

Introduction

The data in this chapter includes statistics on the labour force, forms of employment and industrial disputes. The data is from the original series, unless otherwise indicated. Data sources include the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS), the 1998 Forms of Employment Survey and the monthly Industrial Disputes Survey, all of which are conducted by the ABS.

The labour force concept is the basis for measuring employment and unemployment, and measures the total official supply of labour available. The labour force is broadly defined as persons aged 15 years and over who are either employed or unemployed in a given reference week. The employed can also be considered in terms of full-time and part-time status, which is determined by the number of hours worked per week. Part-time workers are those who usually work less than 35 hours per week. The labour force participation rate is the number of persons in the labour force as a percentage of the civilian population of working age (15 years and over), and serves as a measure of those participating in economic activity.

The ABS conducts a monthly household-based labour force survey which provides estimates at national, state and regional levels. This survey produces major statistical indicators such as the number of persons employed and unemployed. In the LFS, people are considered unemployed if they satisfy three criteria: they are not employed; they are available for work; and they are taking active steps to find full-time or part-time work. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of persons in the labour force.

The Forms of Employment survey was conducted in August 1998, as a supplement to the monthly LFS. This survey examined some of the key factors relating to the nature of employment arrangements.

Measures of industrial disputes are collected monthly by the ABS. An industrial dispute is defined as a withdrawal from work by a group of employees, or a refusal by an employer or a number of employers to permit some or all of their employees to work. The collection is restricted to stoppages and lockouts of 10 working days or more at the establishments where the stoppages occurred. These statistics are based on all disputes identified which occurred during the period.

The labour force

In August 2000, there were 2,413,300 persons in the Victorian labour force (table 5.1). This was comprised of 2,267,200 employed and 146,100 unemployed persons. The Victorian participation rate (which measures the number of persons in the labour force as a percentage of persons aged 15 years or more) was 63.1%. The unemployment rate (which measures the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the labour force) was 6.1%.

As a whole, the participation rate has remained steady at around 63% over the past six years, while the unemployment rate has declined from 8.3% in 1995 to 6.1% in 2000. The number of employed persons has increased over this period by 10.3%. A major factor contributing to the increase in the number of employed persons over this period has been a 7.1% increase in the Victorian population.

While full-time employment grew by only 6.8% between August 1995 and August 2000, part-time employment increased by 21.0%. Part-time employment as a proportion of total employment has increased from 25.1% in August 1995 to 27.6% in August 2000.

The unemployment rate is lower for females than males (5.8 to 6.3% respectively), however, part-time employment is significantly higher for females than for males. Females comprise 72.2% of all part-time workers, and 45.1% of all employed females are employed part-time, compared to only 13.7% of employed males. Growth in part-time employment, however, has been 31.0% for males since 1995, and 17.5% for females.

The participation rate for females increased between August 1995 and August 2000, while that for males decreased slightly. There remains, however, a significant difference between the participation rates of females and males (54.5% and 72.2% respectively).

