



Fair Work
Commission

Work and Care Data Profile

Economic Analysis Team
Fair Work Commission

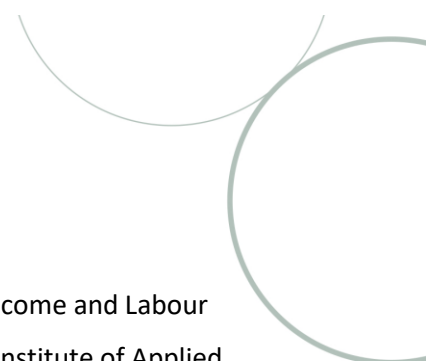


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This report uses unit record data from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey conducted by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research at the University of Melbourne on behalf of the Australian Government Department of Social Services (DSS), with data collection conducted by Roy Morgan Research. The findings and views reported in this paper, however, are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Australian Government, DSS, or any of DSS’ contractors or partners. DOI: [10.26193/3QRFMZ](https://doi.org/10.26193/3QRFMZ).



Introduction

The Work and Care Data Profile uses the latest data obtained from the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, Wave 22 (2022) conducted by the Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research; the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Characteristics of Employment as at August 2023 and data from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency for 2022–23.

Data obtained from HILDA and the ABS is used to provide a profile of work and care among employees in Australia and where possible, data on modern-award reliance is included for additional context. These data are obtained from the research report: [A profile of employee characteristics across modern awards](#)¹ published for the Annual Wage Review 2022–23 and referenced in the [Discussion Paper - Work and Care](#).²

Workplace flexibilities considered in this profile include working from home, flexible hours and flexible start/finish times, job share arrangements and part-time work.

¹ 5 Kelvin Yuen and Josh Tomlinson, 'A profile of employee characteristics across modern awards', (Research Report No 1, Fair Work Commission, March 2023)

² See para. 40: Discussion paper, Work and Care, Modern Awards Review 2023–24, Fair Work Commission, 29 January 2024.

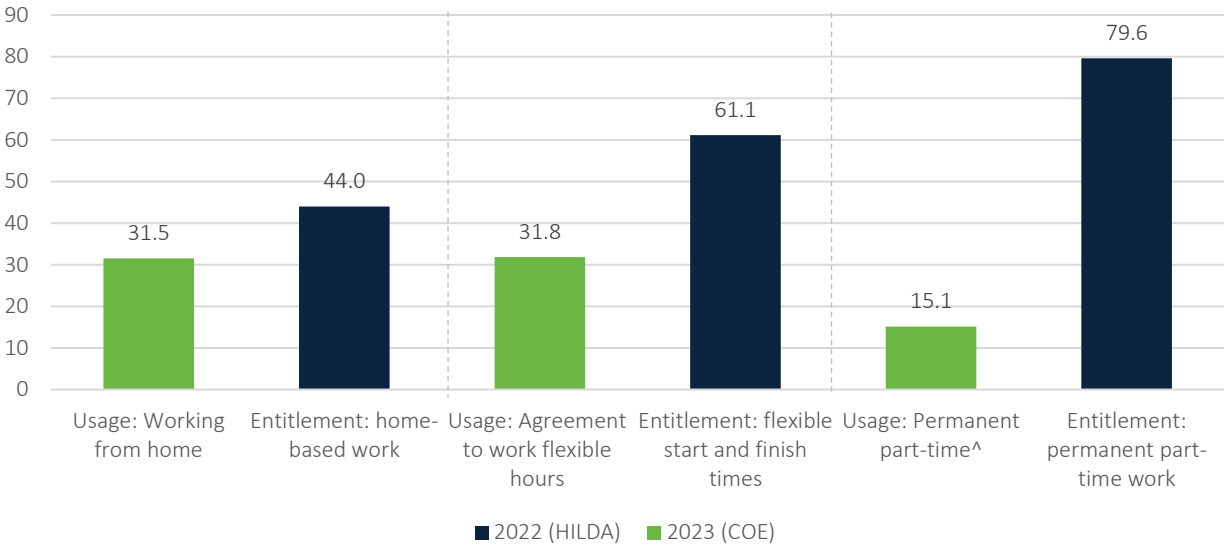


Comparing workplace flexibilities

Of the workplace flexibilities explored in this data profile, working flexible hours and working from home were used at similar rates, while permanent part-time work was less common (Chart 1).

