estimates have been issued in advance of this publication in *Unemployment, Preliminary Estimates* (Catalogue No. 6201.0. Previously Ref. No. 6.35).

The population survey

3. The survey is based on a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (houses, flats, etc.) and non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, etc.), the information being obtained in February, May, August and November from the occupants of selected dwellings by carefully chosen and specially trained interviewers. Interviews are carried out during a period of four weeks, so that in each of the months to which the survey relates there are four survey weeks, chosen so as to fall within the limits of the calendar month or with minimum encroachment into the adjacent months.

Scope

5. The estimates relate to all persons aged fifteen years and over except members of the permanent defence forces and certain diplomatic personnel customarily excluded from census and estimated populations.

Classification of the labour force

6. 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.

Estimation procedure

7. Estimates are obtained by using a complex ratio estimation procedure which ensures that survey estimates conform to independent population estimates by State, area, age and sex. These population estimates are based on very preliminary information and are subject to revision.

Reliability of the estimates

8. Since the estimates in this publication are based on information obtained from the occupants of a sample of dwellings, they may differ from the figures that would have been produced if the information had been obtained from occupants of all dwellings. 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 dwellings was included in the survey. 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 if all dwellings had been included in the survey, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors. Because of the reduction in the size of the sample in November 1977 (see paragraph 4) the standard errors are on average about 15 per cent larger than usual. For November 1977 the relative standard error of an estimate of 2,000,000 is approximately 0.6 per cent (12,000) while that of an estimate of 20,000 is approximately 9 per cent (1,800).

9. Limitations of space preclude publication of the standard errors of all estimates. More information on this topic, together with a table of estimated standard errors for States, Territories and Australia, is given in the quarterly bulletin *The Labour Force* (Catalogue No. 6203.0. Previously Ref. No. 6.20).

Suspension of seasonally adjusted series

10. As explained in the last few issues of this and other labour force publications, the higher level of unemployment since 1974 appears to have been accompanied by shifts in the pattern of seasonal variation. In an attempt to cope with the new situation, changes in the method of seasonal adjustment were made from August 1976 onwards, but it was pointed out that it would be claiming too much to suggest that the problems had been wholly overcome.

11. It is now evident from an examination of the figures for recent quarters that they are not following a

regular pattern of seasonal variation and that the effects of seasonal influences are insufficiently stable to be handled by the revised method. Seasonal adjustment in these circumstances is no longer an aid to interpretation of the figures.

12. Moreover, with the introduction of monthly labour force surveys as from February 1978, household interviews will be conducted over a period of two weeks instead of the four weeks used when the survey was conducted at quarterly intervals. This change of timing may influence the level of figures shown for any month, particularly for months such as February during which unemployment may be changing rapidly. For some time it may be difficult to judge whether seasonal adjustment factors derived from past surveys are applicable to the results of surveys for the months of February, May, August, and November.

13. In these circumstances publication of seasonally adjusted figures of numbers of persons unemployed has been suspended; the matter will be kept under review.

14. All publications produced by the ABS are listed in *Catalogue of Publications 1977* (Catalogue No. 1101.0. Previously Ref. No. 1.8) which is available free of charge from any ABS office.

