



Men at Work in 2017

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Executive summary

The workplace and economy is changing. Casualisation is the norm, industry development is focused on efficiency over jobs, and prospects can seem bleak.

So, what's a man to do?

Through history, work and masculinity has gone hand in hand. In the pages ahead you will read that for Australian men, work is not what it was. The idea of stable employment is depleting before their eyes, with job creation almost entirely in part-time work.

As men become less confident in their work social issues arise in unison - such as mental and financial stress.

While it is easy to focus on the negatives. The evidence presented suggests that men might know what they want from work, and that this is very different from that of their fathers.

The evidence is striking, and conclusions could be unwieldy, but there are two reasons for the shift to casual work. Due to industry change they are being forced into different roles, and that the low-growth economic environment is having a direct impact on their work futures.

Alternatively, which is a smaller group of men, they have realised that they want something very different from work than what their fathers had.

In any case, men at work are facing a dramatically different domain than they saw even just a few years ago.

Quick facts

- Structural change in the labour market is being felt strongest in male dominated industries;
- The shift away from production to a services economy is happening, having a direct impact on men's employability;
- 4 in every 5 jobs created for men in the past two years have been part-time;
- 9 of the 10 largest job loss months in the past five years have been in full-time work, of which 4 have been in the past two years alone;
- More industries than not are shedding full-time jobs for men;
 - Traditionally male jobs in trades and manufacturing losing full-time jobs at the greatest rate;
- More than half of part-time job creation has been greatest in construction, education and transport/warehousing;
- Western Australia, which relies on male-dominated industries, has seen the largest average monthly fall in full-time jobs in the past two years, and the second-highest part-time job creation;
- New South Wales, Western Australia and Victoria are creating the most part-time jobs of all the states in the past two years;
- More than half of all management resignations are men; and,
- Interest in flexible working keeps rising.

Men at Work

In times of transformation, it is hard to see change happening.

For men at work, it is best seen when looking at the 10 largest job-loss months. Nine of the 10 have been in full-time jobs, with four of these occurring since 2015, including the three largest (see appendix).

Table 1 shows the number of men working full and part-time across Australia, which on face value is unremarkable.

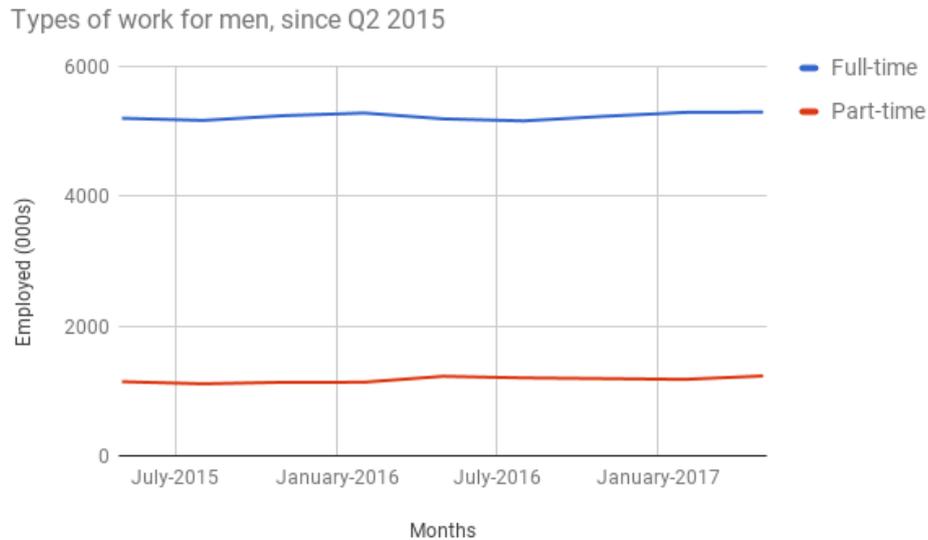


Table 1

However, when this is viewed as a whole +/- change in each reporting period, the picture becomes more interesting. See appendix 2 to see this for men and women and table 2 for men alone.

This picture starts to show that there job creation isn't just more likely to happen in part-time work, but the original data shows that the average number of full-time jobs in this period was 4,800 per quarter where for part-time work it was 16,300 per quarter.

