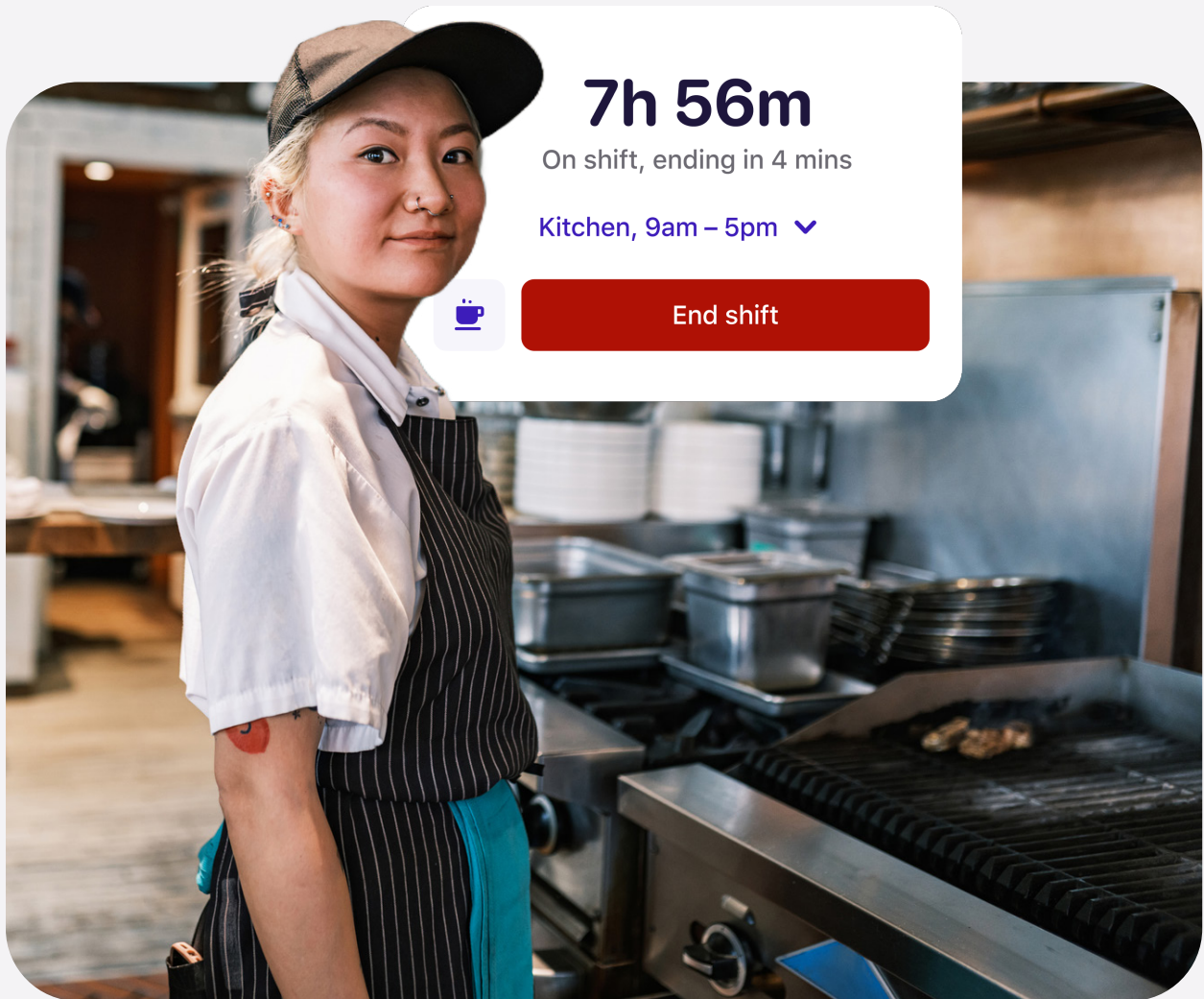


The State of Hourly Work



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Executive Summary

The 2024 State of Hourly Work report analyses the trends, challenges, and opportunities facing shift workers across Australia. It offers insights for employers, policymakers, and industry stakeholders to foster a more supportive and efficient working environment for hourly employees, who play a critical role in the ANZ region's economy.

Financial insecurity remains a major concern, especially for younger generations, despite some improvements in workers' ability to cover living expenses and save for the future. This underscores the need for a continued focus on fair wages, predictable income, and supportive employment practices.