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

R.J. CAMERON
Australian Statistician

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) ('000)	Civilian population aged 15 and over ('000)
	Agriculture ('000)	Other industries ('000)	Total ('000)	Total ('000)	Per cent of labour force (d)	Total excluding persons aged 15-19 years looking for first job ('000)	Number		Per cent of population (f)		
							Original ('000)	Seasonally adjusted (e) ('000)			
MALES											
1976 - Aug. †	282.4	3,485.0	3,767.4	146.2	3.7	133.7	3,913.6	3,942.9	80.0	978.6	4,892.2
Nov.	284.4	3,526.0	3,810.4	144.2	3.6	129.0	3,954.6	3,965.4	80.2	974.1	4,928.7
1977 - Feb.	288.6	3,552.0	3,840.6	173.6	4.3	150.5	4,014.2	3,980.0	81.0	944.2	4,958.4
May	285.1	3,539.4	3,824.5	170.1	4.3	154.7	3,994.6	3,988.0	80.6	963.8	4,958.4
Aug. r	281.4	3,525.4	3,806.9	175.6	4.4	160.5	3,982.5	4,012.9	79.8	1,006.6	4,989.1
Nov.	292.7	3,507.7	3,800.3	170.9	4.3	151.0	3,971.2	3,981.8	79.2	1,040.1	5,011.4
MARRIED WOMEN											
1976 - Aug. †	62.4	1,216.2	1,278.6	51.9	3.9	51.6	1,330.5	1,348.5	40.7	1,942.3	3,272.8
Nov.	58.4	1,251.1	1,309.5	42.2	3.1	41.8	1,351.7	1,326.6	41.0	1,942.6	3,294.3
1977 - Feb.	60.7	1,246.9	1,307.7	67.6	4.9	66.6	1,375.2	1,374.8	41.4	1,944.5	3,319.7
May	61.7	1,266.1	1,327.7	61.6	4.4	61.3	1,389.3	1,397.2	41.9	1,925.8	3,315.1
Aug. r	65.0	1,258.1	1,323.1	63.6	4.6	63.1	1,386.8	1,406.2	41.8	1,932.0	3,318.7
Nov.	70.2	1,248.6	1,318.8	54.4	4.0	54.4	1,373.2	1,347.4	41.5	1,937.0	3,310.2
ALL FEMALES											
1976 - Aug. †	72.2	1,908.0	1,980.2	118.0	5.6	104.2	2,098.2	2,134.1	42.0	2,897.9	4,996.1
Nov.	67.1	1,952.1	2,019.2	110.4	5.2	94.5	2,129.6	2,103.8	42.2	2,912.2	5,041.7
1977 - Feb.	73.0	1,959.6	2,032.7	161.1	7.3	131.2	2,193.8	2,173.5	43.2	2,880.8	5,074.6
May	73.2	1,986.2	2,059.3	144.0	6.5	123.2	2,203.4	2,213.5	43.4	2,877.9	5,081.3
Aug. r	78.3	1,982.6	2,060.9	146.8	6.6	124.4	2,207.6	2,246.4	43.1	2,911.0	5,118.7
Nov.	82.6	1,981.9	2,064.5	143.4	6.5	124.3	2,208.0	2,180.7	42.9	2,933.8	5,141.8
PERSONS											
1976 - Aug. †	354.6	5,393.0	5,747.6	264.1	4.4	237.9	6,011.8	6,072.2	60.8	3,876.5	9,888.3
Nov.	351.5	5,478.1	5,829.6	254.6	4.2	223.5	6,084.2	6,079.6	61.0	3,886.2	9,970.4
1977 - Feb.	361.6	5,511.6	5,873.2	334.8	5.4	281.6	6,208.0	6,150.1	61.9	3,825.0	10,033.0
May	358.3	5,525.6	5,883.8	314.2	5.1	277.9	6,198.0	6,198.3	61.7	3,841.7	10,039.7
Aug. r	359.7	5,508.1	5,867.8	322.4	5.2	284.9	6,190.2	6,253.9	61.2	3,917.6	10,107.8
Nov.	375.3	5,489.6	5,864.9	314.3	5.1	275.3	6,179.2	6,174.2	60.9	3,973.9	10,153.1

(a) For scope of estimates see page 1, paragraph 5. (b) For definitions see the explanatory notes to the latest issue of *The Labour Force* (Catalogue No. 6203.0. Previously Ref. No. 6.20). (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* (Catalogue No. 6213.0. Previously Ref. No. 6.4). (d) The number of unemployed in each group as a percentage of the labour force in the same group. (e) For details of the methods used in seasonally adjusting this series see *Seasonally Adjusted Indicators, 1977* (Catalogue No. 1308.0. Previously Ref. No. 1.10). (f) 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).

