

The drivers and uses of time use data in Australia

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Australian Bureau of Statistics
Informing Australia's important decisions



Time Use Survey – Contents

- ABS TUS history and uses
- 2020-21 TUS
- How 2020-21 TUS has been used
- Enumeration findings
- Plans for 2024 TUS

Time Use Survey – History to 2006

- ABS had previously conducted TUS in 1992, 1997 and 2006
- Face to face interview with leave behind diaries.
- TUS questionnaire completed by any responsible adult and paper diary left behind for everyone in the household aged 15 years and over.
- Diary was for a specific 48 hour period and collected at 5 minute increments
- Data items collected
 - Main activity
 - Who did you do this for
 - What else were you doing at the same time
 - Where were you
 - Who was with you

Time Use Survey – History to 2006 cont.

Paper diaries returned for office for mark in and data entry.

- Team of 20+ staff checking, editing and data entry
- 60 page coding manual – subjective decision making - imputed travel, indoor/outdoor
- Took 12 months to code and data enter

Survey was cancelled in 2014 due to funding constraints – expensive, resource intensive

Uses of earlier TUS

In the ABS the TUS has been used in a number of our publications and releases about time use and unpaid work.

Unpaid Work and the Australian Economy, Australia 1997, Australian Bureau of Statistics. catalogue number 5240.0

5240.0 - Occasional Paper: Measuring Unpaid Household Work, 1992

How Australians Use Their Time – Selected findings from the 1992 Time Use Survey, Australia, 1992, Australian Bureau of Statistics. catalogue number 4153.0

Unpaid work -Australian System of National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods

Time Use Survey – reinstatement

- **2018 Women's Economic Security statement included funding to reinstate Time Use Survey (TUS)**
- **Key insights**
 - Value of unpaid work
 - Gender differences in paid and unpaid work
 - Uptake of flexible working arrangements
 - Balance between work and other roles within families
 - Volunteering and other community participation
- **Key components**
 - Commencing in 2020-21
 - On-going survey – Input into the annual releases of the Labour Account^(a) and Status of Women Report Card^(b)
 - Introduction of e-collection and online diary

▶ (a) [Working Future: The Australian Government's White Paper on Jobs and Opportunities | Treasury.gov.au](#)

• (b) [Status of Women Report Card - 2023 | PM&C \(pmc.gov.au\)](#)

• [Status of Women Report Card 2024 | Working for Women \(genderequality.gov.au\)](#)

Time Use Survey - Strategy

Modernise the Australian TUS

Drivers

- Align with respondent behaviours and expectations – digital solutions
- Align with modern survey practices
- Quick turn around regular collection
- High cost of traditional collection approaches – face to face interviewing, leave behind diaries, data entry, coding and microediting – expensive but also to move away from heavy clerical coding and editing and subjective decision making
- Modernised the activity classification – e.g. added ‘general internet and device use’ to report time spent checking phone including social media, email, browsing. Removed duplication etc

• Data collection

- Online first - self completion electronic questionnaire and online diary
- Computer assisted personal interview and paper form for those not participating online

- Data items collected
 - What was your main activity?
 - Who did you do this for?
 - Did you use a smartphone, tablet or computer to do this main activity?
 - Where were you?
 - What else were you doing at the same time?
 - Did you use a smartphone, tablet or computer to do this main activity?
 - Where you alone or with anyone you know? (options to select – alone, partner, child aged 0-4 years, child aged 5-14 years, other people I live with, other people I know)

Enumeration

- Collected during COVID
- Field procedures were adjusted in line with jurisdictional restrictions
- Paper and online diary
- Paper diaries returned to the office for data entry and coding
- Data released October 2022.