Looking at whether workers thought they had a particular entitlement to workplace flexibilities if required, permanent part-time work was most frequently reported as being available, followed by flexible start and finish time and then home-based work.

Chart 1: Comparing workplace flexibilities: entitlements and usage, proportion of employees



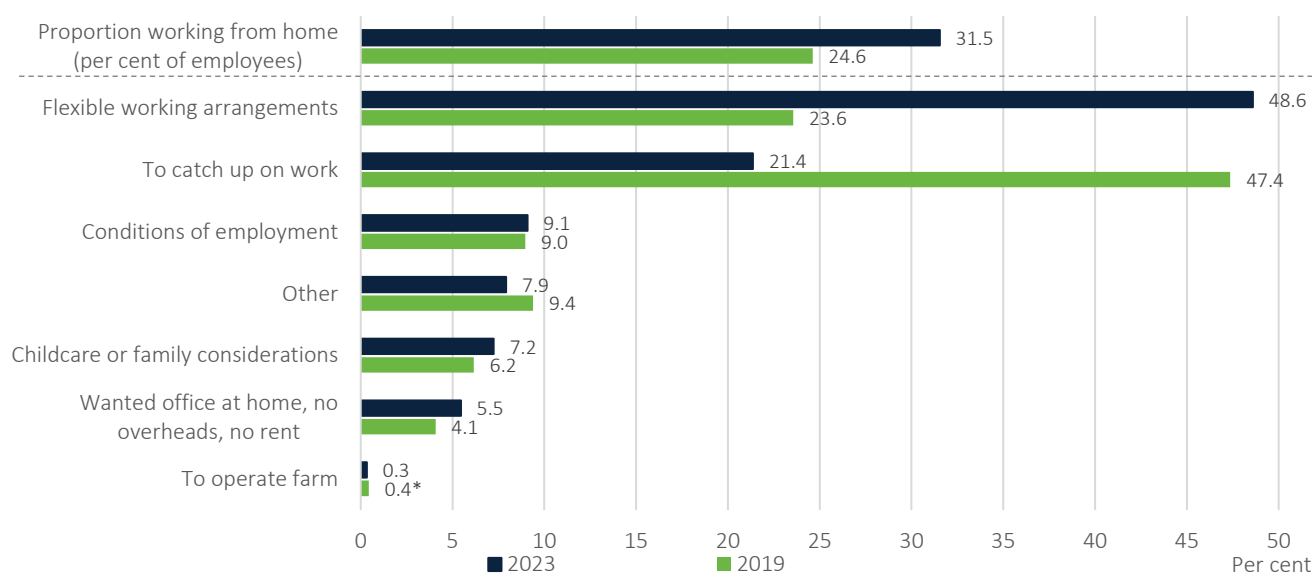
Note: ^Permanent part-time proportion refers to employees with leave entitlements working part-time (in main job) as a proportion of all employees

Source: Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, Waves 22; ABS, Characteristics of Employment (COE), Australia, August 2023.

Working from home

As of August 2023, 34.2 per cent of female employees and 28.9 per cent of male employees regularly work from home in their main job.³ Overall rates of working from home increased between 2019 and 2023, from 24.6 to 31.5 per cent (Chart 2). 'To catch up on work' was the most common main reason for working from home in 2019, however more recently, 'flexible working arrangements' has become the most common reason (increasing from 23.6 to 48.6 per cent).

Chart 2: Reason for working from home, those who regularly work from home, 2019 and 2023



Note: Main reason regularly worked from home in main job. Data refers to August of each year. Flexible working arrangements refers to 'had an agreement to work flexible hours'. * Estimated number of employees with this reason for working from home has a relative standard error of 25% to 50%, proportion should be used with caution.

Source: ABS, TableBuilder: *Characteristics of Employment, Australia, 2019 and 2023 (August)*.