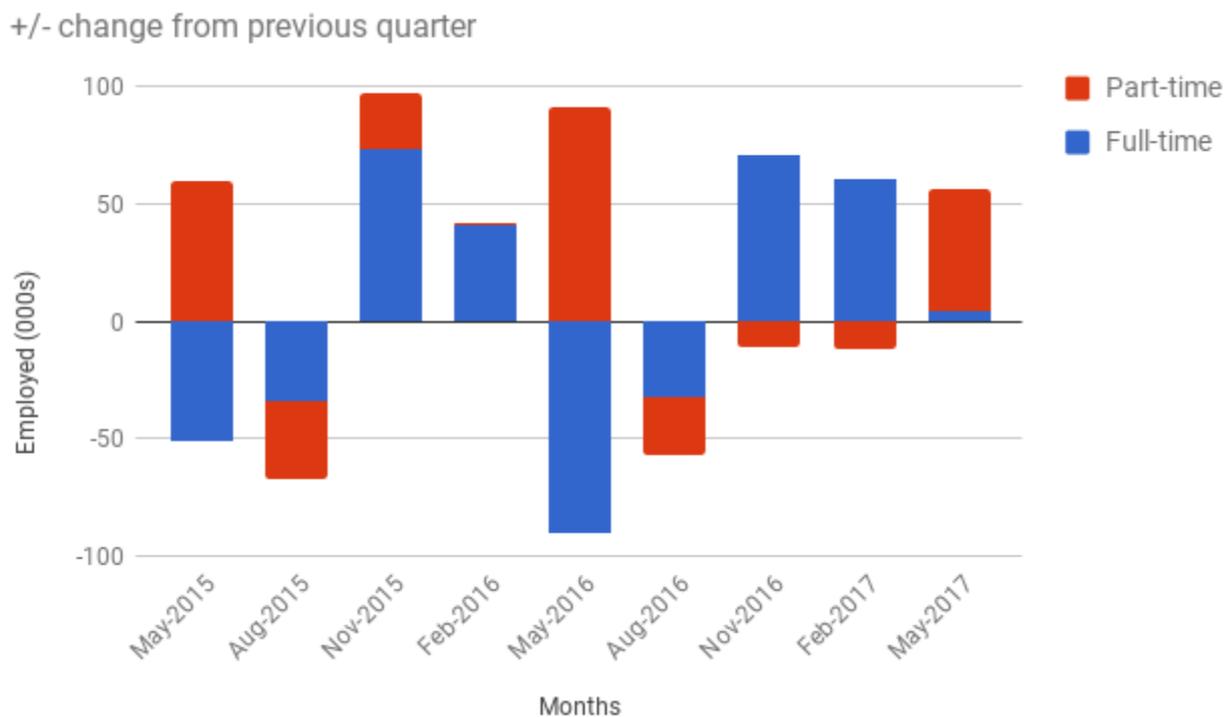
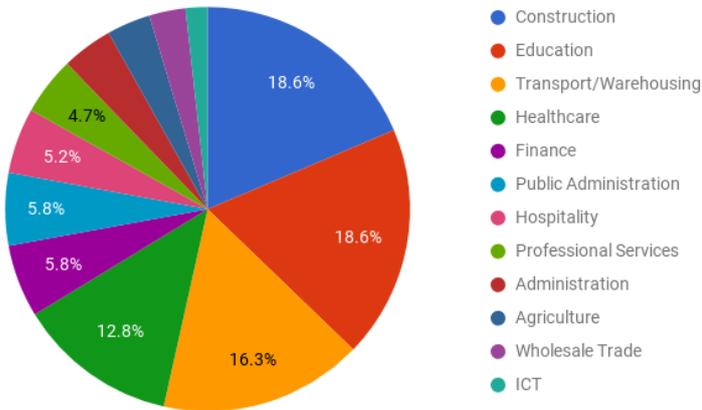


Table 2

Digging further into this, an analysis of industry job creation and loss for genders, it becomes clear that part-time job creation is being seen most in traditionally male-dominated fields.