5.1 LABOUR FORCE STATUS OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER

August	Employed			Unemployed		Labour force	Not in labour force	Unemployment rate	Participation rate
	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Total				
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	%	%
MALES									
1995	1 031.3	132.4	1 163.6	99.7	111.9	1 275.6	469.7	8.8	73.1
1996	1 046.4	137.2	1 183.7	98.1	111.5	1 295.1	470.5	8.6	73.4
1997	1 025.3	146.6	1 171.9	100.0	115.2	1 287.1	501.7	9.0	72.0
1998	1 050.0	156.9	1 206.8	87.4	103.9	1 310.8	504.0	7.9	72.2
1999	1 072.4	153.3	1 225.7	80.3	98.4	1 324.2	518.2	7.4	71.9
2000	1 092.4	173.5	1 265.9	66.1	84.5	1 350.4	521.2	6.3	72.2
FEMALES									
1995	507.2	384.1	891.3	49.5	72.9	964.2	860.4	7.6	52.8
1996	509.2	386.7	895.9	60.7	86.1	981.9	866.2	8.8	53.1
1997	499.9	395.2	895.1	57.5	86.4	981.5	889.8	8.8	52.5
1998	537.9	416.4	954.2	50.4	81.4	1 035.7	860.6	7.9	54.6
1999	527.8	425.5	953.3	38.4	67.4	1 020.6	902.3	6.6	53.1
2000	550.1	451.2	1 001.3	39.7	61.6	1 063.0	887.3	5.8	54.5
PERSONS									
1995	1 538.5	516.5	2 055.0	149.2	184.8	2 239.8	1 330.1	8.3	62.7
1996	1 555.6	523.9	2 079.5	158.8	197.5	2 277.1	1 336.7	8.7	63.0
1997	1 525.2	541.7	2 066.9	157.4	201.6	2 268.6	1 391.4	8.9	62.0
1998	1 587.9	573.2	2 161.1	137.8	185.4	2 346.4	1 364.6	7.9	63.2
1999	1 600.2	578.8	2 179.0	118.7	165.8	2 344.8	1 420.5	7.1	62.3
2000	1 642.4	624.7	2 267.2	105.8	146.1	2 413.3	1 408.5	6.1	63.1

Source: Labour Force, Victoria (Cat. no. 6202.2).

Unemployment

There have been marked changes in the duration of unemployment over the past five years. Between August 1995 and August 2000, the number of unemployed persons declined by 21%, however the number of persons unemployed for less than 13 weeks (short-term unemployed) increased by 8% (table 5.2). This was offset by falls of 37% in persons unemployed for between 13 and 52 weeks, and 29% for persons unemployed for 52 weeks or more (long-term unemployed). In August 2000, almost one-third of all unemployed persons were long-term unemployed. Long-term unemployment decreased in all age groups, with the smallest decline being for 15–19 year olds (4%).

The proportion of unemployed persons who were long-term unemployed in August 2000 increased with age, from 15% for 15–19 year olds to 41% for 45–54 year olds and 68% for persons aged 55 and over.

5.2 UNEMPLOYED PERSONS, By Age and Duration of Time

Duration of unemployment (weeks)	Age group (years)						Total
	15–19	20–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55 and over	
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
August 1995							
Under 13	10.8	12.2	10.8	13.0	6.2	*4.4	57.2
13 and under 52	16.3	13.7	18.2	7.6	8.5	*3.7	68.1
52 and over	4.8	6.3	13.2	14.8	12.6	7.8	59.5
Total	31.9	32.1	42.1	35.4	27.3	16.0	184.8
August 2000							
Under 13	14.4	12.2	14.7	10.5	8.3	*1.4	61.5
13 and under 52	10.8	9.9	8.5	8.0	*4.4	*1.1	42.7
52 and over	4.6	*4.0	11.2	8.3	8.9	5.0	42.0
Total	29.8	26.1	34.4	26.8	21.7	7.4	146.1

Source: Unpublished data, Labour Force Survey.

Age

Employment and unemployment characteristics vary markedly with age. Participation rates are highest amongst persons aged 20–54, ages traditionally associated with being in full-time employment, with 20–24 year olds having the highest participation rate of 82.0% (table 5.3). In contrast, the participation rate for 15–19 year olds is 53.6%, lower than any other age group below age 60. This age group also had the highest unemployment rate (17.0%). Of those persons who were employed, the 15–19 year old age group had the highest proportion in part-time work (69% of employed persons).

5.3 LABOUR FORCE STATUS OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER — August 2000

Age group (years)	Employed			Unemployed	Labour force	Not in labour force	Unemployment rate	Participation rate
	Full-time	Part-time	Total					
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	%	%
15–19	45.8	99.6	145.4	29.8	175.2	151.6	17.0	53.6
20–24	174.6	83.0	257.6	26.1	283.7	62.4	9.2	82.0
25–34	462.6	102.9	565.5	34.4	599.9	138.4	5.7	81.2
35–44	423.1	142.3	565.4	26.8	592.1	135.9	4.5	81.3
45–54	370.7	113.3	484.0	21.7	505.6	133.3	4.3	79.1
55–59	103.1	38.0	141.2	*3.9	145.1	93.1	*2.7	60.9
60–64	44.7	22.3	67.0	*3.5	70.5	127.1	*5.0	35.7
65 and over	17.9	23.3	41.2	*0.0	41.2	566.6	*0.0	6.8
Total	1 642.4	624.7	2 267.2	146.1	2 413.3	1 408.5	6.1	63.1

Source: Labour Force, Victoria (Cat. no. 6202.2).

