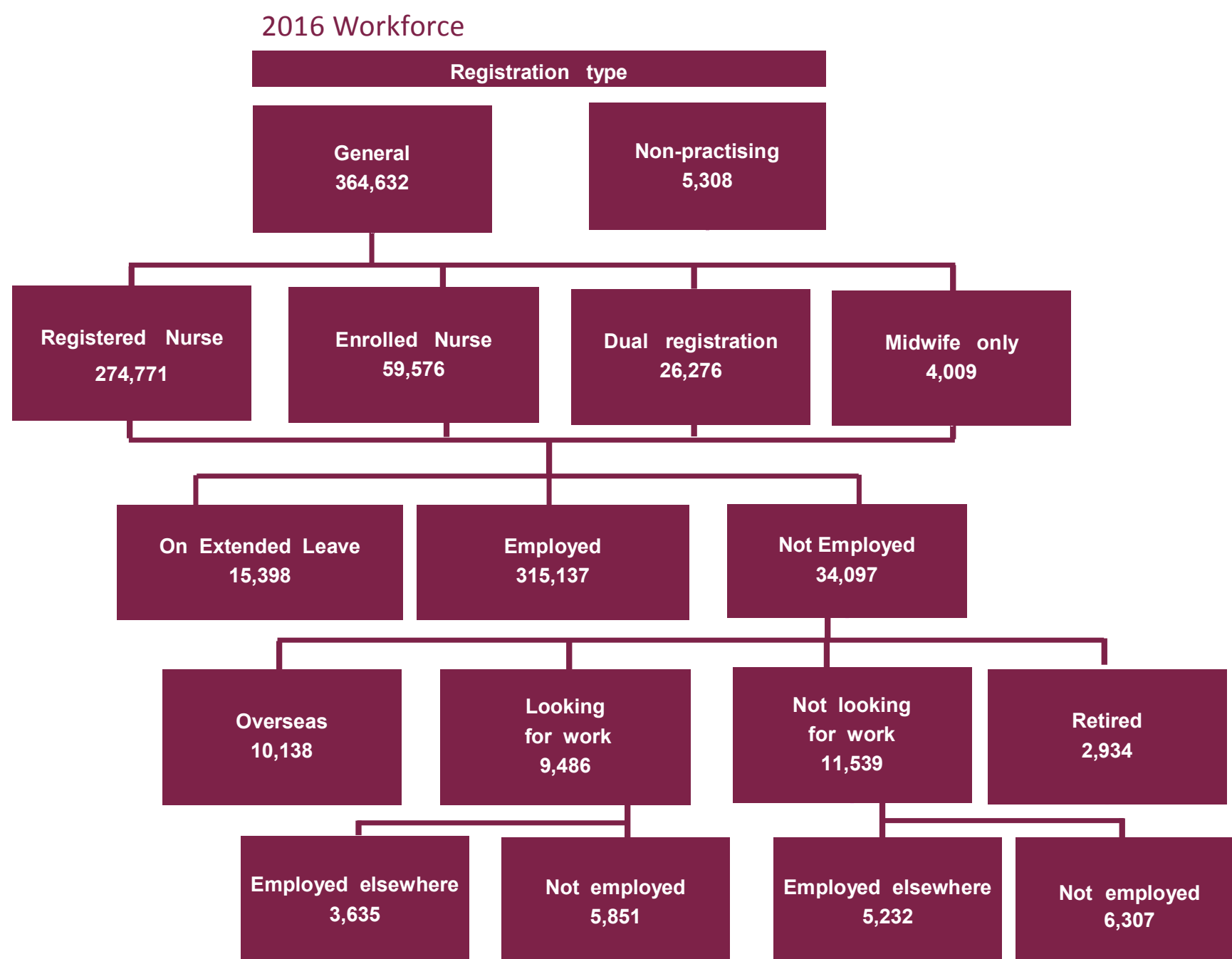


# Nurses and Midwives NHWDS 2016 Fact Sheet



Australian Government  
Department of Health



The Nursing and Midwifery 2016 total (General & Non-practising) *registered* workforce (**369,940**) has increased by **7.5%** (**25,750**) in size since 2013 (**344,190**), with an average annual growth of **2.4%**. The percentage of nurses and midwives not employed and looking for work has remained at **1.6%** of the workforce since 2013.