Male part-time job creation, average since 2015



Male full-time job losses, average since 2015

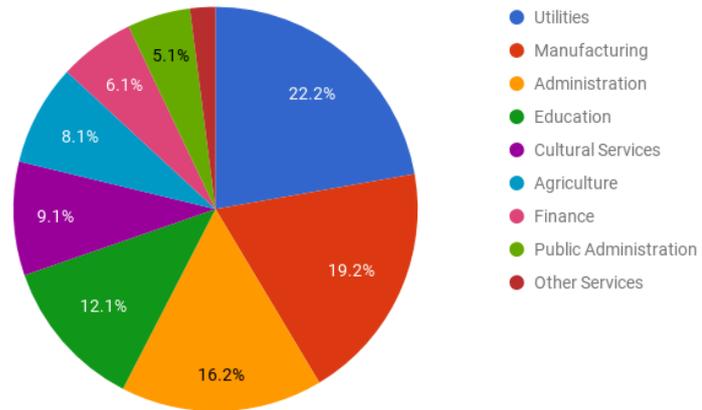


Table 3

Table 4

Tables 3 and 4 show the industries driving growth in part-time work and those shedding full-time jobs. The similarity between the leading industry changes in both charts. Effectively highlighting the decline in the need of traditionally base skills found on the front-line of key industries.

To compare, industries with the largest full-time job growth are construction, healthcare and retail.

Rather than just a discussion point, the economy is actually shifting away from production to services; and the industries still in the traditional arms of the economy are undergoing a distinct change in their human capital.

Further, looking at the states, table 5 shows that New South Wales and Western Australia are creating more part-time jobs than would be expected by their size, while Victoria and Queensland could be considered to be creating less part-time jobs than expected for their economic size.

Part-time job creation, average since 2015

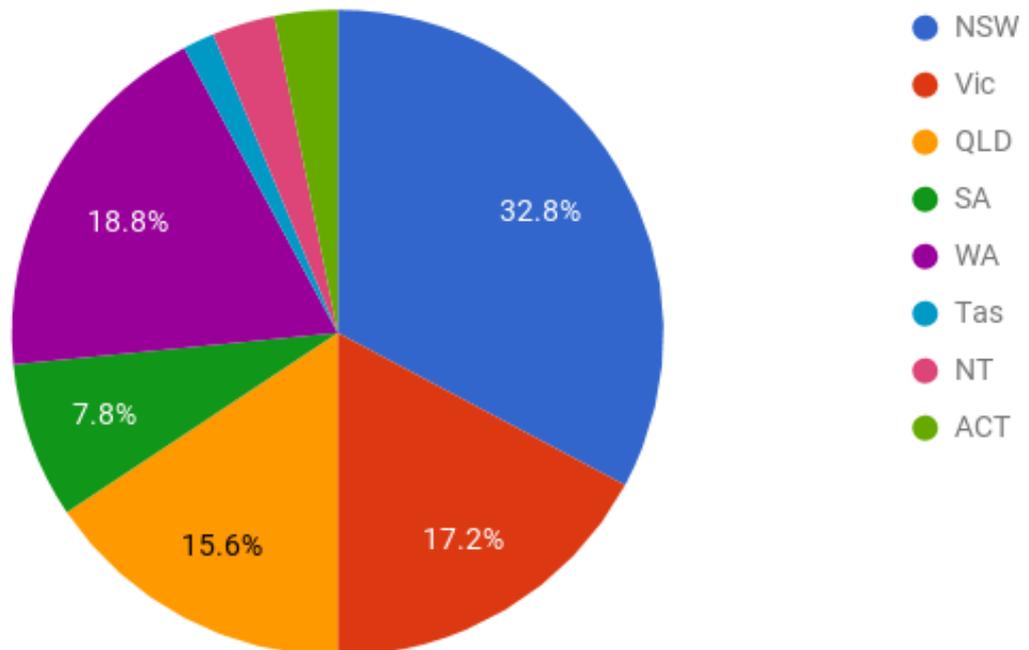


Table 5

Structurally, the labour market for men is changing dramatically. While part-time job creation is happening across industries, it does seem to be targeted at men on the ground in traditional male work. As workers in professional, and typically more educated, fields are not facing this reality to the same extent.

This may be unsurprising to watches of the labour market, it does us more than state the obvious.

Australian men have been defined by their work, what they do is who they are. These shifts go to the heart of a socio-economic challenge.