Birthplace

In August 2000, one in four employed Victorians were born overseas (table 5.4). Participation rates for persons born overseas were generally lower than for those born in Australia. Persons born in the main English-speaking countries (United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, USA, Canada and New Zealand) had a higher labour force participation rate than those born elsewhere overseas (62.5% and 50.9% respectively), and a lower unemployment rate (4.9% and 7.9% respectively).

The only birthplace region having a higher participation rate than Australia is Oceania (excluding Australia), with 72.9%. The majority of persons in this group were born in New Zealand. The lowest participation rate was 45.6%, for persons born in the Middle East and North Africa.

5.4 LABOUR FORCE STATUS, By Birthplace — August 2000

	Employed full-time	Total employed	Total unemployed	Labour force	Not in labour force	Unemployment rate	Participation rate
	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000	%	%
Australia	1 216.8	1 709.7	104.6	1 814.3	833.9	5.8	68.5
Oceania (excluding Australia)	34.6	42.2	*2.9	45.2	16.8	*6.5	72.9
Europe	225.6	297.6	19.2	316.9	322.0	6.1	49.6
Middle East and North Africa	21.2	29.1	*2.8	32.0	38.2	*8.9	45.6
Southeast Asia	60.8	77.0	8.8	85.9	54.1	10.3	61.3
Northeast Asia	24.0	30.7	*1.5	32.2	31.9	*4.6	50.2
Southern Asia	28.0	38.8	*2.7	41.5	21.9	*6.4	65.4
The Americas	15.5	21.5	*1.8	23.3	12.0	*7.8	66.0
Africa (excluding North Africa)	15.8	20.3	*1.8	22.1	11.5	*8.0	65.7
Main English-speaking countries	135.0	181.9	9.5	191.4	114.6	4.9	62.5
Other than main English-speaking countries	290.7	375.6	32.1	407.6	393.9	7.9	50.9
Total born outside Australia	425.7	557.5	41.5	599.0	508.5	6.9	54.1

Source: Labour Force, Victoria (Cat. no. 6202.2).

Industry

The major employing industries in Victoria at August 2000 were manufacturing (370,100 persons), retail trade (316,400 persons) and property and business services (287,100 persons) (table 5.5). These industries accounted for 16.3%, 14% and 12.7% respectively, of employed persons.

There were marked differences by sex with regard to the industry of employment. Males dominated employment in construction (88% of employed persons), electricity, gas and water supply (88%) and transport and storage (74%). Females, on the other hand, comprised 76% of employment in health and community services and 70% of those employed in education.

In the 5 years from August 1995 to August 2000, the number of employed persons in Victoria increased by 10.3%. The largest increases were in property and business services (38.6%), communication services (35.6%) and cultural and recreational services (30.4%). In contrast, the electricity, gas and water supply sector recorded a 36.8% decline in employment, while employment in wholesale trade declined by 15.3% and government administration and defence by 12.7%.