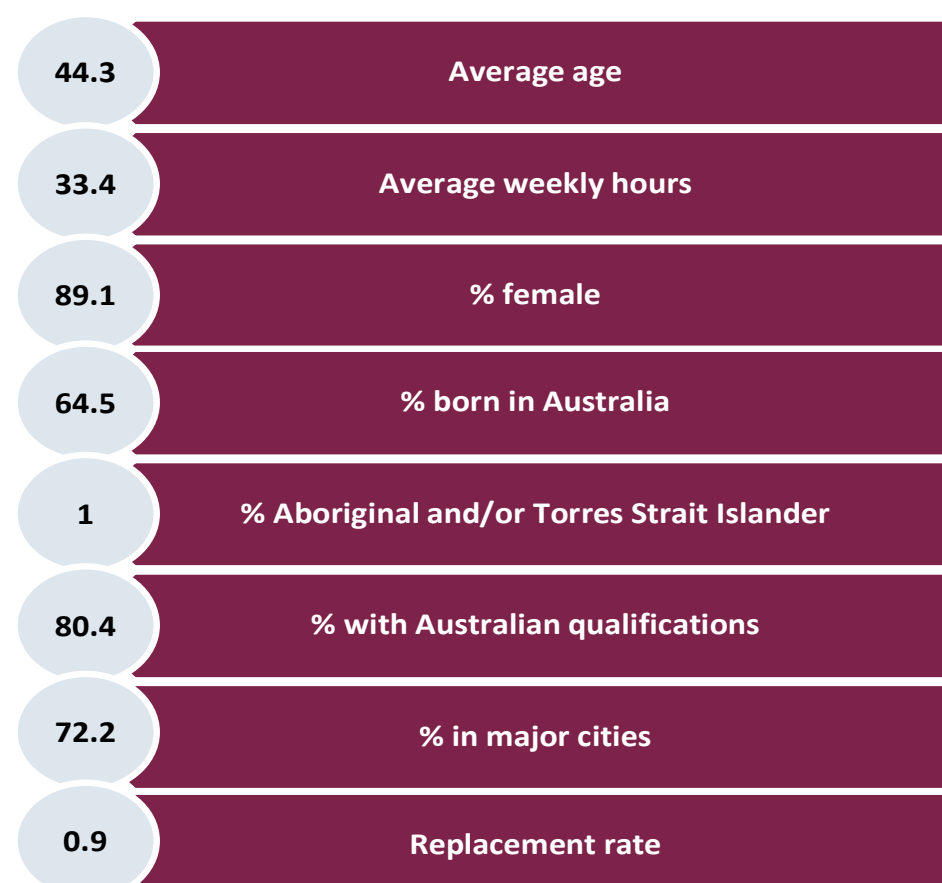
Employment count for **All Nurses and Midwives** is a total headcount, whereas the employed counts by profession (Nursing (Registered Nurse (RN), Enrolled Nurse (EN)) and Midwifery) are calculated based on working hours in each division and/or profession. That is, if a person records hours in more than one profession (Nursing (RN/EN) and/or Midwifery), they will be counted as employed in each of those professions. For example, someone who reports hours worked as an RN and a Midwife will be reported in both employed counts.

For this reason the total employment count for All Nurses and Midwives will not match the sum of the employment count in each profession.

Profession and division	2013	2016	Average annual growth
Registered Nurse	215,481	236,948	3.2%
Enrolled Nurse	50,741	51,464	0.5%
Registered Nurse and Midwife	26,623	23,285	-4.4%
Midwife	2,332	3,440	13.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>295,177</b>	<b>315,137</b>	<b>2.2%</b>

This fact sheet focuses on the *registered and employed* Nursing and Midwifery workforce in Australia ("Workforce").

