

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN YOUTH REPORT



**Labour Economics Office
Western Australia**

**Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
(DEWR)**

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
SUMMARY.....	2
LABOUR MARKET.....	4
Employment.....	5
Unemployment.....	6
Unemployment Rates.....	7
Duration of Unemployment.....	8
Participation Rates.....	9
Underemployment.....	11
Regional Data.....	12
Employment by Industry.....	12
Employment by Occupation.....	13
Population / Working Age Projections.....	16
SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION.....	18
Age Participation Rates.....	18
Retention Rates.....	18
Proportion of Youth Studying/Not Studying.....	20
Transition from Year 12 to Higher Education.....	21
Type of Educational Institution Attended.....	21
Educational Attainment and Gender.....	22
Educational Attainment and Labour Force Status.....	23

INTRODUCTION

This report analyses information on the youth labour market and transitional issues from education to work.

The definition of “youth” for this report is 15-24 year olds. The report also differentiates between the age cohorts of 15-19 year olds (referred to as “teenagers”) and 20-24 year olds (referred to as “young adults”), as there are significant differences between the labour market and educational experiences of the two groups.

Information in this report has been derived from published and unpublished data from various sources including the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) and the Department of Education Services.

Because the employment data used in this report have been derived from the ABS 1996 Census and the Labour Force Survey (LFS), some data may appear inconsistent. The monthly LFS is the source of Australia’s official estimates of employment and unemployment. It is a household based sample survey (the sample is made up of householders in a range of dwelling types). The LFS also provides a time series for many labour market characteristics. The Census is conducted every five years and is a full count of all usual residents in Australia. Data from the LFS and the Census are not strictly comparable because of differences in the scope, coverage, timing, measurement of the underlying labour force concepts and collection methodology between the Census and LFS sample. These can result in statistically significant differences between published LFS estimates and Census data.

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SUMMARY

- o Nearly two-thirds (63.9%) of youth aged 15-24 years in WA were employed in 2001. Of those employed, 57.0 per cent were employed full-time.
- o The majority (58.8%) of teenagers were either attending school or a tertiary institution in 2001, however, many were also employed or looking for work, generally on a part-time basis. Teenage full-time employment has declined significantly over the last decade. In 1991, 53.1 per cent of teenagers were employed on a full-time basis compared with 38.1 per cent last year.
- o Over 80 per cent (81.3%) of young adults were in the labour force, with the majority employed on a full-time basis during 2001. However, over the last decade part-time employment for 20-24 year olds has increased at a much faster rate than full-time employment and now represents nearly 30 per cent (28.7%) of employment in this age group.
- o During 2001 there was an average of 15,600 teenagers and 12,800 young adults unemployed in WA. Of these 19,200 were neither attending school or a tertiary institution, and were seeking full-time work.
- o The teenage (15-19 year old) unemployment rate is traditionally higher than that of young adults (20-24 year old) which is also higher than for the total labour force. In 2001 the average unemployment rate for teenagers in WA was 16.7 per cent, 11.1 per cent for young adults and 5.1 per cent for those aged 25 and over and 6.8 per cent for the total labour force.
- o Nearly two-thirds (64.4%) of the young unemployed and seeking full-time employment last year were males. This is slightly less than for the total labour force where 68.5 per cent of the unemployed seeking full-time work were males.
- o The average duration of unemployment for teenagers in 2001 was 18.5 weeks compared with 31.8 weeks for young adults and 36.4 weeks for the total labour force.
- o The average participation rate for 15-19 year olds during 2001 was 66.1 per cent, slightly below the average for the total labour force of 66.8 per cent. Young adults, however, traditionally have the highest participation rate of any age cohort, and in 2001 the average for this age group was 81.8 per cent.
- o Nearly half (47.9%) of all employed teenagers worked in the retail industry in 1999, with the concentration of female teenagers even higher than for males. Young adults are also more likely to be employed in the retail sector compared to other industries, although the distribution is more evenly spread across a range of industries.
- o Teenagers traditionally find employment in occupations that do not require extensive formal training or skills. Nearly one in five are employed as sales assistants, while a further 10 per cent work as miscellaneous elementary sales workers (mainly check out operators). Although the largest occupational category for young adults is also that of sales worker, it is at the intermediate rather than the elementary level. The occupational distribution is also more evenly spread and similar to that for all employed persons.

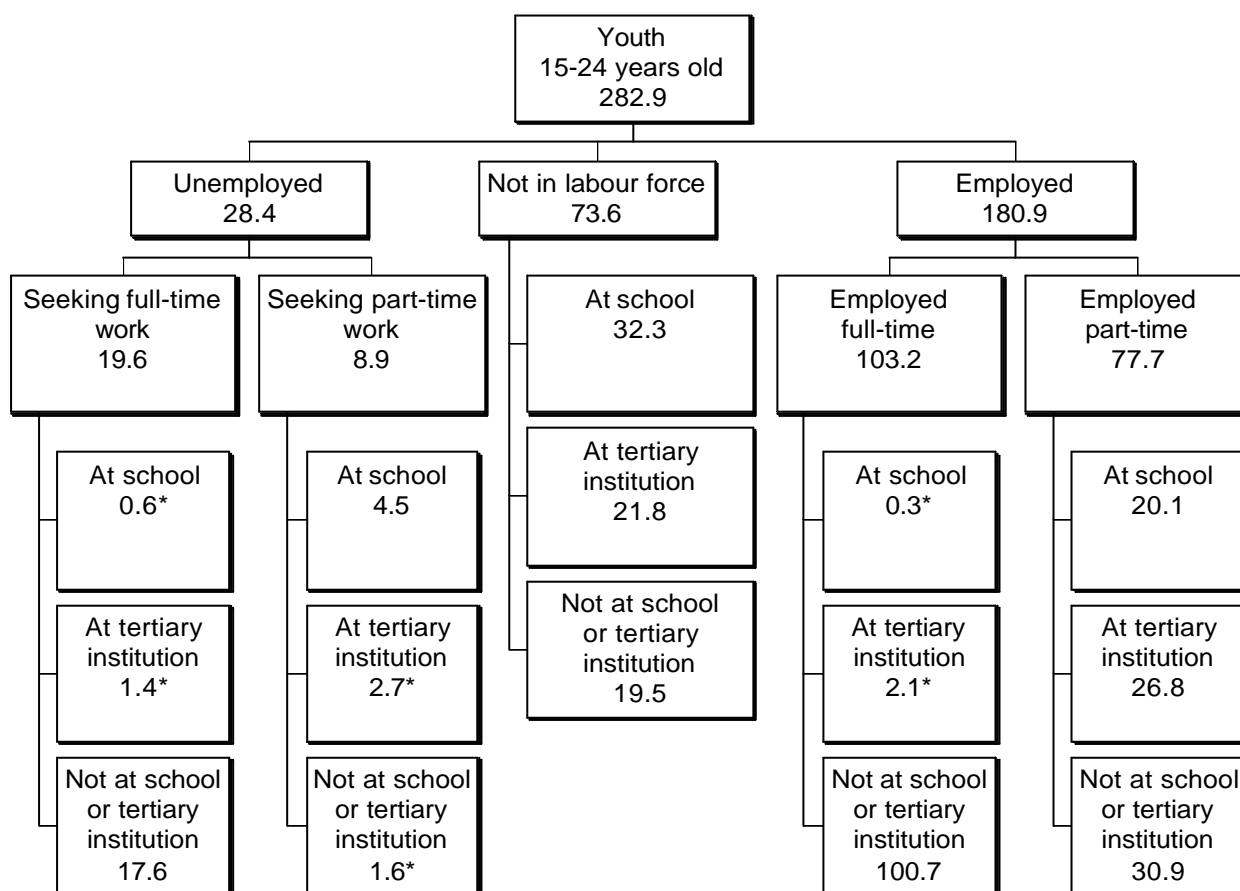
- o In 2000 42.7 per cent of 15-19 year olds in WA remained at school, with the female participation rate generally higher than for males.
- o The retention rate of WA students who remained on to Year 12 was 70.5 per cent in 2001.
- o Of all enrolments in educational institutions in WA in 2000, 29.9 per cent were in schools, 28.5 per cent were in higher education institutions, 30.2 per cent were in TAFE and 11.4 per cent were at other forms of educational institutions.
- o Nearly thirty per cent (29.7%) Year 12 students progressed to higher education in 2001.
- o In May 2000 those persons aged 15-64 with post-school qualifications have an unemployment rate more than 3 percentage points lower than those without post-school qualifications. They also have a significantly higher participation rate and are more likely to be employed full-time than part-time.

LABOUR MARKET

Introduction

There was an average of approximately 282,800 persons aged between 15 and 24 years in Western Australia (WA) in 2001. Of these 138 900 were teenagers aged between 15-19 and 140 800 were young adults aged between 20-24 years old. On average last year, 64.0 per cent of these persons were employed, 26.0 per cent were not in the labour force and 10.0 per cent were unemployed. However, as Chart 1 indicates, a significant proportion of those who were employed (particularly those employed part-time) were also attending an educational institution.