There is also a strong demand for better digital tools to enhance job performance, with workers across all age groups recognising the importance of modern technology. Employers who invest in digital innovation are likely to see gains in productivity and job satisfaction.

Workplace diversity is particularly valued by younger workers, highlighting the importance of inclusive hiring practices. As the workforce becomes more diverse, it's crucial for employers to prioritise diversity and inclusion as core values.

The impact of AI and automation on job security is a concern for many, especially Millennials and Gen X, though Gen Z appears more worried, likely due to their familiarity with technology. Employers must provide training and support to help workers adapt to these changes.

Training and development are essential for skill enhancement, yet the survey reveals these opportunities are often inconsistent. More structured and frequent training programs are needed to support career growth.

Finally, the report underscores generational differences in priorities, with younger workers focusing on diversity, technology, and financial security, while older workers feel more financially secure and less concerned about AI. Understanding these differences is key to effectively supporting a multigenerational workforce.



Emma Seymour

Chief Financial Officer at Deputy

02

Methodology

Deputy partnered with Dimensional Research to conduct the State of Hourly Work Survey.

This report is based on a survey of 1,434 shift workers across Australia.

The respondents were selected to represent a diverse cross-section of the workforce, including variations in age, gender, industry, and company size. The survey data was collected through online questionnaires, ensuring participants could provide candid responses comfortably.

Shift Workers in Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States were invited to participate in an online survey. Various questions were asked about topics such as job satisfaction, financial stability, and skill gaps.

The survey was conducted between June 22 and July 20, 2024. Certain questions were repeated from similar 2020, 2021, and 2023 surveys to enable trend analysis.

03

Trend-focused Data

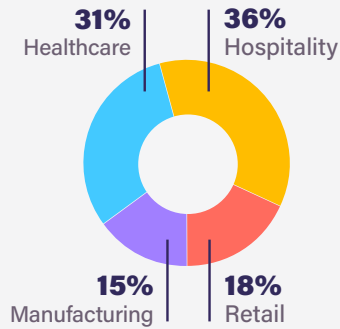
The 2024 survey methodology changed from prior years by expanding to include participants in the manufacturing industry, in addition to the healthcare, hospitality, and retail industries represented in prior years.

In a study such as this, it is important to balance the rigour of the analysis with the experience of the end reader. The best practice for rigorous internal research methodology would be to exclude the manufacturing data from the 2024 survey when doing analysis with prior years. However, this would be very confusing to a casual reader as they will see two different sets of numbers for 2024.

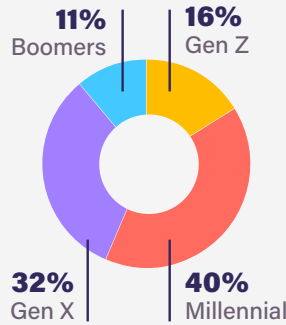
Dimensional Research analysed the impact of including manufacturing for 2024 on year-over-year trends. When comparing the 2024 data excluding manufacturing, there was very little impact on the overall findings for the trend questions, so we are comfortable using the additional manufacturing data as-is without complex analysis for the reader.