## Quick facts



Quick facts—Registered and employed Nurses and Midwives



## Demographics

In 2016, **89.1%** of the Workforce was female and the average age of the total Workforce was **44.3**. There was a minor decrease in the average age between 2013 and 2016.

**26.9%** of females were aged 20-34 years (**75,553**), when compared to 2013 this group was **24.1%** (**63,822**) of the female proportion - a growth of **18.4%** in size.

**25.8%** were aged 45-54 years (**72,487**), when compared to 2013 this group was **28.8%** (**76,117**) of the female proportion - a decrease of **4.8%** in size.

From 2013 to 2016 the male proportion of the Workforce increased by **0.5** percentage points to **10.9%**. Since 2013, the male proportion of the Workforce has increased by **3,419**, with the number of males aged between 23-34 increasing by **1,867**.

Age Group	2013		2016	
	Employed female	Total employed	Employed female	Total employed
0-19	105	116	91	100
20-34	63,822	72,162	75,553	85,760
35-44	59,787	68,362	59,602	68,182
45-54	76,117	83,922	72,487	80,751
55-64	56,060	61,499	62,644	68,891
65-74	8,251	8,843	10,237	11,109
75-99	252	273	321	344

## Registrant replacement rate

In 2016, there were **0.9** new registrants for every Nurse and Midwife that did not renew their registration from 2015. The replacement rate was also **0.9** from 2013 to 2014.

## Hours worked

Throughout 2016 the Workforce worked **33.4** total hours per week on average, and an average of **29.5** clinical hours per week. In comparison, in 2013 the average total hours worked per week was **34.4** and the average clinical hours per week was **30**.

Average hours worked	2013	2014	2015	2016
Clinical	30	29.4	29.4	29.5
Non-clinical	4.4	4.3	4.1	4
Total	34.4	33.7	33.5	33.4

Males (**34,202**) worked **37.5** total hours per week on average, while their female (**280,935**) counterparts worked **32.9** total hours.

Age Group	Males - average hours		Females - average hours	
	2013	2016	2013	2016
0-19	37.3	30	31.6	31.6
20-34	38	37.7	35	34.4
35-44	38.7	38.1	31.9	31.7
45-54	38.2	37.7	34.8	33.3
55-64	37.3	36.6	34.7	32.8
65-74	33.8	31.8	29.9	28.4
75-99	35	22.8	29.2	24.3

The most hours were worked by males in the 35-44 age group (**8,580**), at **38.1** hours per week on average. When compared to 2013, the male 35-44 group average hours has decreased by **0.6** hours. For females the most hours were worked by the 20-34 group (**75,553**), at **34.4** hours. When compared to the 2013, the 20-34 group average hours also decreased by **0.6** hours.

## Tele-Health

A question was added in the 2016 workforce survey to determine the average hours per week practiced via tele-health in the previous year. Tele-health is the use of telecommunication techniques for the purpose of providing telemedicine and education, and health education over a distance.

The workforce survey asks Nurses and Midwives to specify their hours practiced via tele-health in either Nursing or Midwifery - depending on the survey they answer.

For the purpose of this fact sheet these responses have been combined to provide an average for the Workforce. **8.6%** (**27,118**) of the Workforce responded to the tele-health question. On average this Workforce practiced via tele-health **17.9** hours per week.

Remoteness area breakdown for the Workforce that responded to the tele-health question; this shows the location of the person in the Workforce, not the location of the person receiving the service.

Major cities	Inner regional	Outer regional	Remote	Very remote
63.5%	18.4%	12.1%	3.2%	2.8%

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been excluded

## Job Role

Throughout 2016, **91.5%** (**288,326**) of the Workforce worked predominantly in a clinician role. In comparison, **91.1%** (**269,050**) of the Workforce worked in a clinician role in 2013.

Job role	Employed Total (Headcount)	
	2013	2016
Clinician	269,050	288,326
Administrator	11,252	13,858
Teacher or educator	8,663	8,729
Researcher	2,388	2,355
Other	3,824	1,869
<b>Total</b>	<b>295,177</b>	<b>315,137</b>



## Principal area of practice

The workforce survey asks Nurses and Midwives to specify the principal area of their main job in either Nursing or Midwifery - depending on the survey they answer. Principal areas of work are different for Nurses and for Midwives. For the purpose of this fact sheet these responses have been combined into one list.