† Affected by industrial disputes. r - revised.

TABLE 2. EMPLOYED PERSONS (a), NOVEMBER 1977

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Married women</i>	<i>Other females (b)</i>	<i>All females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
NUMBER EMPLOYED ('000)					
Full-time workers (a)	3,619.6	764.7	606.6	1,371.2	4,990.8
Part-time workers (a)	180.8	554.1	139.2	693.3	874.1
Total	3,800.3	1,318.8	745.8	2,064.5	5,864.9
AVERAGE HOURS WORKED (c)					
Agriculture	57.3	30.7	40.4	32.2	51.8
Manufacturing	39.4	33.4	35.3	33.9	38.0
Construction	39.5	22.3	36.4	24.7	38.4
Wholesale and retail trade	40.7	29.3	31.6	30.1	36.3
Community services (d)	39.2	28.6	34.4	30.7	33.9
All industries	40.7	29.2	33.6	30.8	37.2
Full-time workers (a)	42.0	38.7	38.1	38.4	41.0
Part-time workers (a)	15.2	16.1	14.3	15.7	15.6

(a) See footnote (b) to 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. (d) Comprises health, education, libraries, etc.; welfare and religious institutions; and other community services. In May and August each year estimates of average hours are low because hours worked by school teachers are affected by school holidays.

TABLE 3. UNEMPLOYED PERSONS (a), NOVEMBER 1977

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Married women</i>	<i>Other females (b)</i>	<i>All females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
NUMBER UNEMPLOYED ('000)					
Looking for full-time work (c)	160.9	26.6	77.7	104.4	265.3
Looking for part-time work (d)	10.0	27.8	11.2	39.1	49.0
Aged 15-19 years –					
Looking for first job	19.9	*	19.1	19.1	39.0
Other	34.8	*	35.2	37.5	72.3
Total aged 15-19 years	54.7	*	54.3	56.6	111.3
Aged 20 years and over	116.2	52.2	34.6	86.8	203.0
Unemployed for (e) –					
Under 2 weeks	9.5	6.5	7.1	13.6	23.1
2 weeks and under 4 weeks	28.7	8.8	14.8	23.5	52.2
4 weeks and under 8 weeks	31.1	13.1	13.7	26.9	58.0
8 weeks and under 13 weeks	25.0	7.0	12.5	19.6	44.6
13 weeks and under 26 weeks	24.2	7.1	13.7	20.8	45.0
26 weeks and under 39 weeks	22.9	6.6	10.0	16.6	39.5
39 weeks and under 52 weeks	9.6	*	6.6	7.5	17.1
52 weeks and under 65 weeks	10.8	*	*	5.8	16.6
65 weeks and over	9.2	*	7.6	9.1	18.3
All unemployed persons	170.9	54.4	89.0	143.4	314.3
AVERAGE DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT (f) (weeks)					
Aged 15-19 years	18.7	*	19.5	19.3	19.0
Aged 20 years and over	20.6	14.8	24.6	18.7	19.8
All unemployed persons	20.0	14.8	21.5	19.0	19.5
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES (g) (per cent)					
Looking for full-time work (c)	4.3	3.4	11.4	7.1	5.0
Looking for part-time work (d)	5.2	4.8	7.5	5.3	5.3
Aged 15-19 years	14.9	*	17.2	16.8	15.8
Aged 20 years and over	3.2	3.9	6.7	4.6	3.7
All unemployed persons	4.3	4.0	10.7	6.5	5.1

(a) See footnote (b) to Table 1. (b) Never married, widowed and divorced. (c) Includes persons laid off for the whole week from full-time jobs. (d) Includes persons laid off for the whole week from part-time jobs. (e) Period from the time the person began looking for work, or was laid off, to the end of survey week. (f) Periods of unemployment are recorded only in completed weeks; the averages shown are affected accordingly. (g) 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 page 1, paragraph 8 and the Technical Note to the latest issue of *The Labour Force* (Catalogue No. 6203.0. Previously Ref. No. 6.20).