Time Use Survey – ABS releases

✓ Latest release

↓ Data download

How Australians Use Their Time

Key findings on how people use their time in Australia

Reference period 2020-21 financial year

Released 7/10/2022

Next release Unknown

▼ Previous releases

How Australian generations spent their time on recreation and leisure

↓ Data download

Explores activities across Generation Z, Millennials, Generation X, Baby Boomers, and Interwar generation

Released 16/04/2024

Source: [How Australians Use Their Time, 2020-21 financial year](#)

Aussies watch TV more on the weekends
and we're not remotely sorry

Average daily time spent watching
TV and video on weekdays vs weekends

WEEKDAY

2 hours & 48 mins

WEEKEND

3 hours & 12 mins

Note: For persons aged 15 years and older. Includes watching TV, movies, streaming services and online video. Includes YouTube but not other social media.
Source: ABS, How Australians Use Their Time, 2020-21

People were busy taking care of
children in the mornings in 2020-21

The highest proportion of people
participated in child care activities
between 8am-9am

their Time, 2020-21



Average time spent on
housework per day in 2020-21



Females: 1hr 27 mins

Males: 58 mins

Data source: ABS, How Australians Use Their Time, 2020-21

Time Use Survey – Status of Women – report card

- Released annually on International Women's Day, by Dept of Prime Minister and Cabinet
- Includes the most recent available data on the social and economic equality issues facing women and girls in Australia

- On average, women aged 15 to 64 years do 55.4 hours of work a week, 2 hours more than men¹³

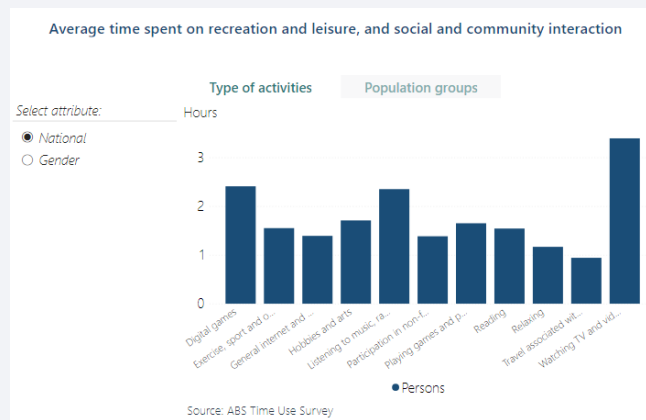
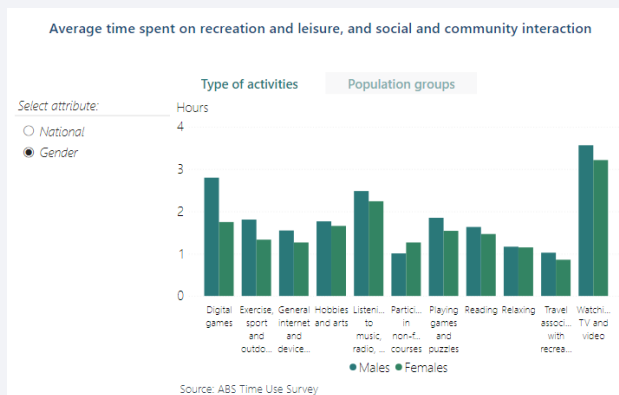
- Women do over 9 hours a week more unpaid work and care than men¹⁵
- Female parents do 1 hour and 15 minutes more unpaid child care a day than male parents¹⁶

Status of Women
Report Card

2024 Status
of Women
Report Card

Time Use Survey – Measuring what matters

Measuring what matters is Australia's national wellbeing framework that will track progress towards a more healthy, secure, sustainable, cohesive and prosperous Australia



[Measuring what matters | Treasury.gov.au](https://www.treasury.gov.au)

Time Use Survey – 2023 Intergenerational Report

2023 Intergenerational Report – projects the economy and the Australian Government's budget to 2062-63

- ▶ This is the sixth report. Its analysis and projections of the key drivers of economic growth will help inform and improve public policy settings to better position Australia for the next 40 years.
- ▶ The report considers 5 major forces affecting the coming decades:
 - population ageing
 - technological and digital transformation
 - climate change and the net zero transformation
 - rising demand for care and support services
 - geopolitical risk and fragmentation.

Box 3.1 Caring roles impact women's participation

The experiences of women in the labour market are varied, and many women continue to face barriers to finding jobs or working their preferred hours. One of the key barriers to women's participation is the unequal division of caring and other unpaid work. In 2020–21, women on average spent around 40 per cent more time on unpaid work each day than men.^{xiii} The gap tends to be largest among parents of young children, but also exists in couples without children and where women are the higher earning partner.