Principal area of practice	2013		2016		Change
	Head-count	Average Total Hours	Head-count	Average Total Hours	
Aged care	43,472	32.7	45,448	32.9	1,976
Medical	26,574	33.8	30,195	33.4	3,621
Peri-operative	22,444	33.2	26,111	33.3	3,667
Surgical	23,470	33.3	24,575	33	1,105
Mental health	19,893	36.6	21,540	36.3	1,647
Mixed medical/surgical	20,183	32.9	21,367	32.6	1,184
Nursing Other	19,422	34.3	18,147	33.2	-1,275
Emergency	16,096	34.9	18,007	34.5	1,911
Critical care	17,726	35.1	17,645	34.7	-81
Practice nursing	12,045	29.3	13,240	29.1	1,195
Community nursing	12,349	32.7	12,616	32.1	267
Rehabilitation and disability	9,457	33.7	10,204	33.4	747
Nursing management	8,145	41.4	8,627	39.1	482
Paediatrics	7,668	32.9	7,007	32.4	-661
Nursing education	6,028	35.5	5,940	34.3	-88
Child and family health	5,312	38	4,705	32.1	-607
Nursing Neonatal care *	-	-	4,402	33.5	-
Antenatal, Intra-partum and Post-partum care *	1,248	36.9	4,295	33.4	3,047 *
Palliative care	3,269	32.5	3,450	32.4	181
Maternity care *	8,318	51.4	3,260	37.3	-5,058 *
Postnatal care *	2,074	31.6	2,948	29.2	874
Care during labour and birth	2,241	34.4	2,763	32.4	522
Nursing research	1,968	34	1,955	33	-13
Drug and Alcohol	1,734	35.1	1,854	34.9	120
Antenatal care *	828	30.9	1,223	30.9	395
Health promotion	1,372	31.8	1,163	29.8	-209
Midwifery Neonatal care *	391	34.1	569	30.1	178
Midwifery education	360	35.6	496	33.5	136
Nursing Policy	419	37.6	439	37.3	20
Midwifery management	267	46.1	424	38.4	157
Midwifery Other	263	40.2	367	31	104
Midwifery research	92	33.6	116	33.1	24
Midwifery Policy	21	40.8	39	36.4	18

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been excluded

\* A change was made to the principal area of practice question in the 2016 Nursing and Midwifery surveys to remove *Continuity of Care* from the options list and include *Antenatal care*, *Neonatal* and *Postnatal Care*. This is evident in the data when comparing the principal area of practice for the Workforce in 2016 to previous years.

The ten principal areas with the highest headcounts account for **75%** (**236,275**) of the total Workforce. Compared to 2013, which was **75.1%** (**221,629**). During the 2013 to 2016 period, *Aged care* increased **4.5%** (**1,976**), *Medical* increased **13.6%** (**3,621**) and *Peri-operative* increased **16.3%** (**3,667**) in size.

In the same period, *Maternity care* decreased **60.8%** (**5,058**) and *Health Promotion* decreased **15.2%** (**209**) in size. In 2013, *Maternity care* reported the highest average total hours per week (**51.4**) which has decreased by **14.1** hours to **37.3** in 2016.

In 2016, the highest average total hours worked per week were in *policy* and *management* roles. Almost all principal areas reported average total hours above **30** except in *practice nursing*, *postnatal care* and *health promotion*.

## Principal work sector

In 2016, **56.2%** of the Workforce worked *only in the public sector*, **34.3%** *only in private* and **3%** in *both*. Throughout the 2013 to 2016 period, the number of the Workforce working in the *public sector only* increased by **5.9%** (**9,832**) and in the *private only* by **10.2%** (**10,039**) in size.