Chart 1: Labour Force Status of Youth in Western Australia, 2001¹ ('000s)



¹ The data are derived from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Labour Force Survey (non seasonally adjusted). They have been averaged over the 12 months from January to December 2001 to minimise seasonal variations.

* The Labour Force Survey data consists of estimates derived from a sample of the population and is subject to standard error. Estimates of 3,000 or less are subject to a high standard error (more than 25%) and should be used with caution.

Table 1: Labour Force Status of the Civilian Population Aged 15-24 Years in WA, 2001

	Attending school		15 - 19 years				Attending school		20 - 24 years			
	('000s)	%	Attending tertiary institution		Neither attending school or tertiary institution		('000s)	%	Attending tertiary institution		Neither attending school or tertiary institution	
Full-time employed	0.3*	0.5	0.7*	2.6	28.6	50.6	-	-	1.5*	5.3	72.1	63.4
Part-time employed	20.1	34.8	14.2	52.8	14.0	24.7	-	-	12.7	45.2	16.9	14.9
Unemployed- seeking full-time work	0.6*	1.0	0.8*	2.9	7.2	12.8	-	-	0.6*	2.1	10.4	9.1
Unemployed- seeking part-time work	4.5	7.8	1.6*	6.0	0.9*	1.7	-	-	1.1*	3.9	0.7*	0.6
Not in labour force	32.3	55.9	9.6	35.7	5.8	10.3	-	-	12.2	43.4	13.6	12.0
Total	57.8	100	26.9	100	56.5	100	0	0	28.1	100	113.7	100

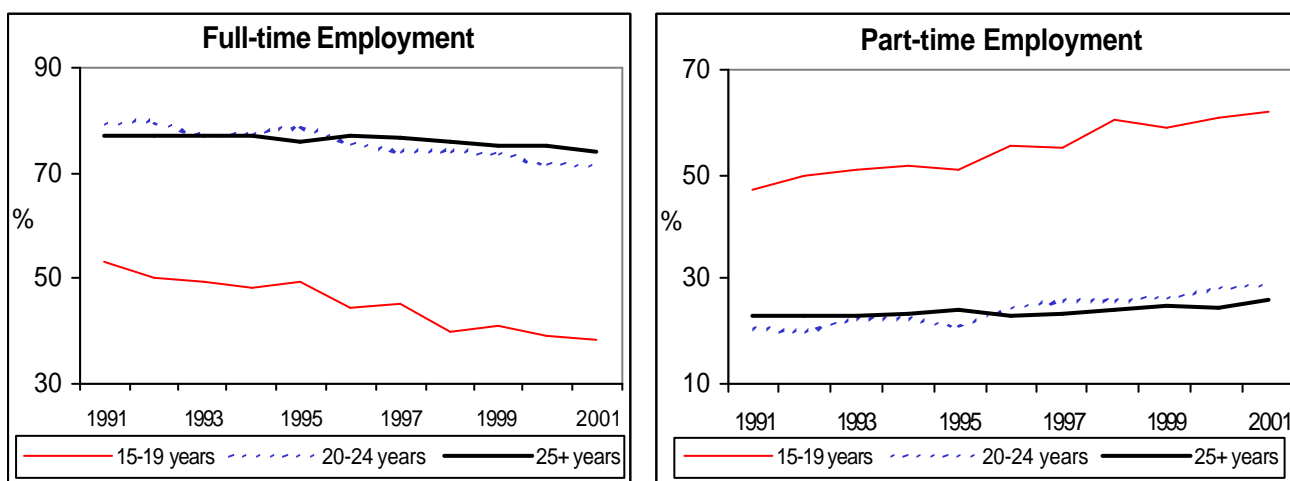
* Estimates of 3,000 or less are subject to a high standard error (more than 25%) and should be used with caution.
 Source: ABS Labour Force Survey. (Data have been averaged annually to smooth the seasonal effects)

Employment

The most significant factor that emerges when analysing the youth labour market is the changes in part-time and full-time employment, particularly for teenagers.

As Figure 1 illustrates, the proportion of teenagers employed full-time (as a proportion of total employment) has fallen 15.0 percentage points from 53.1 cent in 1991 to 38.1 per cent in 2001. This has been associated with an increase in the proportion of part-time work available and a concomitant increase in participation in education over this period. The proportion of teenagers employed part-time during this 10 year period has increased from 46.9 cent to 61.9 per cent, whilst the proportion of teenagers attending educational institutions has increased from 55.6 per cent in 1991 to 59.9 per cent in 2001.

Figure 1: Proportion in Full-time and Part-time Employment WA



Source: ABS Labour Force Survey (Data have been averaged annually to smooth the seasonal effects)

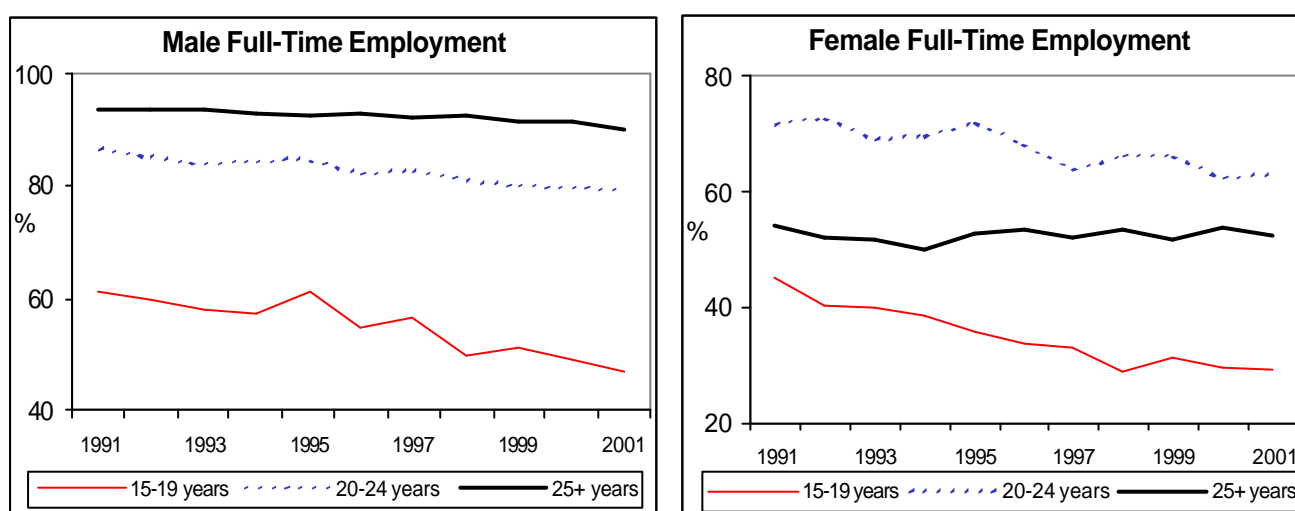
While full-time employment for 20-24 year olds has also declined over the last decade, it has been to a less significant extent than for teenagers. Since 1991, full-time employment for young adults has declined from 79.3 per cent to 71.3 per cent in 2001 and part-time employment has increased from 20.7 per cent to

28.7 per cent over that period. Full-time employment for the 25 years and over group has also decreased slightly over the decade from 77.0 per cent to 74.1 per cent.

The reasons for the decline in employment, particularly full-time employment for youth, are many. They include a recognition of the importance of qualifications and skills acquisition for employment combined with government policies which have resulted in increased school retention. However, relatively depressed economic conditions and diminishing job opportunities for teenagers can lead to what is called the “discouraged worker effect” which results in teenagers remaining at school rather than enter a weak labour market.

As the following graphs show, the fall in full-time employment has impacted more on teenagers (female full-time employment has fallen 16.0 percentage points while male full-time employment has fallen 13.9 percentage points between 1991 and 2001) than young adults and those over 25 years over the last decade. This has been associated with a commensurate increase in educational participation.

Figure 2: Proportion in Full-time Employment in WA - Male and Female



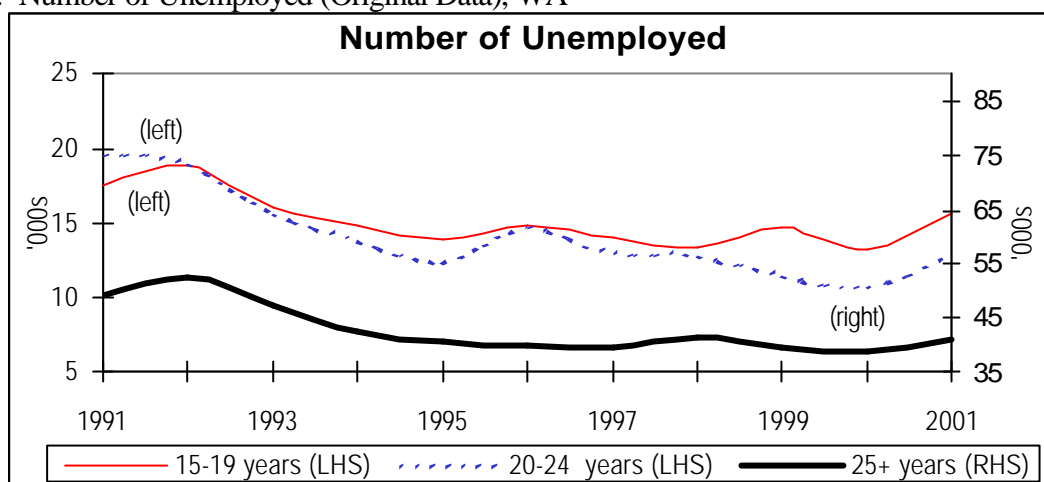
Source: ABS Labour Force Survey (Data have been averaged annually to smooth the seasonal effects)

Unemployment

There is much media coverage and community concern about youth unemployment. It is important to stress that discussion about youth unemployment generally refers to teenagers only. The official youth unemployment rate reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and that are usually cited by the media is for 15-19 year olds seeking full-time work as a proportion of the 15-19 year old *full-time* labour force (ie. those employed full-time or unemployed and seeking full-time work). However, well over half of this age group (59.9% on average in WA in 2001) are either at school or a tertiary institution and are therefore highly unlikely to be in the full-time labour force. As a result, this figure is always considerably higher than for the other age cohorts where a much greater proportion of the population is in the labour force. It is therefore important to distinguish between the two age cohorts and, for teenagers between those seeking full-time work and those, predominantly students, seeking part-time work.