In 2019, 34.0 per cent of employees reported they had an entitlement to home-based work, compared to 44.0 per cent in 2022.⁴ Both Labourers and Community and personal service workers, the two most common occupations for modern award-reliant employees, have low rates of working from home and low rates of entitlement to do so (Table 1).⁵

³ ABS, *Characteristics of Employment, Australia, August 2023*.

⁴ *Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey, Waves 22*.

⁵ For the entitlement questions, respondents are asked to indicate 'whether you, or other employees working at a similar level to you at your workplace, would be able to use these if needed' See [Wave 22 Self Completion Questionnaire](#), p. 19.

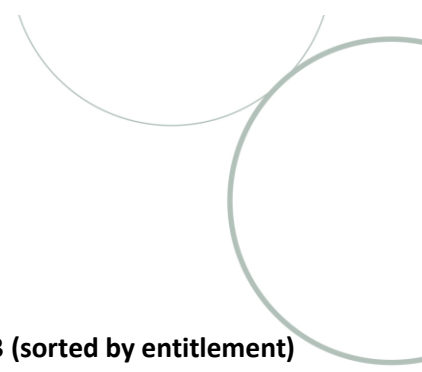


Table 1: Home-based work, proportion of employees, by occupation 2022 and 2023 (sorted by entitlement)

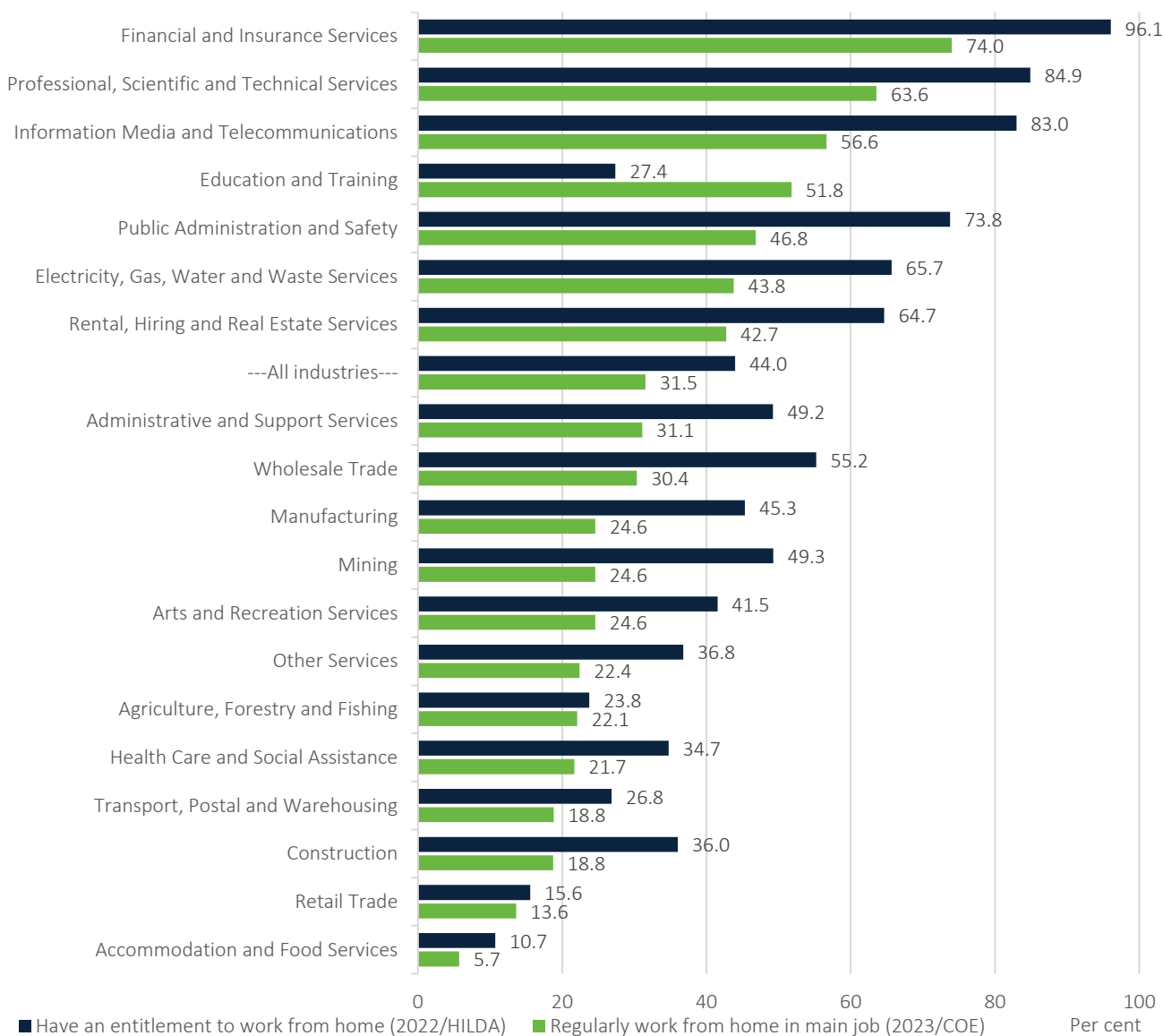
Occupation	Have an entitlement to home-based work (2022/HILDA)	Regularly work from home in main job (2023/COE)	Modern award-reliant employees with occupation as a proportion of all modern award-reliant employees (2021/EEH)
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Managers	67.5	56.5	1.4
Clerical and administrative workers	65.7	41.4	10.4
Professionals	57.6	55.9	4.8
All occupations	44.0	31.5	100
<u>Technicians and trades workers</u>	31.2	13.0	13.0
<u>Community and personal service</u>	19.8	12.1	27.2
Machinery operators and drivers	18.0	3.3	5.6
<u>Sales workers</u>	16.4	15.5	17.4
<u>Labourers</u>	9.1	2.9	20.2

