

Contents

| | | |
|---|---|-----------|
| ■ | Background and Research Objectives | 2 |
| ■ | Research Methodology and Design | 4 |
| ■ | Key Findings | 10 |
| ■ | Detailed Findings: | 14 |
| ➤ | Sample Characteristics | 15 |
| ➤ | About your Job | 23 |
| ➤ | Hours of Work | 32 |
| ➤ | Work / Personal Life Balance | 40 |
| ➤ | Leave Entitlements | 44 |
| ➤ | Job Security and Areas of Concern | 54 |
| ➤ | Living Standards | 72 |
| ➤ | Occupational Health and Safety | 74 |
| ➤ | Industrial Relations | 78 |
| ➤ | Workplace Activists / Delegates | 84 |

Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES



- Made up of 46 affiliated unions and representing around 1.8 million workers in Australia, the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) is the council and national centre representing the Australian workforce.
- ACTU speaks on behalf of all workers in industries such as manufacturing, finance, government and the service sectors.
- In 1999, ACTU executives commissioned Millward Brown to conduct a survey of Australian employees in order to gain more detailed information on workplace issues such as working hours, changes to workplace conditions and security.
- In 2001, the ACTU sought to embark on a new round of the study, hence Millward Brown was commissioned to undertake the research, which proceeded in 2002.
- The key objectives of the National Survey of Workplace Issues 2002 were:

- *To take stock of current workplace sentiments amongst employees.*
 - *To identify shifts or changes, if any, in workplace issues.*
- *To enable ACTU to develop long term strategies to address these issues.*

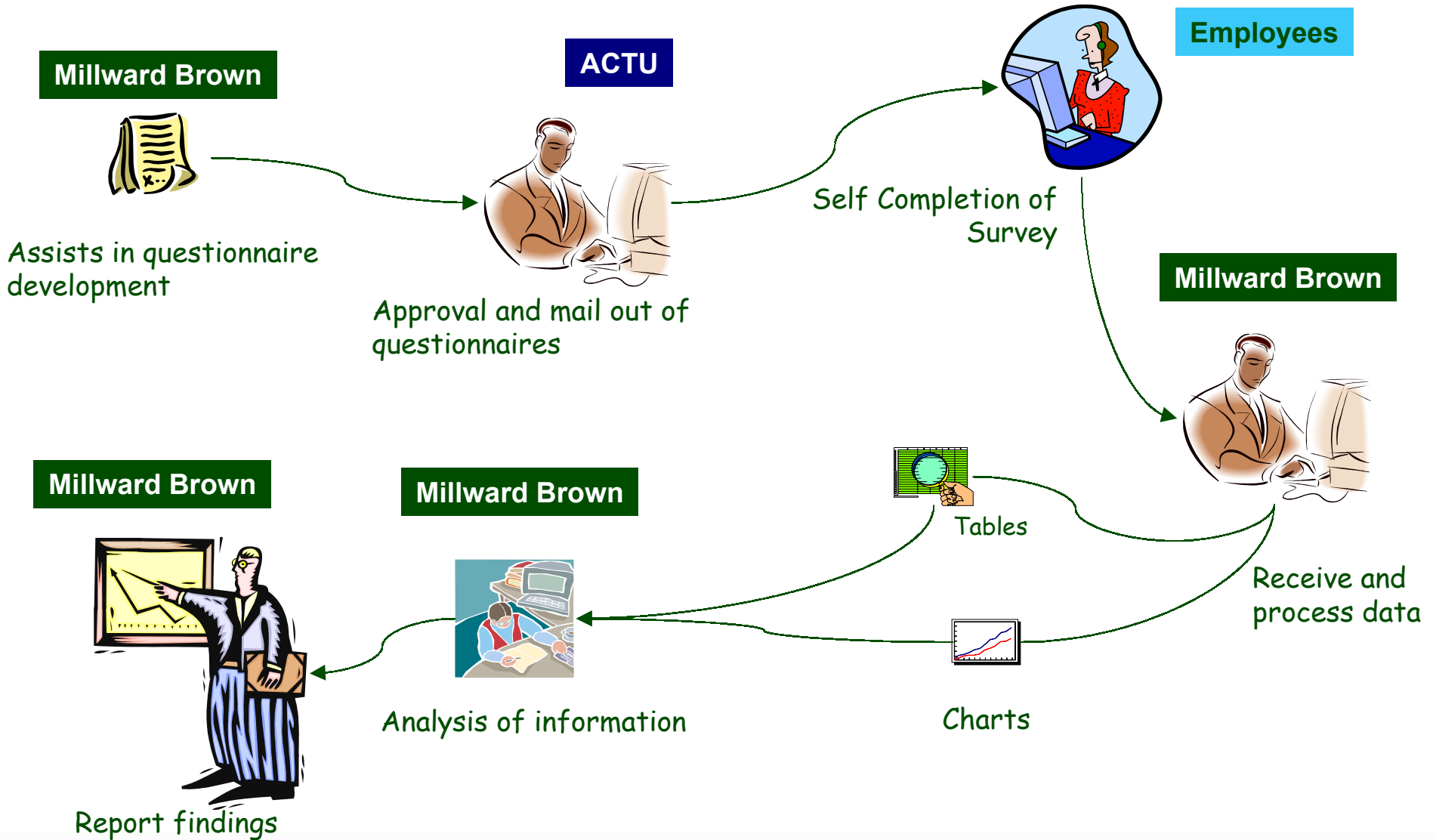
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