Employment sector	Headcount	
	2013	2016
Public sector only	167,135	176,967
Proportion (%)	56.6	56.2
Private sector only	97,979	108,018
Proportion (%)	33.2	34.3
Both	9,872	9,549
Proportion (%)	3.3	3
Non response	20,191	20,603
Proportion (%)	6.8	6.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>295,177</b>	<b>315,137</b>

## Working Intentions

On average the Workforce has worked for **23** years and intends to stay in the workforce for another **15** years.

The male proportion of the Workforce has worked for **26** years and intends to stay in the workforce for another **12** years. The female proportion of the Workforce has worked for **23** years and intends to stay in the workforce for another **15** years.

	Have worked for	Intend to work for
Females	23 year	15 years
Males	26 years	12 years





## Principal work setting

Between 2013 to 2016, the three principal work settings with the highest headcounts have remained the same: *hospital*; *residential health care facilities*; and *community health care services*. These three represent **81.7% (257,466)** of the Workforce. This percentage has remained the same since 2013.

*Hospital* increased by **8% (14,420)**, *residential health care facility* increased by **4.5% (1,742)** and *community health care service* increased by **1.1% (250)** in size. *Aboriginal health service* reported the highest average total hours (**38.4**) worked per week.

Although still only a small proportion of the workforce, *private midwifery practice* had the largest increase in size throughout 2013 to 2016 at **288.5% (626)** from **217** in 2013.

In 2013, the principal work setting *commercial/business service* had the tenth highest headcount. This has decreased by **8.2% (129)** in size.

In 2016, the ten principal work settings with the highest headcounts represented **97%** of the total workforce.

Principal work setting	2013		2016	
	Head-count	Average Total Hours	Head-count	Average Total Hours
Hospital	179,391	34.9	193,811	33.8
<i>FTE Clinical - public*</i>	112,929.1		118,092.8	
<i>FTE Clinical - private*</i>	37,510.3		40,171.8	
Residential health care facility	38,452	33	40,194	33.2
Community health care service	23,211	35.2	23,461	33.6
General practitioner (GP) practice	10,365	28.6	11,596	28.7
Other	11,954	35	10,470	33.5
Outpatient service	9,299	34.5	10,457	33.2
Other private practice	6,746	29.9	7,229	29.6
Tertiary educational facility	3,520	36.5	3,630	35.1
Other government department or agency	3,241	37.3	3,057	35.2
Correctional service	1,350	38.1	1,631	37.7
School	1,387	30.1	1,511	28.9
Aboriginal health service	1,388	41.2	1,507	38.4
Commercial/business service	1,568	34	1,439	33.2
Defence forces	1,059	37.2	1,277	36.8
Residential mental health care service	-	-	1,018	29.2
Other educational facility	967	32.5	935	32.3
Private midwifery practice	217	38.3	843	37.8
Hospice	745	31.2	714	31.1
Locum private practice	174	29.6	180	30.7
Specialist (O&G) practice	129	38	177	27.6

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been excluded

\* The *hospital* setting FTE has been calculated based on *clinical* hours worked in either the *private* or *public* sector.

## Initial qualification

The workforce survey asks the Workforce where they obtained their initial qualification. **80.4% (253,444)** obtained their initial qualification(s) in Australia, **0.4% (1,362)** obtained one initial qualification in Australia and one overseas and **17.7% (55,770)** obtained their initial qualification(s) overseas.

2016		
Profession and division	Initial Qualification Country	Total
EN Only	Australia	48,110
	Overseas	1,672
	Not stated/Unknown	1,682
RN	Australia	182,942
	Overseas	51,348
	Not stated/Unknown	2,658
Midwife Only	Australia	2,390
	Overseas	948
	Not stated/Unknown	59
Dual registered	Both Australia	20,002
	Nursing in Australia and Midwifery Overseas	633
	Midwifery in Australia and Nursing Overseas	729
	Both Overseas	1,802
	Not stated/Unknown	162

## Distribution

### State and territory

In 2016, more than half (**55.2%**) of the Workforce was located in **NSW (28.2%)** and **VIC (27.1%)**, and **20.3%** was located in **QLD**.