TABLE 4. CIVILIAN POPULATION 15 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER (a), BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS
STATES AND TERRITORIES, NOVEMBER 1977

State or Territory	Employed (b)(c)			Unemployed (b)		Total labour force (b)		Not in labour force (b) ('000)	Civilian population aged 15 and over (a) ('000)
	Agri-culture ('000)	Other industries ('000)	Total ('000)	Number ('000)	Per cent of labour force (d)	Number ('000)	Per cent of population (f)		
MALES									
New South Wales	84.3	1,264.2	1,348.5	58.9	4.2	1,407.4	78.7	379.8	1,787.2
Victoria	65.9	964.1	1,030.0	44.0	4.1	1,074.0	80.0	268.6	1,342.5
Queensland	66.3	481.3	547.6	26.7	4.6	574.3	77.8	164.0	738.3
South Australia	31.2	319.1	350.3	17.4	4.7	367.7	79.8	93.2	460.9
Western Australia	35.1	292.4	327.5	13.8	4.0	341.3	79.6	87.5	428.8
Tasmania	8.7	101.0	109.6	4.7	4.1	114.3	77.4	33.5	147.8
Northern Territory	*	27.0	28.0	1.6	5.4	29.6	84.0	5.6	35.2
Australian Capital Territory	*	58.7	58.9	3.8	6.1	62.7	88.6	8.0	70.7
Australia	292.7	3,507.7	3,800.3	170.9	4.3	3,971.2	79.2	1,040.1	5,011.4
FEMALES									
New South Wales	21.5	715.0	736.5	52.0	6.6	788.5	42.7	1,059.0	1,847.5
Victoria	19.9	552.3	572.1	38.9	6.4	611.0	43.9	779.5	1,390.5
Queensland	19.2	256.3	275.5	19.5	6.6	295.1	39.3	456.1	751.1
South Australia	9.9	186.5	196.5	12.2	5.9	208.7	43.9	267.1	475.7
Western Australia	9.9	167.4	177.2	13.0	6.8	190.2	45.1	232.0	422.3
Tasmania	2.2	54.3	56.6	4.8	7.8	61.4	40.7	89.3	150.6
Northern Territory	*	14.5	14.5	*	*	15.6	50.9	15.0	30.6
Australian Capital Territory	*	35.7	35.7	1.9	4.9	37.5	51.2	35.8	73.4
Australia	82.6	1,981.9	2,064.5	143.4	6.5	2,208.0	42.9	2,933.8	5,141.8
PERSONS									
New South Wales	105.8	1,979.2	2,085.0	110.9	5.1	2,195.9	60.4	1,438.8	3,634.8
Victoria	85.7	1,516.3	1,602.1	82.9	4.9	1,685.0	61.7	1,048.0	2,733.0
Queensland	85.5	737.6	823.1	46.2	5.3	869.3	58.4	620.1	1,489.4
South Australia	41.2	505.6	546.8	29.6	5.1	576.4	61.5	360.2	936.6
Western Australia	45.0	459.8	504.7	26.8	5.0	531.5	62.5	319.5	851.0
Tasmania	10.9	155.3	166.2	9.5	5.4	175.7	58.9	122.7	298.4
Northern Territory	*	41.5	42.4	2.7	6.0	45.1	68.6	20.7	65.8
Australian Capital Territory	*	94.4	94.6	5.7	5.6	100.2	69.6	43.9	144.1
Australia	375.3	5,489.6	5,864.9	314.3	5.1	6,179.2	60.9	3,973.9	10,153.1

For footnotes see Table 1.

* Subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses.

NOTE. Standard errors of State estimates are available from the office of the Australian Bureau of Statistics in each State capital. See also Explanatory Notes, paragraphs 8 and 9.