For this reason, it is useful to refer to Figure 3 which depicts the actual number of unemployed persons since 1991. The total number of unemployed has fallen from the peak of 1992 to an average of 15,600 teenagers, 12,800 young adults and 41,000 persons 25 and over looking for work in 2001.

Figure 3: Number of Unemployed (Original Data), WA



LHS – left hand side, RHS – right hand side

Source: ABS Labour Force Survey (Data have been averaged annually to smooth the seasonal effects)

Of the total labour force in 2001, an average of 67.0 per cent of those unemployed and seeking full-time employment were male. The gender imbalance is slightly less for unemployed youth with 57.4 per cent of all teenagers seeking full-time work being male, but even greater for young adults with 69.8 per cent of the total number being males seeking full-time employment.

Unemployment Rates

The following table highlights the difference in the representation of the unemployment rate. The *full-time unemployment rate* is the number of people seeking full-time employment as a proportion of the full-time labour force. The *unemployment rate* is the proportion of people unemployed seeking work (either full or part-time) of the total labour force. The *unemployment to population rate* is the proportion of the population seeking work (either full or part-time) of the total population (either in the labour force or not in the labour force).

Table 2: Full-time, Total Unemployment Rates and Unemployment to Population Rate, 2001, WA*

	15-19 Years	20-24 Years	25+ Years	Total Labour Force
Full-time Unemployment Rate	21.0	11.9	5.5	7.3
Unemployment Rate	16.7	11.1	5.1	6.8
Unemployment to Population Rate	11.1	9.0	3.3	4.6

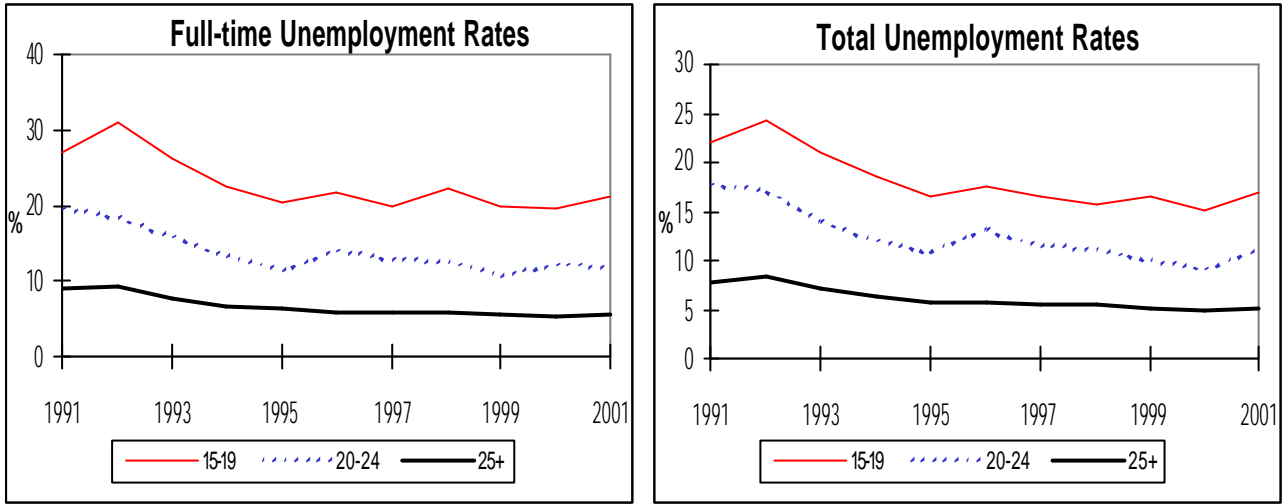
* Original Data

Source : ABS Labour Force Survey (Data have been averaged annually to smooth the seasonal effects)

Regardless of how it is measured, it is evident that the unemployment rate for teenagers and young adults is significantly above that for those aged 25 and over.

The following graphs indicate how the unemployment rates for all age cohorts but particularly youth have fluctuated over the last decade. All peaked in the recession of the early 1990s and despite slowly dropping over the last six years have not fallen to the pre-recession levels.

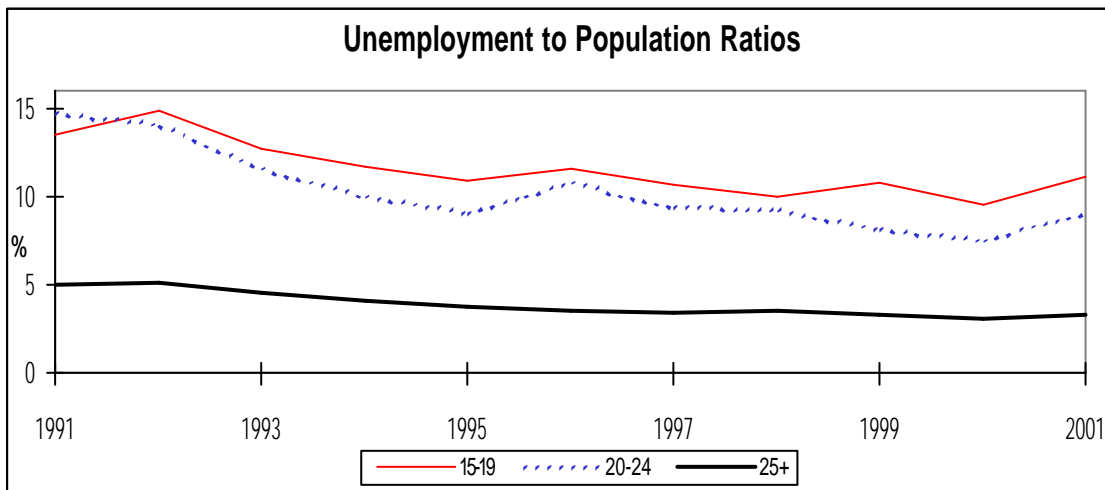
Figure 4: Youth Unemployment WA - Full-time and Total Unemployment Rates



Source: ABS Labour Force Survey (Data have been averaged annually to smooth the seasonal effects)

The unemployment to population rate picture basically replicates the full-time and total unemployment rates. Interestingly, the number of unemployed 20-24 year olds peaked one year earlier in 1991 than for the rest of the labour force. This increase in the number of unemployed young adults was associated with a large increase in those not in the labour force.

Figure 5: Youth Unemployment WA - Unemployment to Population Rate



Source: ABS Labour Force Survey (Data have been averaged annually to smooth the seasonal effects)

Duration of Unemployment

As might be expected, the period of unemployment for youth is significantly lower than for the total labour force. In 2001, the average duration of unemployment since the last full-time job for teenagers was 18.5 weeks whilst young adults were, on average, unemployed for 31.8 weeks before securing a full-time job.

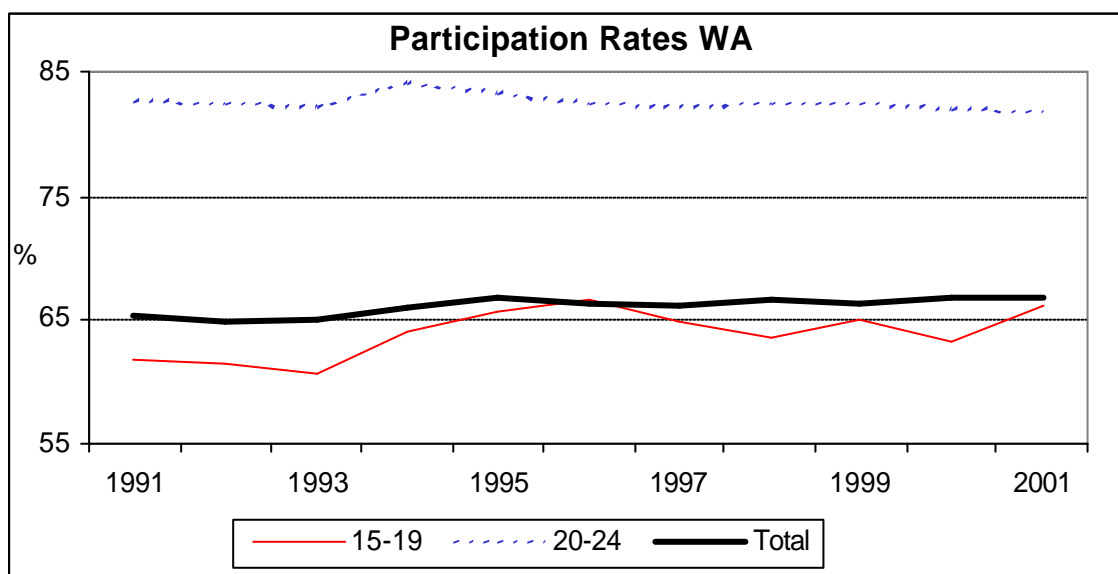
This compares with the total labour force where the average duration of unemployment was 36.4 weeks since the last full-time job. The proportion of young people who are long-term unemployed (LTU) for a period of 52 weeks or more of the total number unemployed and looking for full-time employment is also relatively low. For 15-19 year olds, the average proportion in 2001 of LTU was 11.0 per cent, for 20-24 year olds it was 19.1 per cent while for the total labour force it was 20.2 per cent.