The gap in labour force participation rates and hours worked between women and men is largest around prime child-rearing years (Chart 3.7 and Chart 3.8). A woman's likelihood of being employed drops by around 45 per cent in the year of their first child's arrival, with little recovery in the following five years, and hours in paid work are around 35 per cent lower on average in the first five years of parenthood.^{xiv} In contrast, men's hours worked on average drop only in the first month of parenthood before returning to their previous levels.^{xv}

[2023 Intergenerational Report | Treasury.gov.au](https://www.treasury.gov.au/publications/inbrief/2023/intergenerational-report)

Time Use Survey – Other uses

- National Strategy for Volunteering
- Research and articles from media and academics – strong focus on unpaid care/work discrepancy between men and women.

National Strategy for Volunteering 2023–2033

At the same time, women were more likely than men to participate in most types of domestic activities, including housework (70 per cent of females compared to 42 per cent of males), food and drink preparation/service (75 per cent compared to 55 per cent), and shopping (38 per cent compared to 31 per cent).⁴⁹ Gender dynamics in volunteering, including the relationship with paid work and domestic labour, needs greater exploration to ensure volunteering does not continue to perpetuate power imbalances and systemic barriers that exclude certain people from volunteering.

News...

Australian unpaid social contributions valued at \$287 billion

15 March 2023

[Australian unpaid social contributions valued at \\$287 billion - The University of Sydney](#)

[National Strategy for Volunteering - Volunteering Australia](#)

Time Use Survey – Labour Account

TUS will be used to expand the Labour Account by providing the data on the amount (hours) spent on unpaid care. By combining with the monetary value of care this will ensure that the contribution of unpaid care to society and the economy is more visible alongside paid work.

- TUS is an important enabler to accurately estimating the social and economic contribution of unpaid care.
- Will draw on international standards and frameworks as well as practices of other comparable national statistical organisations.
- Will build on the previous work
- Early stages of developing a method for estimating the economic value of unpaid care.
- Work is still being scoped out.

2020-21 TUS – enumeration findings

- Lower response rates compared to 2006

Response rates	2020-21	2006
Household	49%	64%
Person	69%	91%
Diary	67%	81%

2020-2021 TUS – enumeration findings cont.

- **Main activity was well reported, including caring and the other key data items.**
- Contextual variables not well reported
 - Secondary activity - Respondents had difficulty understanding the concept of secondary activity
 - Secondary activities were under-reported
 - Only 12% of time had secondary activity reported
 - Half the number of secondary activities compared to 1997
 - Caring as a secondary activity was under-reported
 - Only 13% of those reporting a secondary activity reported caring
 - Overall, only 3% of main activities had childcare reported as a **secondary activity** – less than half of what we saw in 2006

2020-2021 TUS – enumeration findings cont.

Negative respondent feedback about the level of detail, complexity and time taken to complete

30% of diaries had a comment.

- 60% negative
- 10% positive
- 30% neutral

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Took a long time</i>- <i>This caused me stress</i>- <i>I hate it</i>- <i>Onerous and intrusive</i>- <i>Extremely complex</i>- <i>annoying to fill out</i>- <i>Too time consuming & intense</i>- <i>Has to be a better way</i>- <i>Not easy at all</i>- <i>Some questions are hard to follow</i>- <i>Ridiculous amount of detail required</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Good Survey</i>- <i>Liked to complete this survey</i>- <i>good to see where time and effort goes</i>- <i>good Australian statistics</i>- <i>easy</i>- <i>form is slick</i> |
|---|--|

Objectives

- High quality TUS data – asking direct questions to better capture the key data-items of unpaid work and care
- Focus on **key data items** and requirements of **key data users**
- Improve respondent experience – reduce burden and incompleteness
- Improve response rates
- Align with digital government strategy

How

- Remove lower priority context variables – secondary activity, device, who with, who for, location.
- Asking direct questions to more consistently collect the key data-items of unpaid care especially as secondary activity – children, adults with a disability, illness or age related.
- Will ask about working from home directly
- No paper diary – CAWI and CATI recall

2024 Time line

- * Enumeration will commence July – Sept 2024 target sample of 10,000 diary days
- * Data released mid 2025 will include microdata file.
- * Undertake analysis and iterative learning/improvement.

Questions?