RESEARCH DESIGN



- Due to external circumstances, the survey was postponed until early to mid 2002.
- As with the research conducted in 1999, a quantitative research technique was used for the 2002 Workplace Issues Study.
- The following pages discuss the research methodology in greater detail:
 - ↳ *Research Process*
 - ↳ *Sample Design*
 - ↳ *Data Collection*
 - ↳ *Questionnaire Development*

RESEARCH PROCESS



■ *Who did we talk to?*

- ↵ The target audience for the research was Australian workers who are members of participating unions.
- ↵ Interested non-union members were also welcome to participate.
- ↵ The sample profile follows in the detailed findings of this report.

■ *How many employees participated?*

- ↵ A similar sample size to that of the 1999 study was sought (N=6,700). Based on an estimated response rate of 30% and the assumption that we required approximately N=7,000 completed surveys, it was anticipated that the ACTU would distribute at least 20,000 questionnaires.
- ↵ However, for the 2002 survey, the ACTU distributed 60,000 surveys in printed form and made the survey available via the web. The final number of completed questionnaires received for processing was N=8,259. Of these, there were approximately n=1,000 returns via the web. In addition, around n=2,000 extra returns were received well after the cut-off date and were not processed.
- ↵ It is difficult to determine the response rate in relation to the non-printed surveys. Excluding the web returns, the response rate on the printed questionnaires was 12%, albeit a good sample size was achieved nonetheless.

■ *How did we reach out to them?*

- ↵ The research was administered via a self completion questionnaire. See Appendix 1.
- ↵ The ACTU was responsible for the distribution of questionnaires to potential respondents.
- ↵ The questionnaire was distributed via a range of means, depending on factors such as budget and ease of locating employees. Distribution methods included trade journals, mail outs, unions directly handing out surveys, and the survey was also made available on the ACTU and other web sites.
- ↵ The survey period was from May through to mid-August 2002. While the end date was specified as July 31st, this was extended in Tasmania, where the questionnaires were not received until later.
- ↵ Completed surveys could be returned to either Millward Brown or the ACTU, whether via fax, email, or reply paid envelopes provided by ACTU. The majority were forwarded to Millward Brown via the ACTU.

QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT



- Millward Brown provided limited assistance to the ACTU in the development of the research instrument.
- As with the 1999 study, the ACTU provided the vast majority of questions, which were converted to an appropriate self completion format, and revised where necessary. See Appendix 1.
- One union, the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) commissioned two additional questions, the results of which are provided in Appendix 2.
- This report provides detailed findings on a selection of core questions, with non-core questions being reported upon by way of charts only and tables (both electronic and hard copy).
- NB: “Not Established” indicates respondents who did not answer a question. Generally, the proportion of those not answering any given question was no higher than 3%. Wherever the proportion was 5% or higher, this is indicated.

KEY FINDINGS

KEY FINDINGS



The ACTU National Survey of Workplace Issues 2002 has revealed a range of employee concerns regarding working hours, unpaid overtime, leave, security, health and safety and living conditions.

- The majority of respondents claimed to be concerned about their job satisfaction (57%) and their rate of pay (61%). However, **the highest priority issues were shown to be high executive salaries (74%, or 50% 'very concerned'), workplace change and restructuring (76%), and stress / pressure at work (68%).**
 - ↪ Health sector workers were significantly more concerned on a range of issues, as were those in New South Wales, along with full time workers.
 - ↪ White collar workers were more concerned about stress at work, their workloads and long working hours.
- **Two thirds of employees claimed to be concerned about their job security (66%) and three in ten feel less secure than they did a year ago (30%).**
 - ↪ Male respondents were observed as less secure than females, as were casuals and those in the Trade / Primary Industry and General Services sectors, and those in New South Wales.
- **Respondents work an average of 36 hours per week.** A total of 32% of the respondents work 40 or more hours each week, with 10% working 45 or more and 4% working 50 hours or more. Half of the sample claimed they are concerned about long working hours (51%).
 - ↪ Males tend to work more hours than females, largely attributed to females being more likely to work part time. 42% of male respondents work 40 hours or more each week, with 15% working 45 hours or more and 6% 50 hours or more.
- **Half of those who responded would prefer to work the same number of hours, while three in ten seek to reduce their hours (28%) and fewer than one in ten would like more hours (9%).** While 20% claim to be dissatisfied with their hours, just 5% were either 'very' or 'completely' dissatisfied. Nearly all full time employees would prefer to retain their full time status (93% of males and 85% of females).

KEY FINDINGS



- **Over half of the respondents work at least some overtime each week (54%), while only 29% are entitled to any paid overtime.** Those who are paid some overtime are far more likely to work overtime hours (75% vs 55% of those who are paid no overtime). Those in the Education sector are the least likely to be paid any overtime (7%), however a quarter still claim they work 5 or more hours overtime per week (26%).
- Interestingly, those who are paid overtime work almost the same number of hours per week as those who are not (37 hours on average, compared with 36 respectively).
- **The estimated average weekly income of respondents was \$736 before Tax, with males on an average of \$869, and females \$641.**
- **Two in five respondents claimed that their work has a negative impact on their family life (38%),** as well as their social and leisure activities. Contributing factors include long working hours, a reduced feeling of job security and financial difficulties.
 - ↳ 69% of respondents claimed to have experienced some form of financial difficulty in the last 12 months, with 63% believing themselves worse off since the introduction of the GST.
- Over half of the respondents believe the impact of their work on their personal life to have increased in the last few years (55%), whereas 38% feel that it has remained the same and just 7% have noticed a decrease (higher among part time (10%) and casual workers (11%)).
- Of those with parental responsibilities, **more than half claimed that the mother was entitled to no paid maternity leave (53%).** Three quarters of these respondents agreed that a period of maternity leave should be paid (73%).