5.5 EMPLOYED PERSONS, By Industry

	August 1995			August 2000		Change over 5 years
	Persons	Males	Females	Persons	Persons	
	'000	'000	'000	'000	%	
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	89.8	62.3	30.1	92.3	4.1	2.8
Mining	6.2	5.4	*2.0	7.4	0.3	19.4
Manufacturing	347.8	264.3	105.9	370.1	16.3	6.4
Electricity, gas and water supply	22.0	12.2	*1.7	13.9	0.6	-36.8
Construction	127.4	140.4	19.2	159.7	7.0	25.4
Wholesale trade	127.0	71.9	35.8	107.6	4.7	-15.3
Retail trade	298.1	149.4	167.0	316.4	14.0	6.1
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	80.8	41.8	54.7	96.5	4.3	19.4
Transport and storage	85.4	72.7	25.7	98.5	4.3	15.3
Communication services	41.3	37.8	18.2	56.0	2.5	35.6
Finance and insurance	87.8	42.2	48.5	90.8	4.0	3.4
Property and business services	207.2	157.8	129.4	287.1	12.7	38.6
Government administration and defence	81.3	31.6	39.3	71.0	3.1	-12.7
Education	148.9	47.5	108.3	155.8	6.9	4.6
Health and community services	186.3	50.9	161.1	212.0	9.4	13.8
Cultural and recreational services	48.7	35.5	28.0	63.5	2.8	30.4
Personal and other services	69.3	42.2	26.4	68.6	3.0	-1.0
Total all industries	2 055.0	1 265.9	1 001.3	2 267.2	100.0	10.3

Source: Labour Force, Victoria (Cat. no. 6202.2).

Occupation

In August 2000, professionals comprised one in five employed persons in Victoria, followed by intermediate clerical, sales and service workers (table 5.6). The largest occupation group for males was tradespersons and related workers (20.9%), and for females it was intermediate clerical, sales and service workers (25.7%). Females comprised 85.5% of advanced clerical, sales and service workers, while 91.2% of tradespersons and related workers were male.

5.6 EMPLOYED PERSONS, By Occupation — August 2000

	Number			Proportion		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
	'000	'000	'000	%	%	%
Managers and administrators	125.0	44.6	169.6	9.9	4.5	7.5
Professionals	222.9	224.8	447.7	17.6	22.4	19.7
Associate professionals	166.8	97.0	263.8	13.2	9.7	11.6
Tradespersons and related workers	264.6	25.4	290.0	20.9	2.5	12.8
Advanced clerical and service workers	16.1	94.7	110.8	1.3	9.5	4.9
Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers	97.4	257.6	355.0	7.7	25.7	15.7
Intermediate production and transport workers	174.6	32.5	207.0	13.8	3.2	9.1
Elementary clerical, sales and service workers	63.0	142.3	205.3	5.0	14.2	9.1
Labourers and related workers	135.5	82.5	217.9	10.7	8.2	9.6
Total all occupations	1 265.9	1 001.3	2 267.2	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Labour Force, Victoria (Cat. no. 6202.2).

Sector

In May 2000, there were an estimated 1,862,700 wage and salary earners in Victoria, the majority of whom (83%) were employed in the private sector (table 5.7). The proportion of persons employed in the private sector has increased from 79% in 1995 and is partially offset by a decline in the number of persons employed in the public sector. A notable fall has been employment in the Commonwealth Government in Victoria, which declined by 30,400 persons (35%) between 1995 and 2000.

5.7 WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS, Sector — Trend

	Private	Public			Total
		Commonwealth Government	State Government	Local Government	
May	'000	'000	'000	'000	'000
1995	1 373.1	85.8	230.1	40.4	1 729.4
1996	1 379.8	84.1	230.0	40.7	1 734.6
1997	1 412.6	65.9	218.6	40.0	1 737.1
1998	1 429.3	59.1	222.3	31.3	1 742.0
1999	1 493.5	53.4	219.3	31.1	1 797.3
2000	1 553.5	55.4	221.7	32.1	1 862.7

Source: Wage and Salary Earners, Australia (Cat. no. 6248.0).

Labour force regions

Labour force status varies considerably between regions (table 5.8). Of the civilian population aged 15 years and over, persons in metropolitan Melbourne had higher labour force participation than those in the balance of Victoria (64.0% compared to 60.8%) and lower unemployment (5.6% compared to 7.4%). In metropolitan Melbourne, 42.9% of employed females worked part-time compared to 51.7% in the balance of Victoria.

At the regional level there were even greater differences in labour force characteristics. The lowest unemployment rate (4.0%) was recorded in the Southern Melbourne region, and the highest (8.8%) in the Barwon-Western District region.

The regions with the highest and lowest participation rates were both in metropolitan Melbourne, these being Inner Melbourne (70.6%) and North-Western Melbourne (56.3%).