Note: The four most common occupations of award-reliant employees (based on Yuen & Tomlinson 2023) are presented underlined.

Source: Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, Waves 22; ABS, *TableBuilder: Characteristics of Employment (COE), Australia, August 2023*; Yuen K & Tomlinson J (2023), *A profile of employee characteristics across modern awards*, Fair Work Commission Research Report 1/2023, March, Table B13.

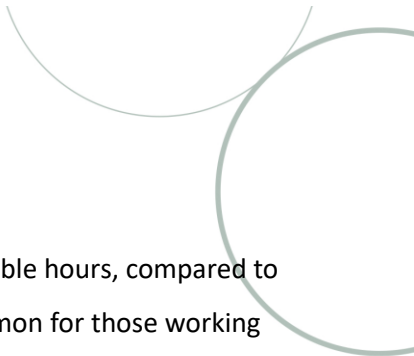
Chart 3 shows that home-based work entitlements vary widely across industries, with most modern award-reliant industries⁶ having proportions below the all-industry average.

Chart 3: Working from home, proportion of employees, by industry



Source: Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, Wave 22; ABS, *TableBuilder: Characteristics of Employment, Australia*, August 2023

⁶ Modern award reliance refers to the proportion of total employees in a given industry that have their wage set by a modern award. As of May 2021, the five industries with the highest rates of modern award reliance include (in order, starting from most award reliant) Accommodation and food services, Administrative and support services, Other services, Retail trade, and Arts and recreation services. Together these 5 industries employ 57.8 per cent of all modern award reliant employees. See Yuen K & Tomlinson J (2023), *A profile of employee characteristics across modern awards*, Fair Work Commission Research Report 1/2023, March.