KEY FINDINGS

- **Almost half of the respondents had taken time off in the preceding year to care for someone, with 41% of these respondents claiming this time as ‘carer’s leave’,** while the majority claimed sick leave instead (45%). Of all those who responded to the survey, most agreed that they should be entitled to additional days leave to care for family members who are sick (78%).
- Occupational health and safety issues appear to be reasonably well addressed at present, however, the survey shows that **respondents are concerned about their workplace being understaffed, people being overloaded and, in turn, working long hours.**
- In terms of industrial relations, **50% disagreed with the statement that “employers can generally be trusted”.** Two thirds felt that employers should not be able to monitor employees by video for health and safety purposes (65%), while the vast majority felt that employers should be bound by unfair dismissal laws (80%).
- Most respondents were union members (94%), with **the majority of members agreeing that their union has performed well in a range of key areas,** such as maintaining and improving employment conditions, improving members’ wages and negotiating desirable Enterprise Bargaining Agreement outcomes.
- Unions are also seen to have been communicating effectively with members, with the most preferred form of communication with members being via newsletter.
- In addition to these results, 37% of respondents provided a written response to the open-ended General Comments section of the questionnaire. The ACTU is separately analysing these results.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Sample Characteristics

Sample Characteristics

- The following pages table the characteristics of the sample of employees who returned the questionnaire.
- The sample profile shows that the results stem from a good cross section of Australian workers, in terms of gender, age, income and level of education, as well as city versus country dwellers and attitudinal differences. However, there is likely to be some bias evident in the results, due to a high proportion of respondents in some respects, such as the proportion of full time workers (73%), those from Victoria (40%), as well as certain industry sectors.
- Some observations from the sample in relation to child care:
 - ↵ Female workers are more likely to be the main care giver of their child, whereas males are more likely to claim that the responsibility is 'shared equally'.
 - ↵ Less than a quarter of respondents have their child in paid childcare (23%), with two thirds in no childcare at all (67%). The majority claimed that their children do not need childcare, however the older the respondent, the more likely they were to respond in this way, suggesting that their children are also older.
- In terms of income, females earn significantly less than males. Those more likely to claim a higher weekly income included:
 - ↵ metropolitan residents;
 - ↵ public sector employees;
 - ↵ those in the 'Government Administration and Defence' and 'Trade / Primary Industry' groups;
 - ↵ those residing in the ACT (72% earning \$800+p/w), followed by NSW (63%)*; and
 - ↵ white collar workers.

* A high proportion of Northern Territory employees were also in the higher income bracket (69% at \$800+ p/w), however, this was based on a small sample size (n=48) and is therefore indicative only.

Sample Profile



| | % |
|---------------------------------|----|
| <u>Gender</u> | |
| Male | 42 |
| Female | 56 |
| <u>Age</u> | |
| 15-24 | 3 |
| 25-34 | 14 |
| 35-44 | 29 |
| 45-54 | 37 |
| 55-59 | 12 |
| 60+ | 5 |
| <u>State / Territory</u> | |
| ACT | 5 |
| New South Wales | 14 |
| South Australia | 6 |
| Victoria | 40 |
| Northern Territory | 1 |
| Queensland | 10 |
| Tasmania | 2 |
| Western Australia | 22 |
| <u>Area of Residence</u> | |
| Capital city | 58 |
| Regional centre | 25 |
| Rural area | 16 |

| | % |
|--|----|
| <u>Work Status</u> | |
| Full time | 73 |
| Part time | 21 |
| Casual | 5 |
| <u>Entitled to Overtime Payment</u> | |
| Yes | 29 |
| No | 43 |
| Don't Know | 19 |
| <u>Highest Level of Education</u> | |
| Some secondary/ High school | 19 |
| Completed secondary/ High school | 23 |
| Apprenticeship | 7 |
| Associate diploma or certificate | 24 |
| Bachelors degree or higher | 27 |
| <u>Enrolled in Course of Study</u> | |
| Yes | 15 |
| No | 83 |
| <u>Marital Status</u> | |
| Married / De Facto | 78 |
| Single | 22 |

Base: All respondents (n=8,259)