The proportion of total employed persons who were female varied from 48.7% in Inner Melbourne to 39.7% in the South-Eastern Melbourne region. Inner Melbourne also recorded the lowest proportion of employed females working part-time (27.8%), while the highest was in Loddon-Mallee (58.4%).

5.8 LABOUR FORCE STATUS, Labour Force Region(a) — August 2000

	Employed full-time		Employed part-time		Total employed '000	Unem- ployed '000	Labour force '000	Unem- ployment rate %	Parti- cipation rate %
	Males	Females	Males	Females					
	'000	'000	'000	'000					
Melbourne									
North Western Melbourne	55.8	30.0	5.2	18.7	109.8	10.4	120.2	8.7	56.3
Outer Western Melbourne	121.8	68.6	18.4	46.0	254.8	21.4	276.2	7.7	63.8
Inner Melbourne	56.7	47.1	12.1	18.1	134.0	6.9	140.9	4.9	70.6
North Eastern Melbourne	95.6	48.7	17.4	37.2	199.0	11.5	210.5	5.4	64.5
Inner Eastern Melbourne	140.7	80.3	25.1	58.1	304.3	15.0	319.4	4.7	64.3
Southern Melbourne	86.6	44.1	15.2	42.1	187.9	7.9	195.8	4.0	62.3
Outer Eastern Melbourne	110.1	49.3	14.1	43.3	216.8	10.9	227.6	4.8	68.5
South Eastern Melbourne	88.8	38.5	11.4	27.5	166.2	9.4	175.6	5.4	62.6
Mornington Peninsula	55.9	22.2	7.0	30.4	115.5	6.5	122.0	5.3	61.5
<i>Total Melbourne</i>	<i>812.0</i>	<i>428.8</i>	<i>125.9</i>	<i>321.6</i>	<i>1 688.3</i>	<i>99.9</i>	<i>1 788.1</i>	<i>5.6</i>	<i>64.0</i>
Balance of Victoria									
Barwon–Western District	75.7	33.9	12.8	30.7	153.2	14.7	167.9	8.8	58.9
Central Highlands–Wimmera	48.0	20.0	8.8	21.9	98.6	7.3	105.9	6.9	63.3
Loddon–Mallee	48.9	18.9	8.5	26.5	102.8	5.2	108.0	4.9	59.4
Goulburn–Ovens–Murray	65.2	29.5	9.6	29.4	133.8	10.6	144.4	7.3	63.2
All Gippsland	42.6	19.0	7.9	21.1	90.6	8.4	99.0	8.5	59.9
<i>Total Balance of Victoria</i>	<i>280.4</i>	<i>121.3</i>	<i>47.6</i>	<i>129.6</i>	<i>578.9</i>	<i>46.3</i>	<i>625.2</i>	<i>7.4</i>	<i>60.8</i>
Total Victoria	1 092.4	550.1	173.5	451.2	2 267.2	146.1	2 413.3	6.1	63.1

(a) Refer to Appendix for map displaying Labour Force Statistical Regions.

Source: *Labour Force, Victoria* (Cat. no. 6202.2).

Forms of employment

In Victoria in August 1998, 1,299,100 (61.0%) of employed persons were employees with leave entitlements, slightly higher than the 58.8% recorded for Australia (table 5.9). There were a significant number of Victorians employed as self-identified casuals (15.7%).

5.9 EMPLOYED PERSONS: EMPLOYMENT TYPES — August 1998

Employment Types	Victoria		Australia	
	'000	%	'000	%
Employees with leave entitlements	1 299.1	61.0	4 939.7	58.8
Self-identified casuals	333.9	15.7	1 486.9	17.7
Other employed persons	80.4	3.8	299.5	3.6
Owner managers of incorporated enterprises	172.5	8.1	590.9	7.0
Owner managers of unincorporated enterprises	244.7	11.5	1 078.8	12.8
Total	2 130.6	100.0	8 395.8	100.0

Source: *Forms of Employment* (Cat. no. 6359.0).