Participation Rates

The participation rate measures the proportion of the civilian population 15 and over who are in the labour force (employed and unemployed persons) and generally is influenced by both sex and age.

Until the early 1990s, the teenage participation rate in Western Australia was generally lower than the participation rate for the population as a whole, however, teenage participation rates have been increasing over the last decade. The average participation rate for teenagers has increased from an average of 61.8 per cent in 1991 to 66.1 per cent in 2001, just below the average for the total labour force of 66.8 per cent in 2001. The participation rate for the 20-24 age group has varied only slightly over the last decade. However, the 2001 average of 81.8 per cent was the lowest it has been in the last decade and is well down on the peak of 84.2 per cent in 1994.

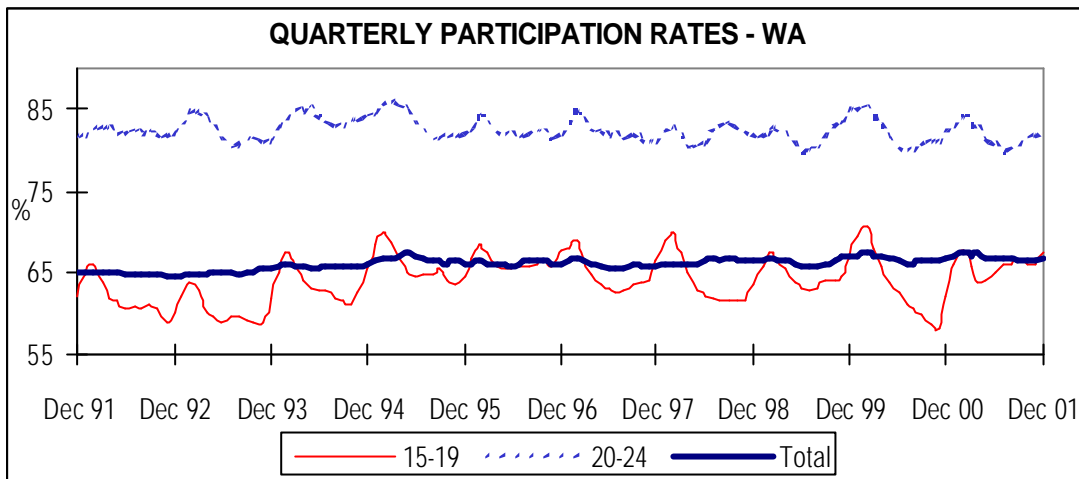
Figure 6: Participation Rates WA



Source: ABS Labour Force Survey (Data has been averaged annually)

Figure 7 illustrates the seasonal variation of the participation rate for teenagers with it peaking in December/January as school leavers enter the labour market. A significant proportion of these subsequently return to study or exit the labour market for other reasons. However, as school leavers and those attending tertiary institutions have generally entered the labour force permanently by their early twenties, the participation rate increases for the 20-24 year olds with this age cohort actually having the highest level of any age cohort. While the participation rate for young adults is also affected by seasonality, it is to a far lesser extent than teenagers.

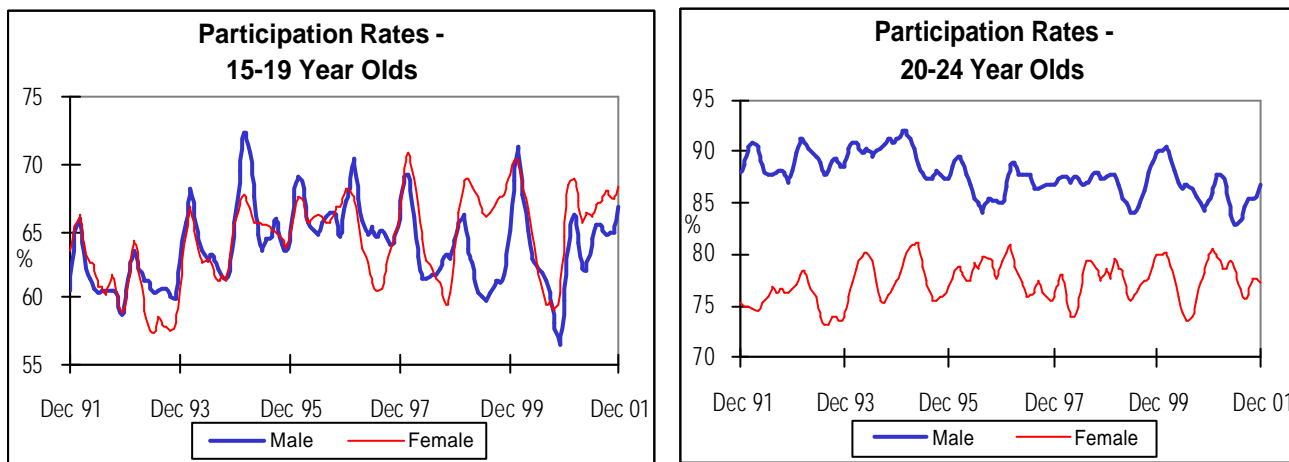
Figure 7: Quarterly Participation Rates WA



Source: ABS Labour Force Survey (Data has been averaged quarterly by 3 month moving average)

It is evident from the following graphs, that the participation rates for both male and female teenagers are roughly the same. However, in the early twenties the male and female participation rates start to diverge as females leave the labour market. The participation rate then continues to decline as parents (mainly women) tend to leave the labour force to raise children. It increases again in the 35 to 44 year old age cohort as many women with children seek employment again. The participation rate declines for those older than 54 years as people retire from the labour force.

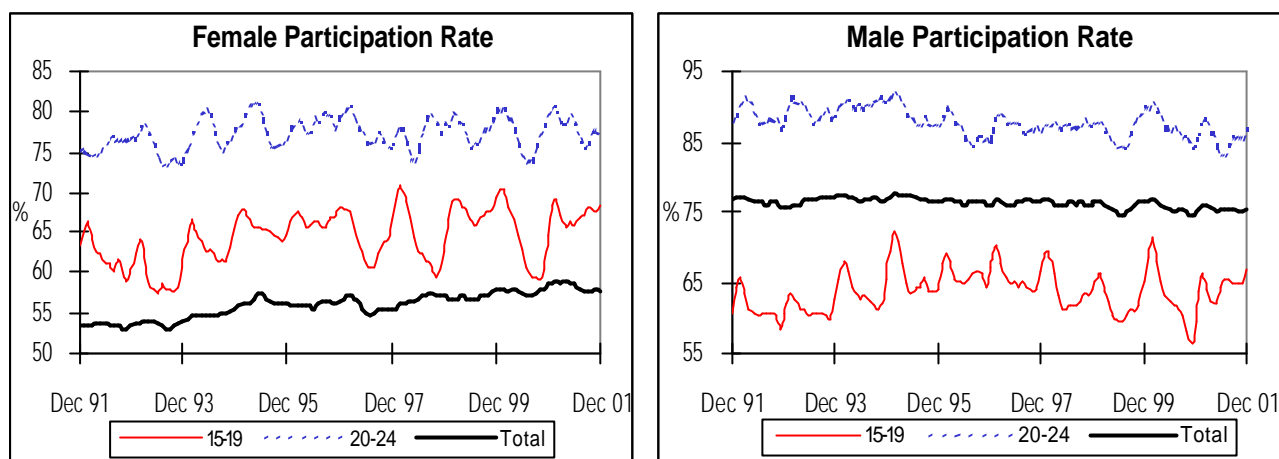
Figure 8: Youth Participation Rates WA - Teenagers and Young Adults



Source: ABS Labour Force (Data have been averaged quarterly using a 3 month moving average)

Nevertheless as the following graphs indicate, the female participation rates for both the 15-19 year old and 20-24 year old groups are still considerably above the average for all females, whereas the teenage male participation rate is significantly below that for all males in the labour force while the young adults rate is well above the average rate.