It is integral for policy makers to consider two key questions:

1. Are jobs being created that people want and need?
2. How does a reshaped labour market impact broader social issues?

In the case of men, it is clearer than most. There is a host of social evidence available, though its utilisation may be a concern.

As a further note, Workplace Gender Equality Agency data shows that 57.3 per cent of all management resignations are by men. Along with 30 per cent of all male workers using flexible working arrangements - purchased leave, compressed weeks, varied hours etc - a rate which is increasing, the assumption can be made that some men desire a different working life than the typical full-time experience.

We know the workplace is changing, for some that is a forced reality and others a desired shift.

For men, the future of work is very different to what they expected.

Appendix

1

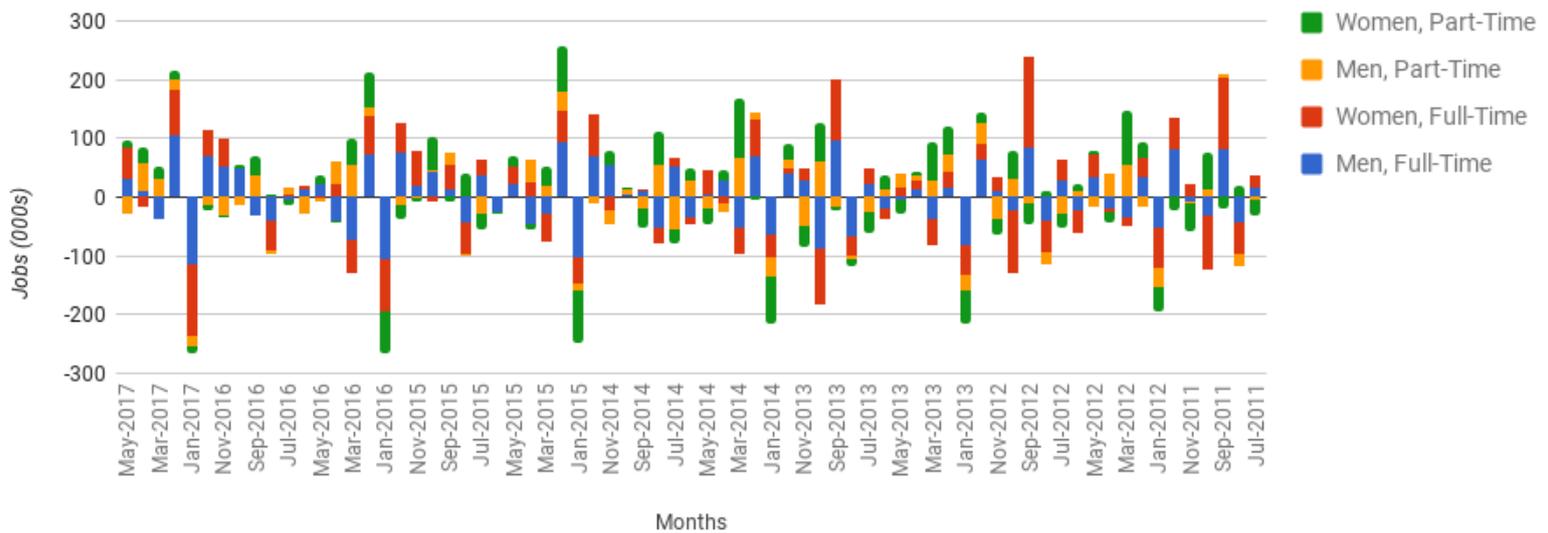
10 biggest monthly job losses since 2012

Month	Job losses (000s)
Jan-2017	-114.9
Jan-2016	-107.1
Jan-2015	-101.2
Oct-2013	-88.1
Jan-2013	-81.5
Mar-2016	-72.6
Aug-2013	-67.2
Jan-2014	-63
Jul-2014*	-55.5
Jan-2012	-52.8
Mar-2014	-52.6

*Part-time jobs

2

Job creation, July 2011 - date



Disclosure:

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This is part of an annual update of diversity in the workforce and organisational leadership in Australia, initiated by Conrad Liveris. These contributions are verifiable and are reviewed by experts prior to release.

The intention is to provide analysis on various workforce and economic topics on contemporary topics of national and industry interest. All efforts are made to present the evidence as impartial, independent, fair and not misleading.