In August 1998, the majority (57.7%) of employed persons in Victoria preferred no change to their hours of work (table 5.10). This percentage was similar for full-time and part-time workers, 58.6% and 55.1% respectively, and was also similar to those for Australia. In contrast, for those who did prefer to change their hours of work, a marked difference was shown between full-time and part-time workers. Among full-time workers, 28.2% preferred to work fewer hours, and only 8.5% preferred more hours; while among part-time workers, 34.6% preferred more hours, while only 5.7% preferred fewer hours.

5.10 EMPLOYED PERSONS, PREFERENCE TO CHANGE HOURS — August 1998

Preference to change hours	Victoria		Australia	
	'000	%	'000	%
Full-time workers				
Prefers more hours	134.0	8.5	655.9	10.5
Prefers fewer hours	443.9	28.2	1 699.5	27.2
Prefers no change	920.6	58.6	3 607.5	57.7
Did not work last week	73.3	4.7	284.7	4.6
<i>Total</i>	<i>1 571.7</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>6 247.5</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Part-time workers				
Prefers more hours(a)	193.6	34.6	766.2	35.7
Prefers fewer hours	31.9	5.7	128.0	6.0
Prefers no change	308.0	55.1	1 145.1	53.3
Did not work last week	25.3	4.5	108.9	5.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>558.9</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>2 148.2</i>	<i>100.0</i>

(a) This category combines responses to two separate questions by different groups of employed persons.

Source: *Forms of Employment (Cat. no. 6359.0)*.

Industrial disputes

For the third consecutive year, the number of industrial disputes in Victoria has increased, from 98 in 1996, to 240 in 1999 (table 5.11). The largest increase occurred between 1998 and 1999 when the number of disputes increased by 75% (from 137 to 240). The number of employees involved in industrial disputes increased by 37% between 1998 and 1999, while working days lost increased by only 9%.

Overall, the duration of disputes between 1998 and 1999 has decreased, as has the number of employees involved per dispute. The average number of employees involved per dispute decreased from 897 to 700, while average working days lost per dispute decreased from 1,460 to 909.

5.11 INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

	Total disputes	Total employees involved	Working days lost	Working days lost per thousand employees
	no.	'000	'000	'000
1994	109	52.2	87.0	52.0
1995	110	79.0	126.1	72.0
1996	98	121.1	218.1	122.0
1997	112	129.1	212.1	118.0
1998	137	122.9	200.0	108.0
1999	240	168.1	218.2	116.0

Source: *Industrial Disputes, Australia (Cat. no. 6321.0)*; Unpublished data, *Industrial Disputes Survey*.

During 1999, the highest level of disputation occurred in the manufacturing industry which accounted for 57.5% of working days lost and 42% of all employees involved in disputes (table 5.12). The construction industry accounted for 29.1% of working days lost and 40% of all employees involved. There were 1.8 working days lost per employee involved in the manufacturing industry, compared with only 0.9 in the construction industry. This compares to the average number of working days lost per employee involved in Victoria, of 1.3.

5.12 INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES BY INDUSTRY — Year ended December 1998

	Disputes(a)	Employees involved	Working days lost	
			'000	%
Agriculture	n.p.	0.2	0.2	0.1
Mining	5	0.6	0.8	0.4
Manufacturing	100	71.4	125.5	57.5
Electricity, gas and water supply	11	1.4	2.9	1.3
Construction	86	67.8	63.4	29.1
Wholesale and retail trade, cafes and accommodation	8	0.7	1	0.5
Transport and storage	16	6.2	4.3	2
Communication services	5	0.7	0.6	0.3
Finance insurance, property and business services	14	1.4	3.7	1.7
Government administration and defence	4	0.8	0.6	0.3
Education, health and community services	11	13.2	12.6	5.8
Cultural, recreational, personal and other services	4	3.8	2.5	1.1
Total(b)	240	168.1	218.2	100.0

(a) A dispute affecting more than one industry is counted once in each industry but only once at the broader industry level. (b) Sum of components may not equal totals due to rounding.

Source: *Industrial Disputes, Australia* (Cat. no. 6321.0); *Unpublished data, Industrial Disputes Survey*.

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