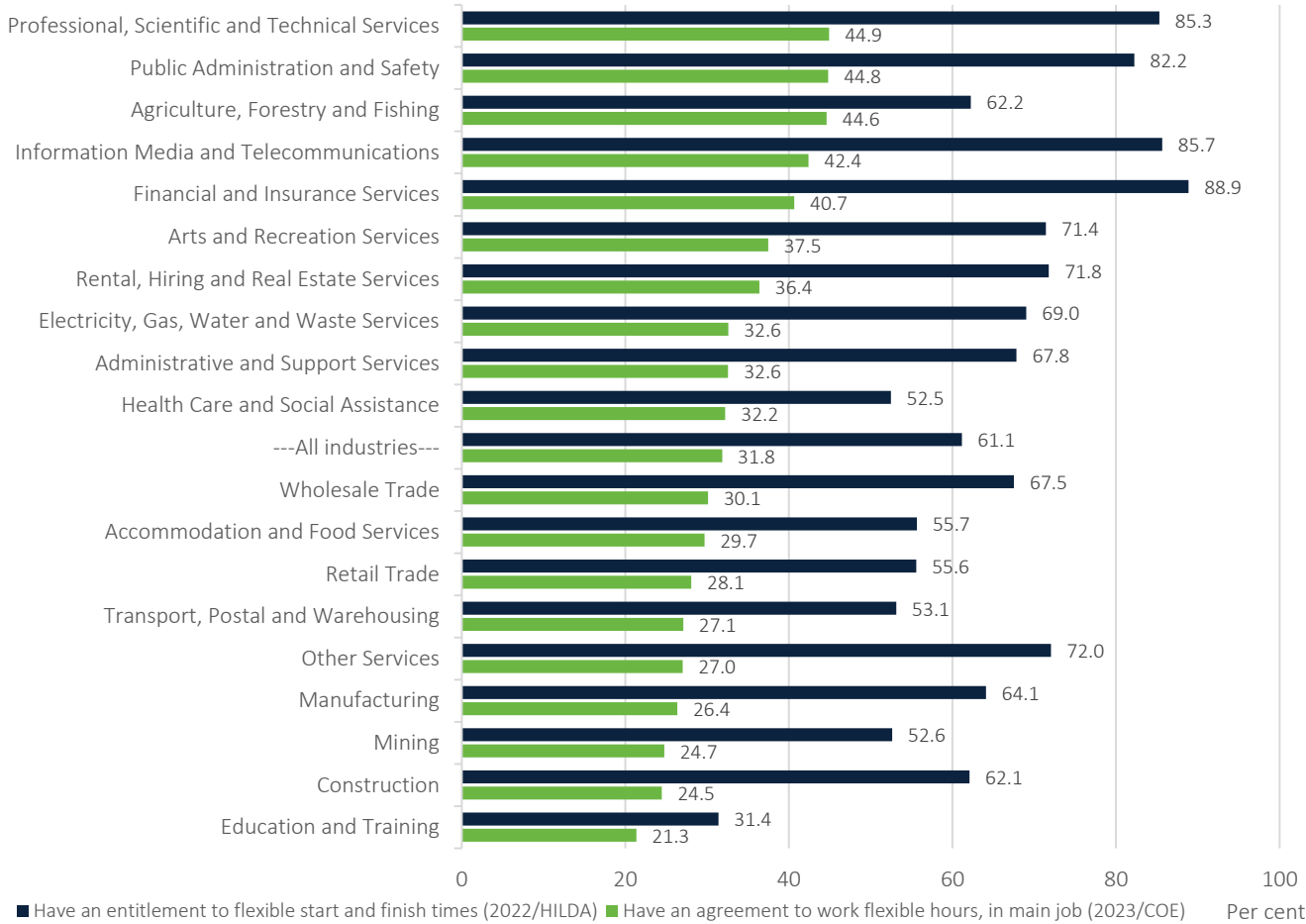


Flexible hours and flexible start/finish times

As of August 2023, 33.7 per cent of female employees had an agreement to work flexible hours, compared to 29.9 per cent of male employees. Agreements to work flexible hours were more common for those working part-time (33.4 per cent) compared to those engaged full-time (31.1 per cent).⁷ Chart 4 shows that in 5 of the 19 industries, 40 per cent or more workers reported having an agreement to work flexible hours in 2023.

Using HILDA, the data show that of all employees in 2022, 61.1 per cent reported they had an *entitlement* to flexible start and finish times if required. Chart 4 also shows that in 13 of the 19 industries, 60 per cent or more (of employees) identified having an entitlement to flexible start and finish times.

