



## Young people Work and study patterns

*Extracted from Australia's welfare 2009*

*Chapter 2, pages 57–59*

About 9 in 10 young people are engaged in either study or work. In 2008, 86% of young people aged 15–19 years and 78% of young people aged 20–24 years were participating full time in education or work.

School leavers are taking varied pathways from school to full-time work. Between 1998 and 2008 there was a 27% increase in young people aged 15–24 years combining study with work. The overall proportion of young people participating in education and/or employment increased from 87% to 91% over this period.

In 2008, just under 1 in 3 young people (30%) had more than a full-time load, either full-time study with additional work or full-time work with additional study, with 15–19 year olds more likely to have more than a full-time load (36%) than 20–24 year olds (25%).

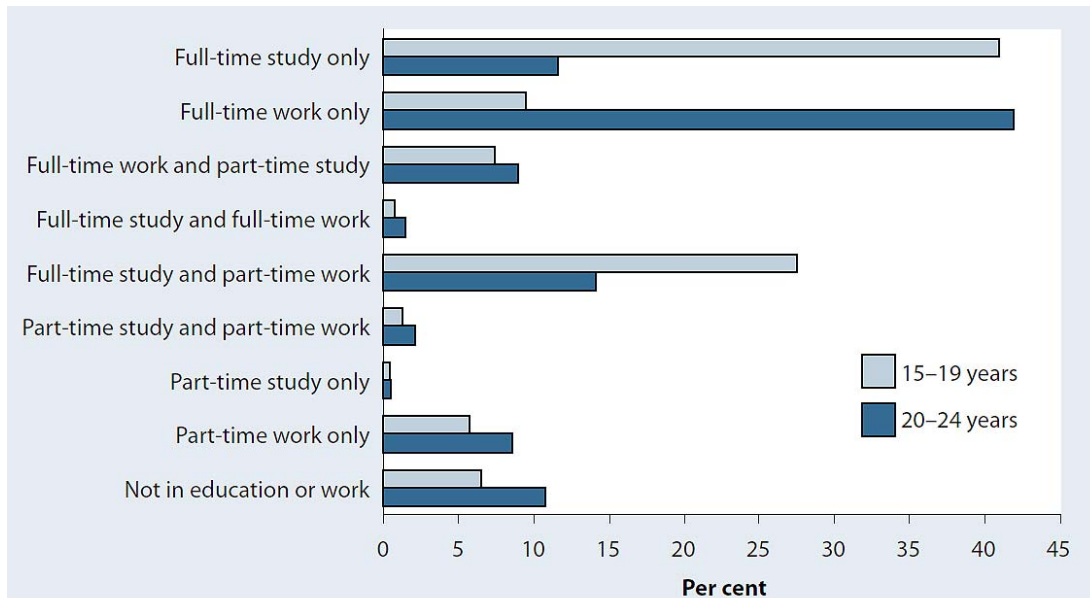
Over two-thirds of 15–19 year olds (69%) were in full-time study (including 28% who combined full-time study with full- or part-time work). This pattern changes as young people leave school. Among 20–24 year olds, full-time employment is the dominant category, with half (51%) in full-time work (including 10% who combined full-time work with full- or part-time study). In total, 27% of 20–24 year olds were engaged in full-time study.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' 2006 Census of Population and Housing, one-third (33%) of Indigenous young people aged 18–24 years were participating full time in work or study—half the proportion of non-Indigenous young people (71%).

Young people not involved in education, training or employment may have fewer opportunities to participate fully in society. They are considered more at risk of personal and social stresses and social exclusion, and may have poorer long-term labour market outcomes than other young people.

Youth unemployment or non-participation in education has been linked to a dependence on parents or social welfare, family problems, substance abuse, physical abuse, violence and crime.

In 2008, almost 1 in 10 young people aged 15–24 years was neither working nor studying. This proportion declined from 13% in 1998 to 9% in 2008. In 2006, Australia ranked 16th out of 25 OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) countries in the proportion of 15–19 year olds not engaged in education or employment, indicating the potential for further improvements in youth participation rates in Australia.



Source: ABS 2008e.

**Figure 2.14: Participation in study and work, May 2008**

### Questions for discussion

1. In 2008, what proportion of people aged 15–24 participated in work and/or education?
2. (a) In 2006, what proportion of non-Indigenous 18–24 year olds were engaged in full-time study?  
(b) What was the proportion for the same age group of Indigenous young people?
3. (a) In 2008 what percentage of people aged 15–24 years neither worked nor studied?  
(b) List three lost opportunities or wellbeing issues and explain how not being involved in education, training or employment might be related to these. (For example, how might being unemployed be related to a person's risk of substance abuse?)
4. (a) In terms of the proportion of 15–19 year olds not engaged in employment or education, where is Australia ranked among OECD countries?  
(b) Describe two strategies which government has carried out or could carry out to lift Australia's ranking.
5. Conduct a survey of your peers to find out what proportion are working part-time as well as studying, and how many hours they work each week. Investigate how this affects their study. Highlight the findings through a poster display or oral presentation.