**SA** and **NT** have the largest number of the Workforce per Estimated Residential Population (ERP) at **1,627** and **1,569.9** per 100,000 respectively. **WA** and **NSW** had the lowest number per ERP at **1,162.4** and **1,153.8** per 100,000 respectively.

2016 State & Territory	Headcount	Total FTE	Average total hours	<sup>2</sup> Rate per 100K population
NSW	88,769	80,994.2	34.7	1,153.8
VIC	85,325	72,144.9	32.1	1,412.8
QLD	63,960	57,245.7	34	1,289.6
SA	28,092	23,372.9	31.6	1,627
WA	32,035	27,993.8	33.2	1,162.4
TAS	7,654	6,568.6	32.6	1,465.9
ACT	5,250	4,881.8	35.3	1,293.7
NT	3,973	3,998.2	38.2	1,569.9

Note: Not stated/Unknown and Other Territories has been excluded  
<sup>2</sup>ABS - 3222.0 - Population Projections, Australia, 2016



When compared to 2013 the rate of the Workforce per 100,000 ERP decreased in **SA** by **44.4** and in **WA** by **50.9**. In **QLD** the rate of the Workforce per 100,000 ERP increased by **61.1**.

In 2016, the average total hours worked by the Workforce generally increased with remoteness, from **32.5** hours per week in **Inner Regional** areas to **40.1** hours in **Very Remote** areas. This pattern was the same in 2013.

2013 State & Territory	Headcount	Total FTE	Average total hours	<sup>3</sup> Rate per 100K population
NSW	83,560	78,110.3	35.5	1,128.1
VIC	79,989	69,879.8	33.2	1,395.1
QLD	57,141	52,314.9	34.8	1,228.5
SA	27,917	24,245.5	33	1,671.4
WA	30,520	27,607.4	34.4	1,213.3
TAS	7,336	6,464	33.5	1,429.8
ACT	4,784	4,543	36.1	1,255.9
NT	3,780	3,968.7	39.9	1,558.3

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been excluded  
<sup>3</sup>ABS - 3218.0 Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2013

In 2016, the highest average total hours worked per week was in **NT (38.2)** and the lowest was in **SA at 31.6**. This pattern has remained the same since 2013. From 2013 to 2016, the average total hours worked per week decreased across all States and Territories.

#### Remoteness area

In 2016, **72.2%** of the Workforce (**227,568**) worked in **Major Cities**, **17.8%** (**56,097**) in **Inner Regional**, **8%** (**25,188**) in **Outer Regional** and **2%** in **Remote/Very Remote (6,247)** locations.

2016 Remoteness Area	Headcount	Total FTE	Average total hours	<sup>3</sup> Rate per 100K population
Major cities	227,568	200,544.2	33.5	1,349.4
Inner regional	56,097	47,994.2	32.5	1,303.7
Outer regional	25,188	22,458.9	33.9	1,207.8
Remote	3,961	3,833	36.8	1,233.5
Very remote	2,286	2,413.1	40.1	1,120.5

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been excluded  
<sup>3</sup>ABS - 3218.0 Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2015

When compared with 2013, the proportions of the Workforce across remoteness areas has remained very similar, with **71.5%** of the Workforce (**210,994**) working in **Major Cities**, **18.2%** (**53,768**) in **Inner Regional**, **8.2%** (**24,117**) in **Outer Regional** and **2.1%** in **Remote/Very Remote (6,242)** locations.

2013 Remoteness Area	Headcount	Total FTE	Average total hours	<sup>3</sup> Rate per 100K population
Major cities	210,994	191,231.5	34.4	1,294
Inner regional	53,768	47,401.7	33.5	1,276
Outer regional	24,117	22,110.9	34.8	1,166
Remote	3,977	3,976.1	38	1,233.2
Very remote	2,265	2,520.7	42.3	1,083.2

Note: Not stated/Unknown has been excluded  
<sup>3</sup>ABS - 3218.0 Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2013

Throughout the 2013 to 2016 period, the average total hours worked per week decreased across all remoteness areas.



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## References

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