Chart 4: Flexible hours and flexible start and finish times, proportion of employees, by industry

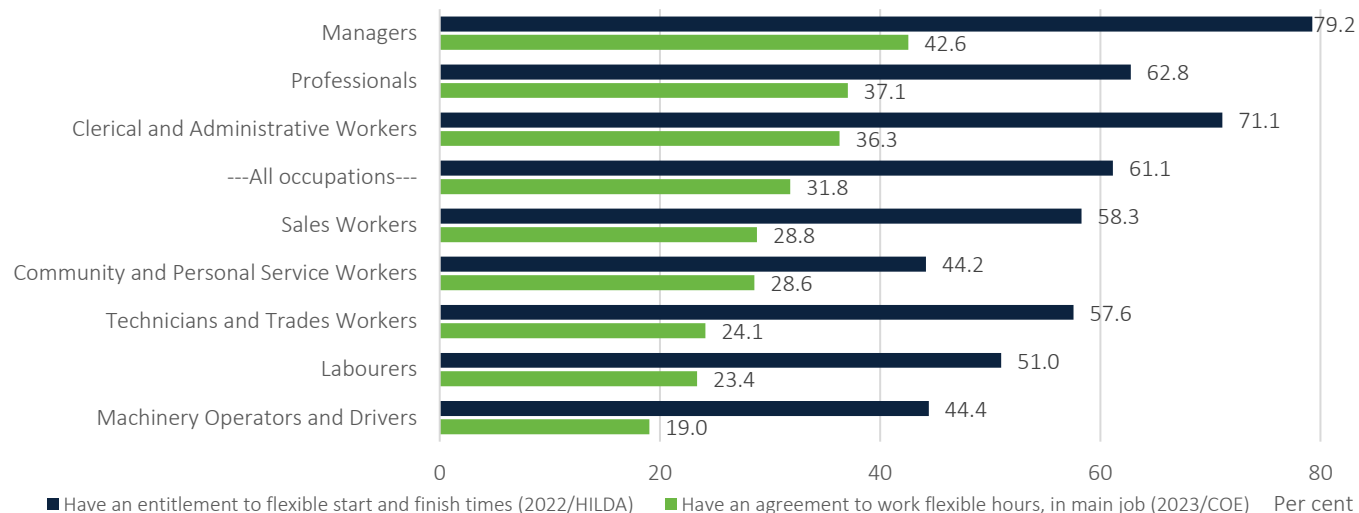


Source: Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, Waves 22; ABS, TableBuilder: Characteristics of Employment, Australia, August 2023.

⁷ ABS, TableBuilder: Characteristics of Employment, Australia, August 2023

As shown in chart 5, Machinery operators and drivers (19.0 per cent) have the lowest rates of agreement to work flexible hours in 2023 among employees and along with Machinery operators and drivers (44.4 per cent), Community and personal service employees (44.2 per cent) report the lowest rates of entitlement to flexible start and finish times in 2022).

Chart 5: Flexible hours and flexible start and finish times, proportion of employees, by occupation

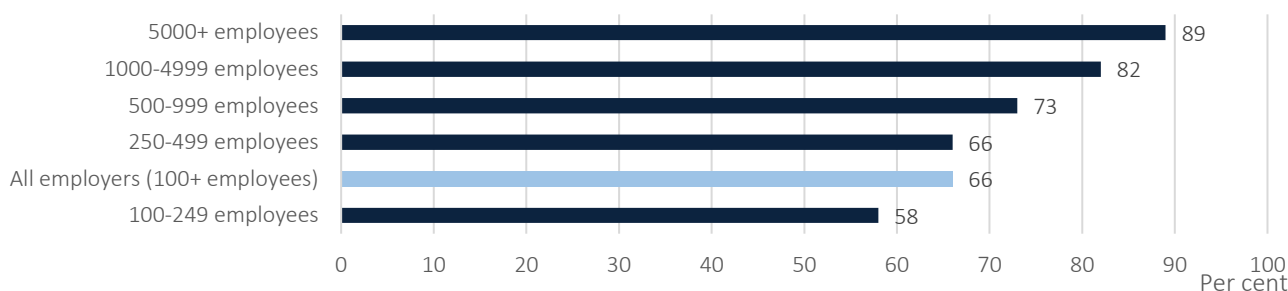


Source: Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, Waves 22; ABS, TableBuilder: Characteristics of Employment (COE), Australia, August 2023

Job sharing

Chart 6 shows that larger employers are typically more likely to offer job sharing arrangements to their employees. In 2022–23 the proportion of employers offering job sharing arrangements in the category ‘5000+ employees’ was 31 percentage points higher than in the category ‘100-250 employees’. Chart 7 shows the proportion of large private-sector employers by industry that offer job sharing arrangements. Over 75 per cent of Education and training and Health care and social assistance reported job sharing.