Figure 9: Youth Participation Rates, WA – Female and Male



Source: ABS Labour Force (Data have been averaged quarterly using a 3 month moving average)

Underemployment

Underemployed persons can be defined as those who are working part-time (ie less than 35 hours per week), but would prefer to work more hours. As Table 4 indicates, underemployment is by far the greatest amongst the 20-24 year old age group, followed by the 15-19 year old group

Table 3: Underemployment in Western Australia, 2001

	15-19	20-24	Total
Employed part-time	47.5	28.0	268.4
Preferred to work more hours	14.7	10.3	65.9
% Underemployed	30.8	36.8	24.5

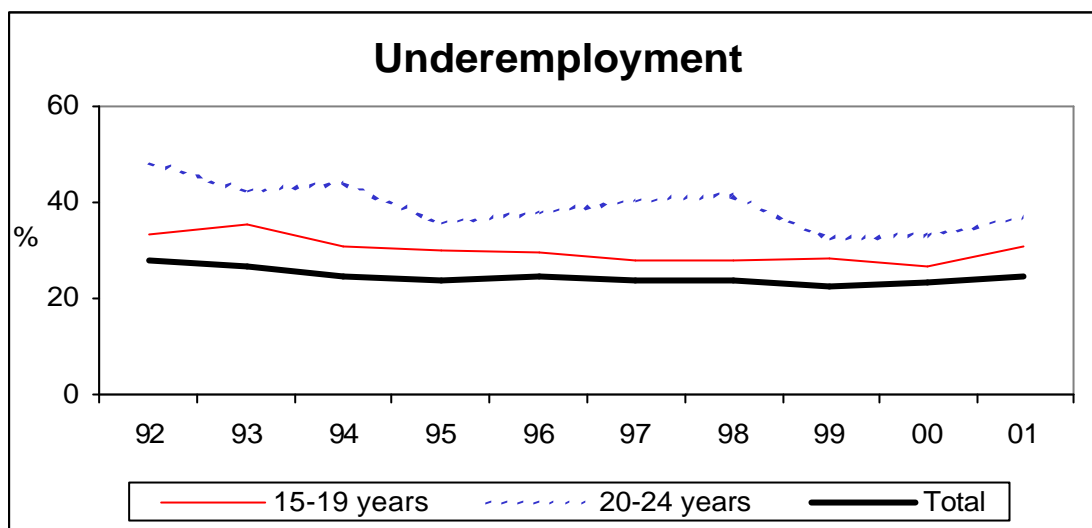
Source: ABS Labour Force Survey (Data has been averaged annually)

The following graph shows that the proportion of underemployed youth has generally followed the pattern of underemployment in the total population over the last decade. Although underemployment was lower in 2001 than it was ten years ago, it was up significantly on last year for the 15-19 year old and 20-24 year old groups.

While a higher percentage of males than females would generally prefer to work longer hours (33.3% compared with 21.3% on average during 2001), the difference becomes greatest in the age groups over 24. The differences are relatively slight between the genders for youth. During 2001, 31.8 per cent of 15-19 year old males and 37.4 per cent of 20-24 year old males would have preferred to work longer hours compared with females where 30.1 per cent of those aged 15-19 years and 36.4 per cent of those aged 20-24 years would have preferred to work longer hours.

Of those who reported that they would prefer to work longer hours during 2001, 81.3 per cent of 15-19 year olds, 41.1 per cent of those aged 20-24 years and 31.5 per cent of the total number of underemployed were actively looking for full-time work.

Figure 10: Underemployment in WA



Source: ABS Labour Force Survey

Regional Data

The unemployment rate between teenagers in Perth and those outside the capital city does not vary significantly, however, it is 1.4 percentage points higher for young adults outside the metropolitan area. The average unemployment rates in 2001 for teenagers in Perth and balance of the State were 16.8 and 16.6 per cent respectively while for young adults they were 10.7 per cent and 12.1 per cent respectively. The unemployment rate for the total population in Perth and the balance of WA averaged 6.9 per cent last year.

Employment by Industry

As at the 1996 Census (the last date at which detailed data are available), slightly under half (45.8%) of all employed teenagers worked in the retail industry. Within the retail industry, 14.6 per cent are employed in specialised food retailing (which includes fast food, fresh meat, fish and poultry retailing, fruit and vegetable retailing and liquor retailing) and 13.6 per cent are employed in supermarket and grocery stores. Other than retail, the only other industries employing significant numbers of teenagers are manufacturing (9.6%) and accommodation, cafes and restaurants (8.3%). Female teenage employment is even more concentrated in the retail industry with 58.1 per cent employed in the retail industry compared to 37.4 per cent of males.

The concentration of teenagers in the retail industry and the clerical, sales and service worker occupational categories reflects the proportion of part-time jobs typically available in these areas of work.

While the retail industry also accounts for the largest proportion of employed 20 to 24 year olds (18.7%), young adults are employed more evenly across industries. Other industries employing relatively large numbers of 20 to 24 year olds include manufacturing (11.0%), property and business services (9.8%), accommodation, cafes and restaurants (8.1%), and health and community services (7.5%).

Table 4: Persons Employed by Industry and Age, WA

Industry	15-19 years %	20-24 years %	15-64 years %
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	3.1	3.5	4.8
Mining	1.1	4.0	3.9
Manufacturing	9.6	11.0	10.6
Electricity, gas & water supply	0.2	0.5	0.9
Construction	5.5	7.0	7.5
Wholesale trade	4.3	6.3	6.0
Retail trade	45.8	18.7	14.2
Accommodation, cafes & restaurants	8.3	8.1	4.5
Transport and storage	1.5	3.0	4.2
Communication services	0.5	1.4	1.7
Finance and insurance	1.6	4.2	3.4
Property & business services	5.5	9.8	10.3
Government administration & defence	1.1	3.5	4.2
Education	1.4	4.3	7.6
Health & community services	4.1	7.5	9.8
Cultural recreational services	2.8	2.8	2.2
Personal & other services	3.7	4.5	4.1

Source: 1996 ABS Census

Although data are not available for 2001, data from the 1999 ABS Labour Force Surveys suggests that the employment of teenagers over the last year has become even more concentrated in the retail industry with 47.9 per cent of 15-19 year olds employed in retailing in that year.

NBEET (1995) found that employers do not require specialist knowledge or skills of school leavers and even basic numeracy and literacy skills are becoming less important in the service industries of retail, tourism and hospitality, as the emphasis shifts to customer service skills. Increasingly employers are seeking to hire school leavers with strong interpersonal and personal presentation skills and either no or limited customer service skills or experience, they then train the teenagers themselves.

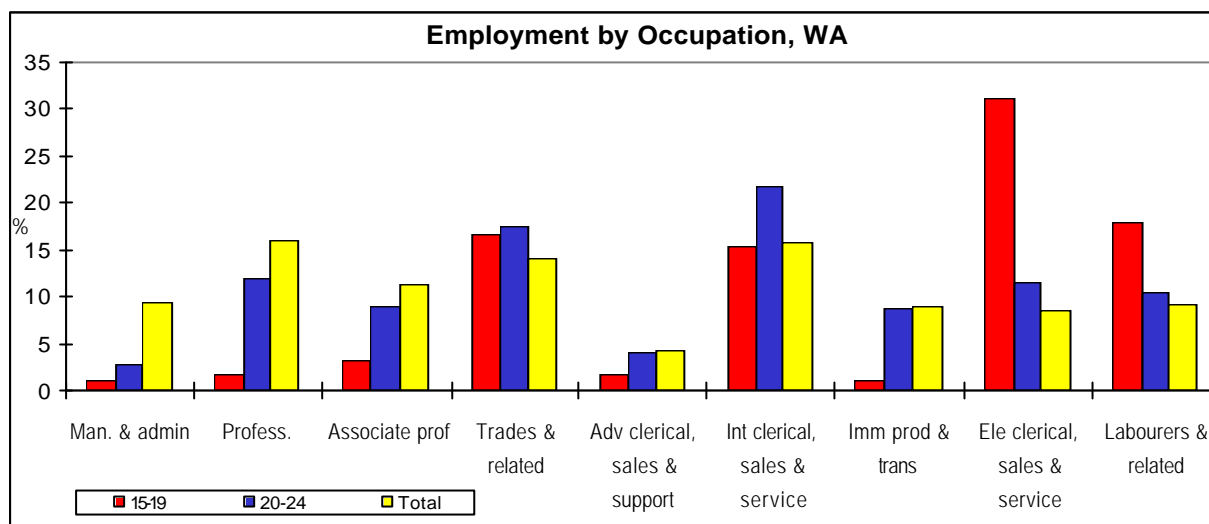
Employment by Occupation

Figure 11 depicts the occupational employment of youth and the total labour force in 1996.

Teenagers traditionally find employment in occupations that do not require extensive formal training. In 1996 they were employed in the occupational categories of elementary clerical, sales and service workers (31.2%), labourers and related workers (17.9%), tradespersons and related workers (16.5%) and intermediate clerical, sales and service workers (15.5%).

Young adults compared with teenagers tend to be employed in occupations that require more formal training or higher levels of skill. They are concentrated in the occupational categories of intermediate clerical, sales and service workers (21.9%), tradespersons and related workers (17.6%), professionals (12.0%) and elementary clerical, sales and service workers (11.5%).