Sample Profile

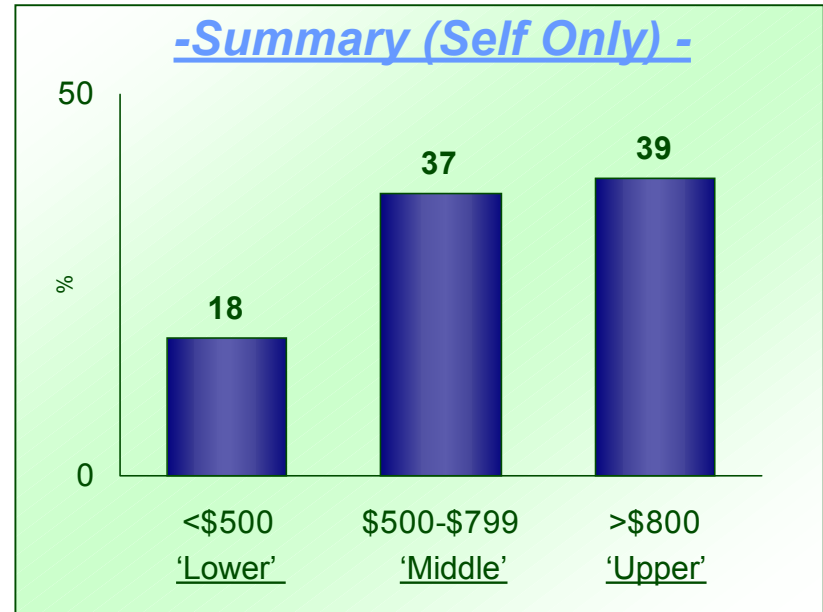
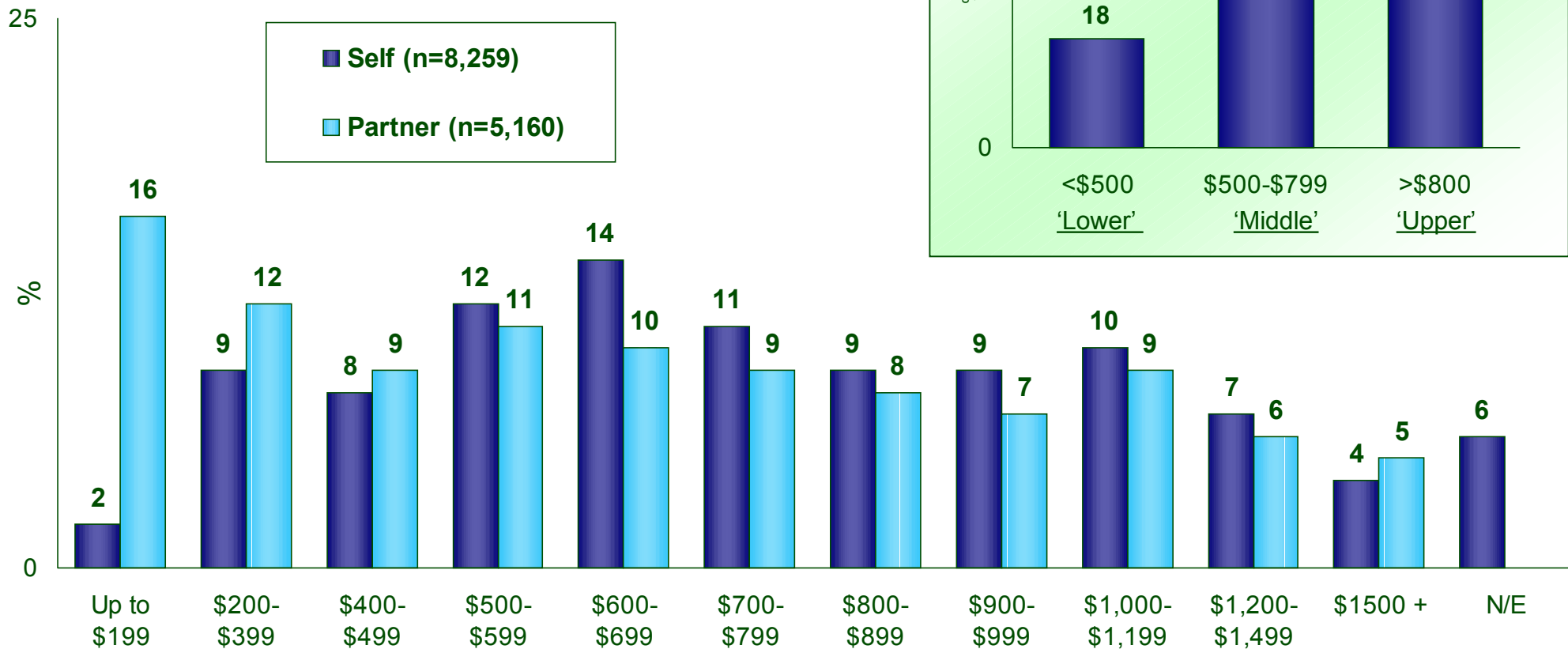


