

Senate Standing Committee on Education and Employment

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE Budget Estimates 2015 - 2016

Outcome 2 - Workplace Relations and Economic Strategy

Department of Employment Question No. EMSQ15-000109

Senator O'Neill asked on 01 June 2015 on proof Hansard page 113

Question

Casual employment breakdown

Senator O'NEILL: In terms of your measurements, then, and going to casuals, Dr Morehead made a claim that there has been a degree of sustainability of numbers of people in casual employment, at 24 per cent of the population—2.2 million. Could you break that information down for me by region and age.

Dr Morehead: We could do that, but we would have to take that on notice. I do not have that with me.

Senator O'NEILL: Are there any trends that are differentiating themselves across the country in terms of casual employment?

Dr Morehead: We would have to take that on notice, and it is probably best to do that by an industry breakdown as well.

Ms Parker: We might be able to. As you would know, Senator, there are certainly regions that are struggling more than others, so it probably does follow that there would be more casuals or others in those kinds of regions, but we will need to take that on notice.

Senator O'NEILL: I might have a few more detailed questions around that, but essentially, given the broader understanding of insecure work—not completely limiting it to casually employed people—what percentage of the working population is in essentially insecure work in its broadest definition? Could you provide some detail about that by region and by age, on notice.

Ms Leon: I do not think we would call it insecure work, for the reasons that I have attempted to outline. The term that is defined as a form of employment is 'casual work'. We can provide you with some data about casual work.

Answer

In November 2013, there were 2.2 million casual employees. In total, 23.5 per cent of employees were employed on a casual basis. The proportion of casual employees has remained fairly consistent over the past two decades.¹

The ABS produces data on casual employment in a number of publications², however these publications do not contain data on casual employment by regions.

The following tables provide casual employment by age (Table 1), industry (Table 2) and state and territory (Table 3).

¹ ABS, *Forms of Employment*, November 2013, Cat. No. 6359.0

² For example: ABS, *Forms of Employment*, November 2013, Cat. No. 6359.0; ABS, *Employee Earnings, Benefits and Trade Union Membership*, August 2013, Cat. No. 6310.0; ABS, *Employee Earnings and Hours*, May 2014, Cat. No. 6306.0.

Table 1: Casual employment by age groups, November 2013

	Number ('000)	Percentage (%)	Proportion of employees working casually (%)
15-19	441.1	19.6	71.4
20-24	453.7	20.2	40.3
25-34	451.2	20.1	18.8
35-44	308.3	13.7	14.9
45-54	312.0	13.9	16.0
55-59	117.0	5.2	15.7
60-64	89.7	4.0	20.1
65 +	76.6	3.4	35.0
Total	2,249.7	100.0	23.5

Source: ABS, *Forms of Employment*, November 2013, Cat. No. 6359.0

Table 2: Casual employment by industry, November 2013

	Number ('000)	Percentage (%)	Proportion of employees working casually (%)
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	70.2	3.1	47.2
Mining	26.3	1.2	9.5
Manufacturing	138.2	6.1	16.8
Electricity, gas and water and waste services	18.8	0.8	12.3
Construction	130.1	5.8	20.8
Wholesale trade	42.2	1.9	12.4
Retail trade	451.0	20.0	40.2
Accommodation and food services	440.0	19.6	64.6
Transport, postal and warehousing	112.4	5.0	23.0
Information media and telecommunications	23.7	1.1	14.2
Financial and insurance services	20.1	0.9	5.7
Rental, hiring and real estate services	26.4	1.2	18.3
Professional, scientific and technical services	76.2	3.4	12.3
Administrative and support services	87.9	3.9	32.7
Public administration and safety	69.3	3.1	9.3
Education and training	155.8	6.9	18.5
Health care and social assistance	239.0	10.6	18.6
Arts and recreation services	65.2	2.9	41.6
Other services	56.9	2.5	17.2
Total	2,249.7	100.0	23.5

Source: ABS, *Forms of Employment*, November 2013, Cat. No. 6359.0

Table 3: Casual employment by state and territory, November 2013

	Number ('000)	Percentage (%)	Proportion of employees working casually (%)
New South Wales	703.5	30.6	23.4
Victoria	532.8	23.1	22.7
Queensland	520.8	22.6	26.1
South Australia	185.7	8.1	27.7
Western Australia	257.5	11.2	23.1
Tasmania	47.0	2.0	24.6
Northern Territory	22.3	1.0	19.5
Australian Capital Territory	32.7	1.4	17.5
Australia	2,302.3	100.0	23.9

Source: ABS, *Australian Labour Market Statistics*, Cat. No. 6105.0

Note: The totals in this chart differ slightly to the totals in Tables 1 and 2 because the data are from different publications.