Figure 11: Persons Employed by Occupation and Age, WA



Source: 1996 ABS Census

Teenagers tend to be employed in a range of service occupations including sales assistant, miscellaneous elementary sales (the majority of whom are checkout operators), elementary food preparation worker (mainly kitchenhands), miscellaneous intermediate production and transport worker (mainly storepersons) and hospitality worker (mainly general waiters and bar staff).

Table 5: Common Occupations for Teenagers (ASCO Minor Group)

Occupation	15-17 years	18-19 years	15-19 years total	Proportion of employed 15-19 year olds %
Sales assistants	6036	4448	10484	19.1
Misc. elementary sales	3807	1961	5768	10.5
Elementary food preparation	2956	1290	4246	7.7
Misc. intermediate production & transport	1398	1396	2794	5.1
Hospitality workers	896	1823	2719	4.9

Source: 1996 ABS Census

Although the most common occupation for young adults is also that of sales assistant, there are proportionately fewer than for teenagers. Other occupations where young adults are commonly employed include hospitality workers (bar staff and waiters), intermediate clerical workers (mainly accounts clerks and bank workers) and miscellaneous intermediate production and transport workers (mainly storepersons).

Table 6: Common Occupations for Young Adults (ASCO Minor Group)

Occupation	20 years	21-24 years	20-24 years total	Proportion of employed 20-24 year olds %
Sales assistants	1779	4852	6631	7.7
Hospitality workers	1005	2922	3927	4.6
Intermediate numerical clerks	477	2389	2866	3.3
Misc. Intermediate production/transport workers	657	1934	2591	3.0
Secretaries & personal assistants	402	1873	2275	2.7
Automotive tradespersons	486	1746	2232	2.6
Carers & aides	432	1726	2158	2.5
Receptionists	459	1618	2077	2.0

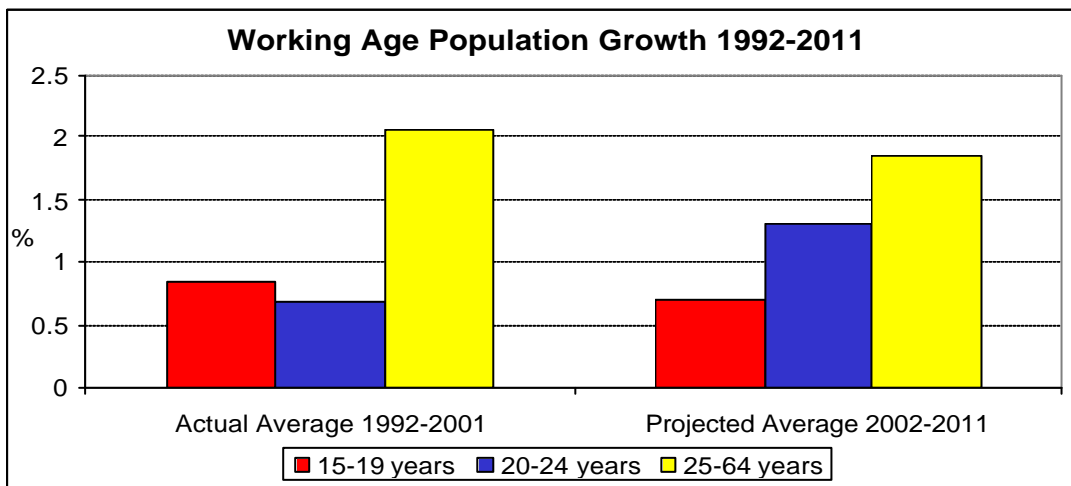
Source: 1996 ABS Census

Population / Working Age Projections

The following graph indicates the wide disparity in the rate of population growth of teenagers and young adults compared to the rest of the working age population over the previous and coming decades.

ABS projections over the next 10 years indicate that the difference between the rate of increase across the three components (namely 15-19 years, 20-24 years and 25 and over) of the 15-64 year old age group will decrease as the “baby boomers” turn 65 and probably exit the working age population.

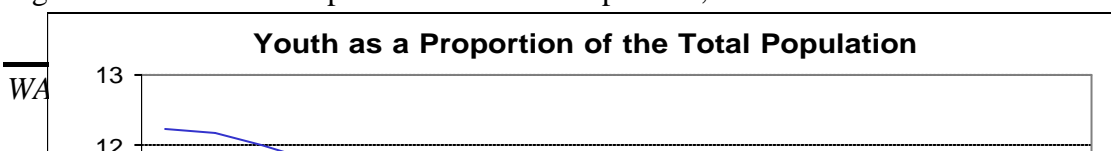
Figure 12: Projected Annual Working Age Population Growth, WA



Source: ABS Estimated Resident Population (Catalogue No. 3201.0) & ABS Projections of the Populations of Australia (Catalogue No. 3222.0 Series 1(a))

Figure 13 indicates that the proportion of youth (both teenagers and young adults) in the total population is projected to decline over the next ten years (again reflecting the aging of the baby boomers).

Figure 13: Youth as a Proportion of the Total Population, WA 1992 - 2011



Source: ABS Estimated Resident Population (Catalogue No. 3201.0) & ABS Projections of the Populations of Australia (Catalogue No. 3222.0 Series 1(a))

SCHOOL TO WORK TRANSITION

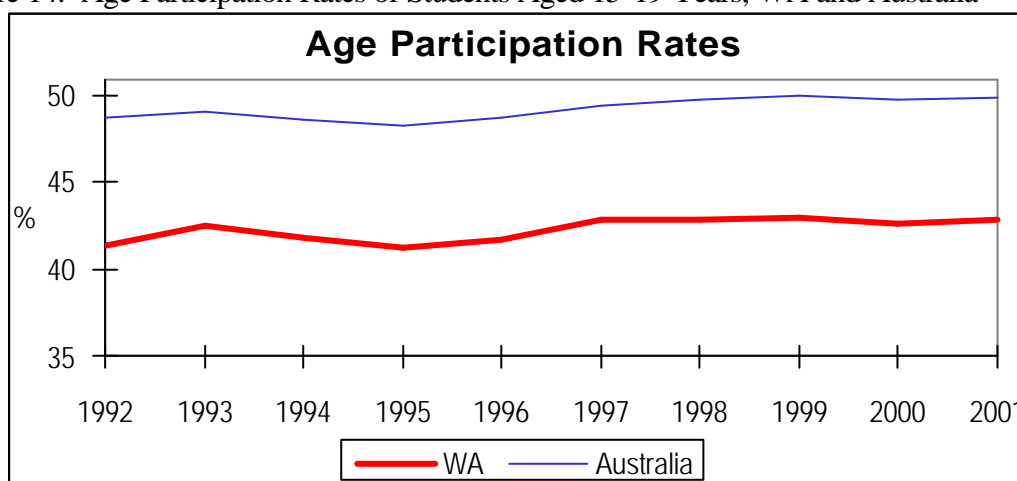
Unless otherwise stated, all the data used in this section of the report are for Australia.

Age Participation Rates

The age participation rate measures the proportion of the 15-19 year old population who are full-time students, expressed as a proportion of the estimated resident population of the same age and sex. An increase in this rate generally results in a fall in the youth labour force participation rate. If an increase in the labour force participation rate is not accompanied by increased employment opportunities for young people, the youth unemployment rate will rise.

Age participation rates increased during the early 1990s and although they dipped slightly last year, they have generally been increasing over the last few years. WA's age participation rate has traditionally been about 7 percentage points lower than the national average. The main factors influencing the age participation rate increases were the emphasis on completing secondary school and, in part, depressed economic conditions. In 2001, 42.9 per cent of WA 15-19 year olds and 49.9 per cent of 15-19 year olds nationally were full-time school students. In addition, the age participation rate for females is higher than that for males. In WA in 2001 females had an age participation rate for 15-19 year olds of 43.9 per cent compared with 42.0 per cent for males.

Figure 14: Age Participation Rates of Students Aged 15-19 Years, WA and Australia



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Schools Australia*, Catalogue No. 4221.0

Retention Rates

The retention rate is the percentage of students in a given age cohort who continue to a particular year of education. Table 7 therefore represents the percentage of Australian students who continued to Years 10, 11 or 12 from their respective cohorts at the commencement of their secondary schooling. The table also provides data on WA students who continue on to Year 12. Although the apparent retention rate of WA students who have completed secondary school is below the national average, care should be taken in interpreting retention rate figures because a range of factors affect the calculation of apparent retention

rates. At the Australian level these include students repeating a year of education, migration and other net changes to the school population. At lower levels of disaggregation, additional factors affect the data, such as enrolment policies and interstate movements of students.