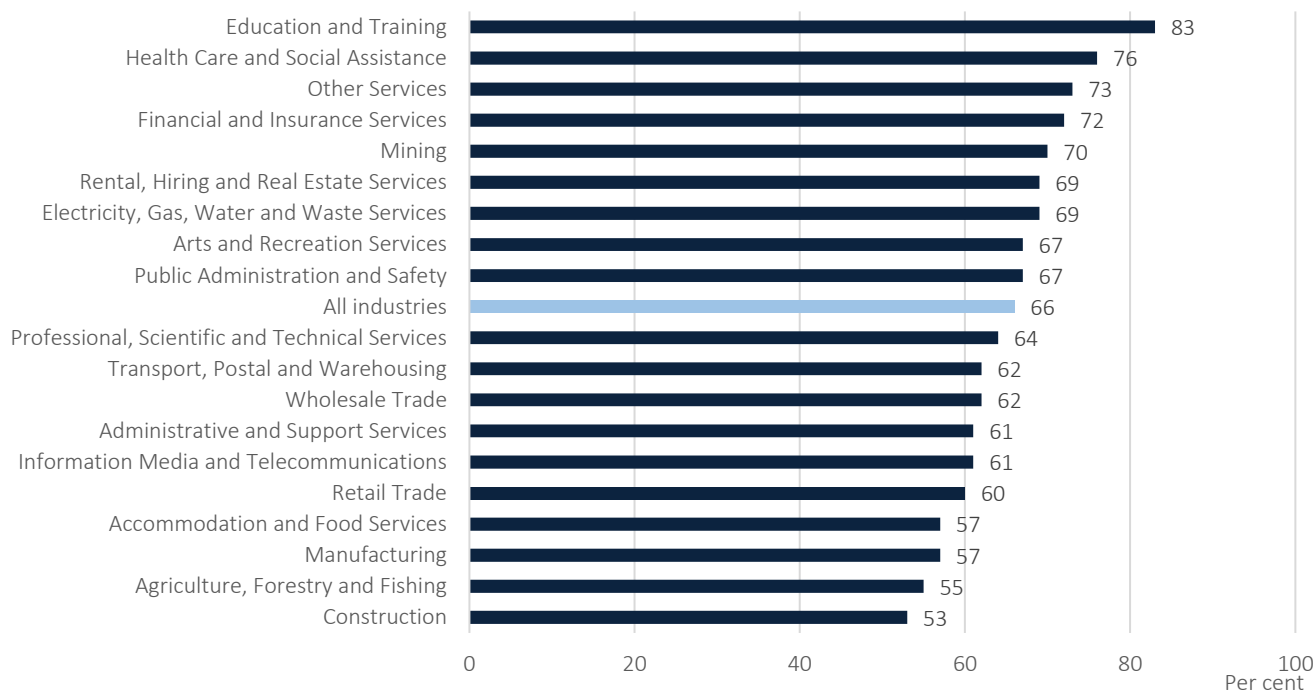
Chart 6: Portion of private sector employers who offer ‘Job sharing’, by employer size



Note: This data does not cover small businesses and a significant proportion of medium-sized businesses that have fewer than 100 employees. It captures approximately 4.5 million employees, which equates to approximately 40 per cent of all employees in Australia.

Source: Workplace Gender Equality Agency, WGEA Data Explorer, ‘Flexible Work, Parental Leave and Domestic Violence Support’, 2022-23.

Chart 7 Proportion of large private-sector employers (100+ employees) who offer ‘Job sharing’, by industry



Note: This data does not cover small businesses and a significant proportion of medium-sized businesses that have fewer than 100 employees. It captures approximately 4.5 million employees, which equates to approximately 40 per cent of all employees in Australia.