| | % |
|---|----|
| <u>Dependents Under 18 years</u> | |
| None | 62 |
| With dependent children | 37 |
| ----- | |
| One | 38 |
| Two | 43 |
| Three | 15 |
| Four or more | 4 |
| <u>Main Care Giver</u> | |
| Me | 33 |
| Spouse/ Partner | 20 |
| Shared equally | 46 |
| <u>Paid Childcare Arrangements</u> | |
| Yes, in paid childcare | 23 |
| No, only in unpaid childcare | 9 |
| Children not in childcare | 67 |

| | % |
|--|----|
| <u>Reason No Childcare Arrangements</u> | |
| A childcare position is unavailable | 1 |
| Too expensive | 5 |
| Prefer not to have children in care | 6 |
| My partner is home | 20 |
| Other family members care | 7 |
| My children do not need childcare | 68 |
| <u>Entitled to Paid Maternity Leave</u> | |
| Yes | 40 |
| No | 53 |
| Don't Know | 19 |
| <u>Other Dependents</u> | |
| Yes | 15 |
| No | 83 |

Weekly Income Before Tax

Note that 6% did not specify their own income. Almost one in five (18%) indicated they are single and a further 20% did not indicate their partner's income. Results shown for partners therefore exclude the proportion who did not respond and those who are single. The summary chart opposite shows the income groupings used throughout the analysis. The average weekly income of those responding to the survey is estimated at around \$736 pre-Tax.



Base: All respondents (n=8,259)