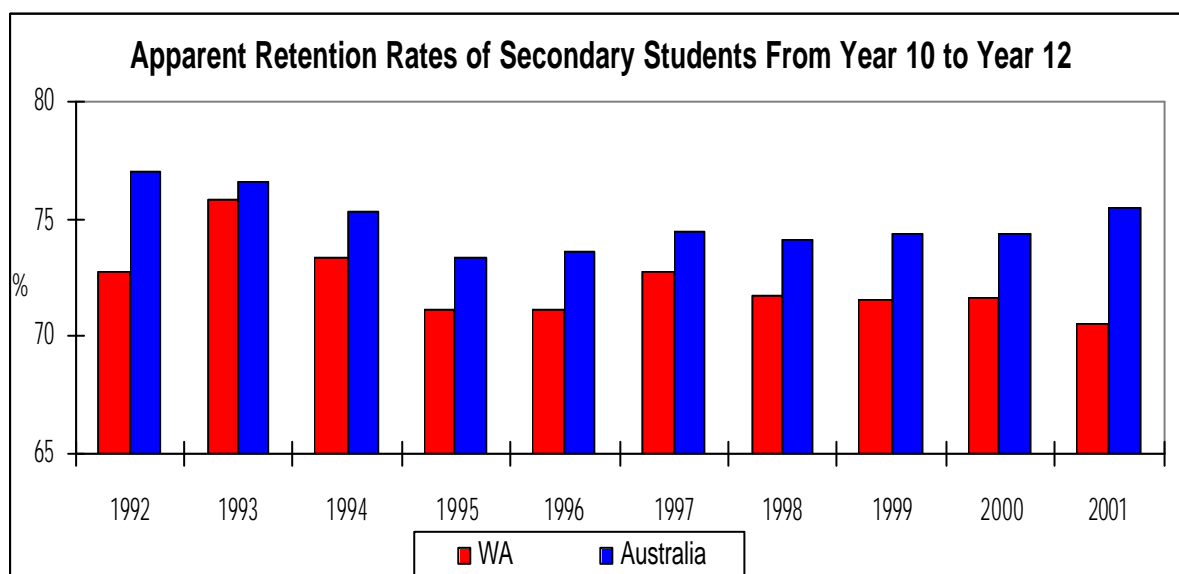
As previously discussed in relation to participation rates, the Year 12 retention rate increased in the early 1990s, but has subsequently declined marginally.

Table 7: Apparent Retention Rates of Secondary Students

Year	Australia			Western Australia		
	Males	Females	Persons	Males	Females	Persons
1992	72.5	82.0	77.1	na	na	72.8
1993	71.9	81.4	76.6	na	na	75.8
1994	70.6	80.2	75.3	na	na	73.4
1995	68.4	78.7	73.4	na	na	71.1
1996	68.6	78.7	73.6	65.6	76.7	71.1
1997	69.3	79.9	74.5	na	na	72.8
1998	68.9	79.4	74.1	na	na	71.8
1999	68.9	79.9	74.4	66.2	77.1	71.5
2000	69.0	80.0	74.4	66.0	77.5	71.6
2001	70.8	80.1	75.4	67.6	76.5	70.5

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Schools Australia, Catalogue No. 4221.0

Figure 15: Apparent Retention Rate of Secondary Students to Year 12



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Schools Australia, Catalogue No. 4221.0

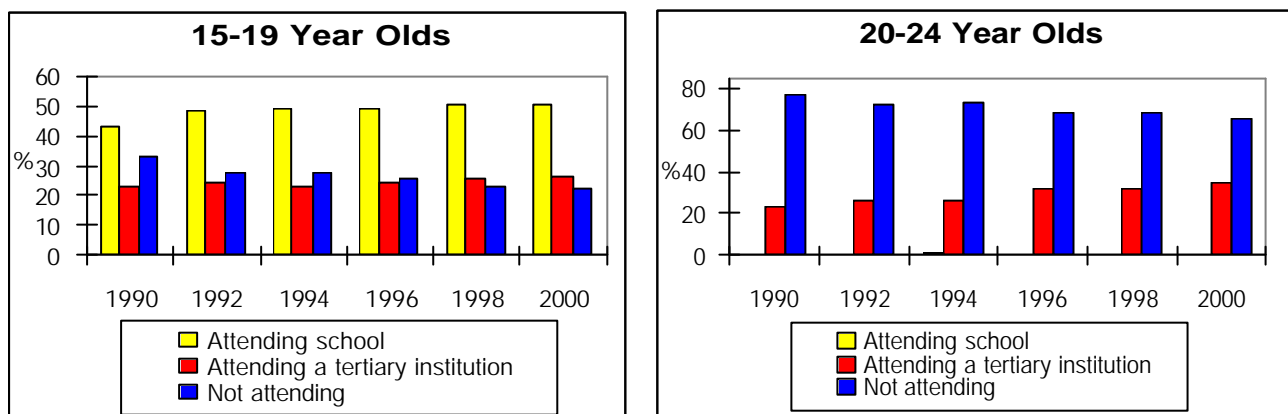
Proportion of Youth Studying/Not Studying

Figure 16 depicts how the proportion of young people studying at an educational institution has steadily increased over the last ten years.

In 2000, a total of 1,039,200 or 77.7 per cent of 15-19 year olds in Australia were currently attending either school or a tertiary institution, an increase of 11.1 percentage points on the number in 1990. While the proportion attending a tertiary institution has increased, the more significant increase for this age group has been amongst those at school.

A total of 880,300 or 65.6 per cent of 20-24 year olds were *not* studying in 2000, a decrease of 11.0 percentage points over the ten years from 1990. The most significant change amongst youth has been for 20-24 year olds studying at a tertiary institution, which has shown an increase of 11.2 percentage points since 1990.

Figure 16: Proportion of Youth Studying and Not Studying, Australia



Source: ABS, *Transition From Education to Work*, Catalogue No. 6227.0

Although limited historical figures are available, WA data indicate that in 2000, 45.1 per cent of 15-19 year olds were studying at school, a further 27.4 per cent were studying at a tertiary institution while the remaining 27.5 per cent were neither attending school nor a tertiary institution. While the proportion at school has decreased over the last few years, the more significant increase for this age group has been amongst those attending a tertiary institution. An even greater percentage point increase has occurred in the 20-24 year old age group with just over one-third now attending a tertiary institution. The majority of this age group are not attending a tertiary institution.

Table 8: Proportion of Youth Studying/Not Studying, WA

	1998	1999	2000
15-19 YEAR OLDS			
Attending school	45.1	43.4	42.6
Attending a tertiary institution	27.4	28.4	32.9
Not attending	27.5	28.2	24.5
20-24 YEAR OLDS			
Attending school	0	0	0.4
Attending a tertiary institution	26.7	31.2	33.7
Not attending	73.3	68.8	66.0

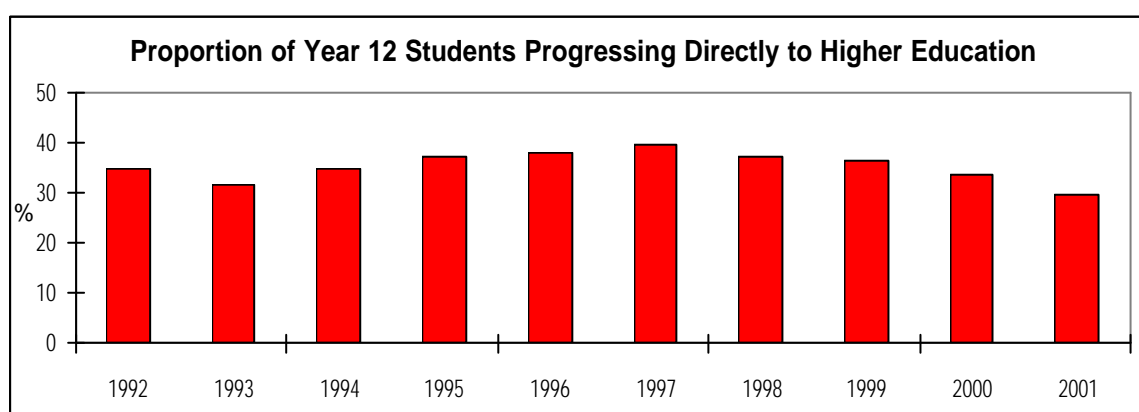
Source: ABS, *Transition From Education to Work*, Unpublished data

The long-term rise in educational attendance is probably due to a combination of factors including a recognition of the importance of qualifications and skills acquisition for employment, government policies to increase school retention and prevailing economic conditions.

Transition from Year 12 to Higher Education

Figure 17 depicts how the proportion of Year 12 students progressing to higher education has fluctuated widely over the last decade, from a high of 39.5 per cent in 1997 to a low of 29.7 per cent in 2001. In 2001 the proportion fell by 3.9 percentage points over the previous year. This represented 5,998 Year 12 students progressing directly to higher education.