Source: Workplace Gender Equality Agency, WGEA Data Explorer, ‘Flexible Work, Parental Leave and Domestic Violence Support’, 2022-23.

Part-time

As of August 2023, 31.1 per cent of employees worked part-time (43.3 per cent of female employees and 18.8 per cent of male employees).⁸ The most common reason for employees working part-time rather than full-time in 2022 was ‘Going to school, college, university etc.’; however, ‘caring for children’ was the third most common among all part-time employees and the second most common among female part-time employees (Table 2).

Table 2: Part-time employees by main reason for working part-time hours rather than full-time

Main reason for working part-time hours rather than	Total	Female	Male
	(%)	(%)	(%)
Going to school, college, university etc.	27.8	23.5	37.6
Prefer part-time work	27.4	27.2	27.7
Caring for children	17.8	24.3	3.0
Prefer job & part-time hours are a requirement of the job	12.7	12.2	13.7
Could not find full-time work	5.7	4.4	8.8
Own illness or disability	4.0	3.9	4.3
Other reasons	4.6	4.4	4.9
Total	100	100	100

Note: Only the top 6 reasons for total part-time workers are listed in table. ‘Other reasons’ above incorporates 8 other possible answers, including (from most to least common for total): ‘Other personal or family responsibilities’, ‘Caring for disabled or elderly relatives (not children)’, ‘Other’, ‘Getting business established’, ‘Attracted to pay premium attached to part-time /casual work’, ‘Welfare or pension decision may be affected by working FT’, ‘Involved in voluntary work’, ‘COVID-19’.

Source: *Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey, Waves 22*

As shown in Table 3 (below), approximately 79.6 per cent of all employees (85.8 per cent for females and 73.0 per cent for males⁹) reported having an entitlement to permanent part-time work in 2022. Of the four industries that most commonly employ modern award- reliant employees (underlined in Table 3), two of them (Accommodation and food services and Administrative and support services) have proportions of employees reporting they have an entitlement to permanent part-time work below that of ‘All industries’.

⁸ ABS, *TableBuilder: Characteristics of Employment, Australia, August 2023*

⁹ *Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey, Waves 22*



Table 3: Permanent part-time work, proportion of employees, by industry (sorted by entitlement)

Industry	Have an entitlement to permanent part-time work (2022/HILDA)	Permanent [^] part-time (2023/COE)	Modern award-reliant employees in industry as a proportion of all modern award-reliant employees (2021/EEH)
	(%)	(%)	(%)
<u>Health Care and Social Assistance</u>	90.1	30.4	17.1
Financial and Insurance Services	87.4	11.0	0.8
Public Administration and Safety	86.9	10.7	1.3
Information Media and	86.8	11.0	0.4
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	86.8	6.5	np
Education and Training	85.8	25.3	3.1
<u>Retail Trade</u>	82.4	20.3	14.0
Professional, Scientific and Technical	80.4	10.4	2.3
All industries	79.6	15.1	100
Wholesale Trade	77.9	7.5	1.9
Other Services	75.0	14.1	7.0
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	72.8	7.6	2.6
Manufacturing	72.7	5.6	5.8
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	72.0	10.0	2.0
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	71.2	4.6*	n/a
Mining	69.8	4.6	np
<u>Administrative and Support Services</u>	69.0	14.0	13.2
Arts and Recreation Services	67.2	18.0	2.1
<u>Accommodation and Food Services</u>	65.4	10.0	21.6
Construction	56.1	4.9	4.6

Note: np = not published. * Estimated number of permanent part-time employees in this industry has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution. [^]Permanent part-time proportion refers to employees with leave entitlements working part-time (in main job) as a proportion of all employees. Agriculture, forestry and fishing is not in scope of the EEH survey. The 4 most common industries for modern award-reliant employees (based on Yuen & Tomlinson 2023) are underlined.

Source: Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) Survey, Waves 22; ABS, *Characteristics of Employment (COE)*, Australia, August 2023; Yuen K & Tomlinson J (2023), *A profile of employee characteristics across modern awards*, Fair Work Commission Research Report 1/2023, March, Table B13.