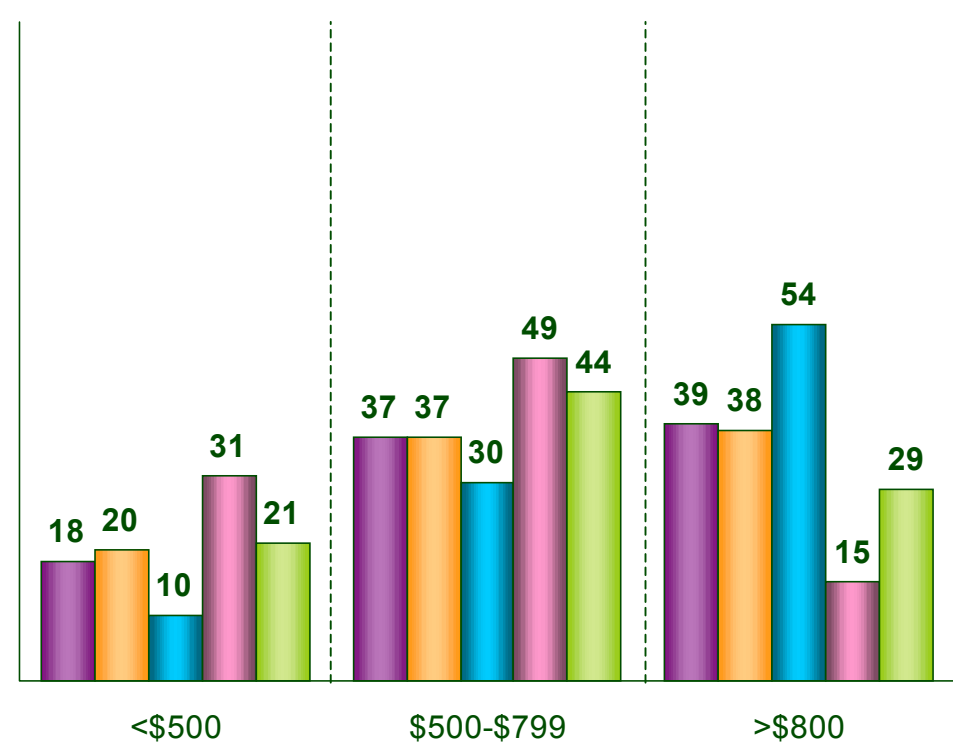
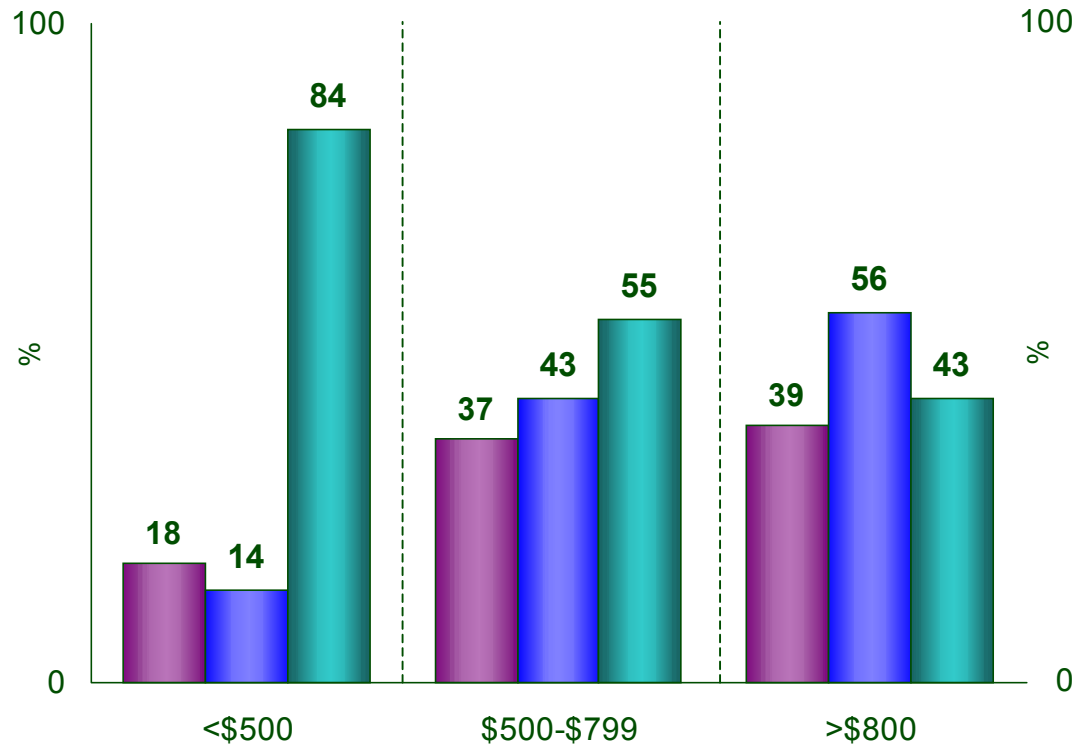
Q1.9 What is your total weekly income before Tax? What is your spouse/ partner's total weekly income before Tax?



Weekly Income Before Tax (Self Only)

- Gender -

- Employer -



| | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Total (n=8,259) | Males (n=3,491) | Females (n=4,598) |
| Ave: \$736 | \$869 | \$641 |

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Total (n=8,259) | Private (n=1,938) |
| Public (n=3,630) | Local Govt (n=1,844) |
| Non-Profit (n=702) | |

Q1.9 What is your total weekly income before Tax? What is your spouse/ partner's total weekly income before Tax?