Figure 17: Proportion of Year 12 Students Progressing Directly to Higher Education, WA

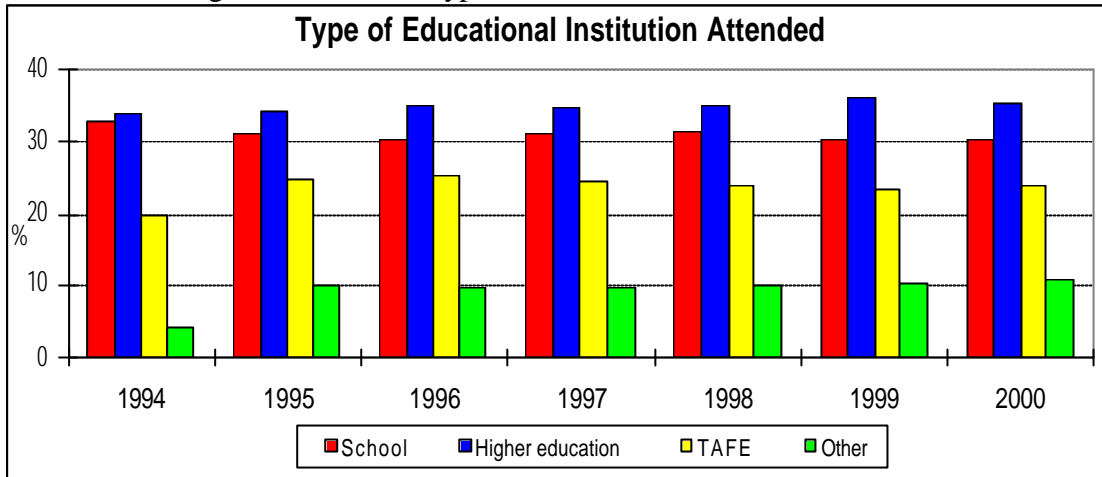


Source: Department of Education Services, 2000 Statistics, *Higher Education in Western Australia*

Type of Educational Institution Attended

Figure 18 shows only a minor variation in the proportion of persons aged 15-64 attending the various types of educational institutions over the last five years, although the proportion attending “Other” Institutions has increased by over 6 percentage points since 1994, when the data first became available. Other educational institutions includes establishments that offer educational courses that involve commercial and business training, and those where insufficient information was available to determine the type of educational institution.

Figure 18: Persons Aged 15-64 Years: Type of Educational Institution Attended, Australia



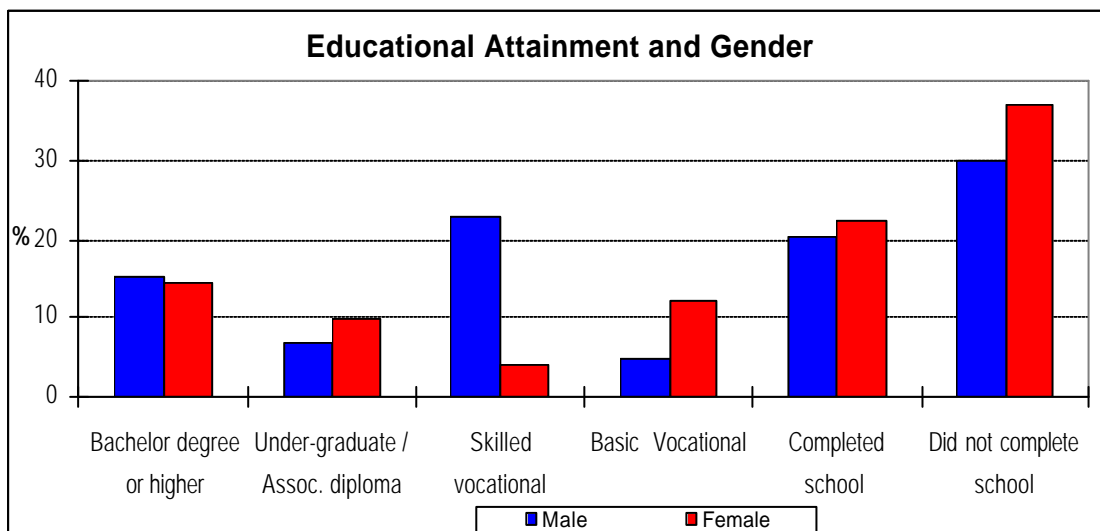
Source: ABS, *Transition From Education to Work*, Catalogue No. 6227.0

While there is limited historical data available for WA, in 2000 25.8 per cent of all enrolments at educational institutions in this State were in schools, 35.5 per cent were in higher education institutions, 26.6 per cent were in TAFEs and 12.7 per cent were at other forms of educational institutions.

Educational Attainment and Gender

Figure 19 indicates that there are some significant differences in the educational attainment of West Australian males and females. The largest proportion of both males and females did not complete the highest level of school (29.8% and 37.0% respectively). Similar proportions of males and females complete the highest level of schooling and obtain no other qualifications (20.2% and 22.4% respectively), however, the next greatest proportion of males are those who have completed a skilled vocational qualification (22.9%), while the next greatest proportion of females are those who have completed a Bachelor degree or higher (14.5%).

Figure 19: Persons Aged 15-64 Years: Educational Attainment and Gender, May 2000, WA

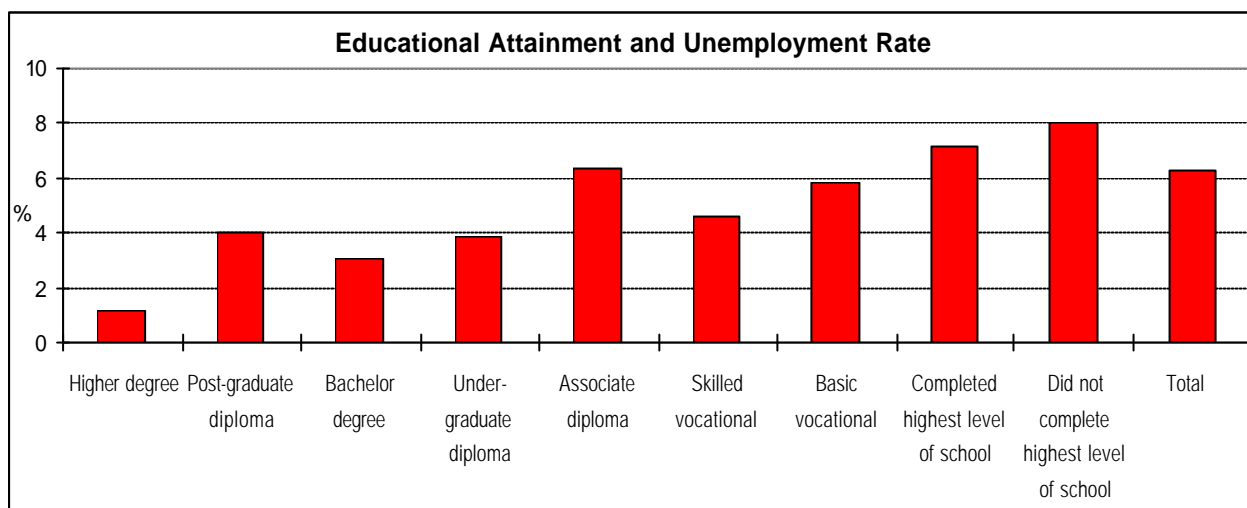


Source: ABS, *Transition From Education to Work*, Catalogue No. 6227.0

Educational Attainment and Labour Force Status

Figure 20 and Table 9 depict how higher levels of education attainment influence labour force status in WA. As might be expected, in May 2000, the higher the level of educational attainment generally the lower the unemployment. This data should, however, be used with caution because of the very low numbers included in some labour force categories of those with post-school qualifications.

Figure 20: Educational Attainment and the Unemployment Rate, May 2000, WA



Source: ABS Transition from Education to Work, Catalogue No. 6227.0

Those with post-school qualifications in 2000 had an unemployment rate 3.4 percentage points lower than those without post-school qualifications. Those with post-school qualifications also had a significantly higher participation rate (84.6% compared with 71.7%) and were more likely to be employed full-time than part-time (78.1% compared with 68.3%).

Table 9: Persons Aged 15-64: Labour Force Status and Educational Attainment in May 2000, WA *

	Employed		UE*	Labour force	NILF**	Total	UE Rate*	Participation Rate
	Full-time '000s	Part-time '000s						
With post-school qualifications	345.4	97.1	19.6	462.1	83.9	546.0	4.2	84.6
Higher degree	16.4	1.8	0.2	18.4	1.2	19.7	1.1	93.8
Post-grad diploma	16.2	3.4	0.8	20.4	2.4	22.8	4.0	89.6
Bachelor degree	92.1	25.8	3.7	121.6	15.2	136.8	3.0	88.9
Under-graduate diploma	37.5	16.5	2.2	56.1	15.6	71.7	3.9	78.3
Associate diploma	15.2	5.4	1.4	22.0	6.1	28.1	6.4	78.2
Skilled vocational	119.6	15.8	6.6	141.9	20.9	162.8	4.6	87.2
Basic vocational	48.4	28.4	4.8	81.6	22.5	104.1	5.8	78.4
Without post-school quals	298.2	138.7	36.1	473.0	186.8	659.9	7.6	71.7
Completed school	114.2	64.7	13.8	192.8	64.1	256.9	7.2	75.1
Did not complete school	183.5	73.7	22.3	279.5	122.8	402.3	8.0	69.5
Still at school	0.3	18.8	5.0	24.0	35.7	59.7	20.6	40.3
Total	643.9	254.5	60.7	959.2	306.4	1 266	6.3	75.8

UE – Unemployed/ment ** NILF - Not in Labour Force

Source: ABS, Transition From Education to Work, Catalogue No. 6227.0

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National Board of Employment, Education and Training (1995) *Demand and Dimensions of Education and Training*, AGPS, Canberra.