The State of Hourly Workers in Australia

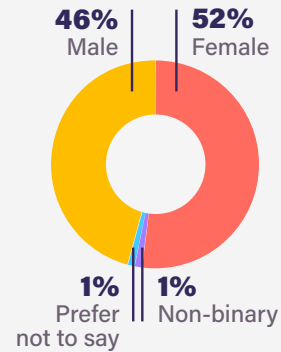
Industry



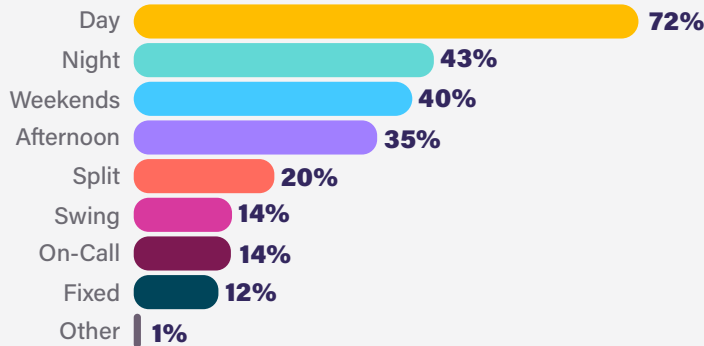
Generation



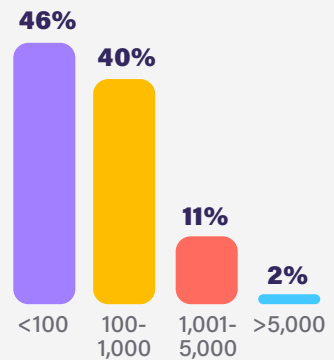
Gender



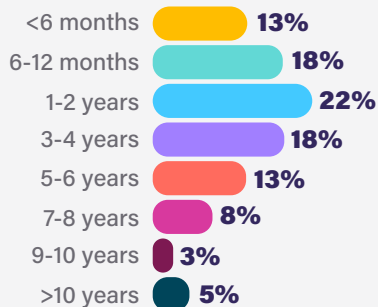
Type of Shifts



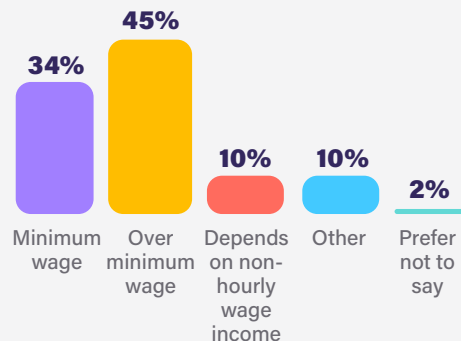
Size



Current tenure



Income



Job Satisfaction *and* Engagement



Is your direct manager supportive?



In Australia, most workers (56%) consistently feel supported by their direct manager, reflecting generally strong managerial engagement. However, 40% of workers report that they only occasionally feel supported, indicating room for improvement in consistent managerial practices. A smaller group – 4% of workers never feel supported, suggesting that some employees may be left without the necessary guidance and support in their roles.

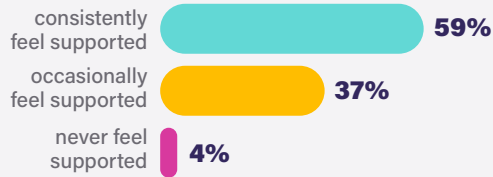
While most age groups feel consistently supported, Gen X (61%) are the most likely to feel this way, while Millennials (52%) are the least likely. Gen Z workers show a higher incidence of never feeling supported (7%) than other age groups.

Male and female workers report similar levels of support from their direct managers, with females slightly more likely to feel consistently supported (59%) than males (54%). A small percentage (4%) of both genders report never feeling supported.

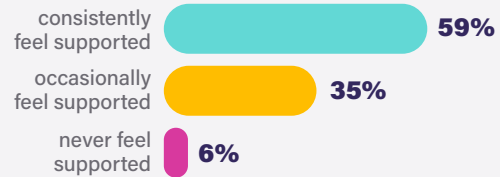
Workers in healthcare and hospitality feel the most consistently supported by their managers (59%). In contrast, workers in retail are less likely to feel consistent support (47%), with a higher percentage only occasionally feeling supported (50%).



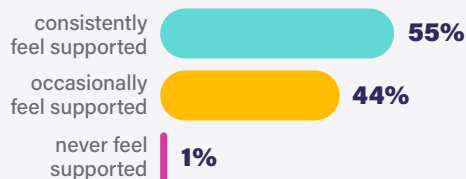
Healthcare



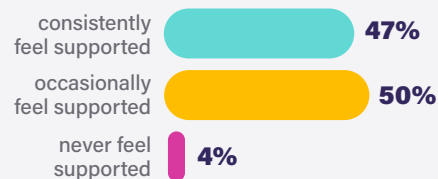
Hospitality



Manufacturing



Retail



Employees new to their roles (less than a year) in the Australian region are most likely to feel consistently supported (67%), whereas those who have been in their roles for 1 to 4 years are less likely (52%), which suggests initial managerial support may taper off over time.

Nearly half of Australia's hourly workers (47%) plan to stay in their current positions, indicating significant satisfaction and stability within their roles. Another 26% of workers aim to move up within their current company, reflecting aspirations for career advancement.

A smaller portion of workers are considering a change, with 8% planning to switch to a similar role at a new company and 11% looking to switch industries altogether. Only 5% of workers plan to quit their job, whether to retire, return to school, or for other reasons, while 3% have other unspecified plans.

Financial Stability *and* Poly-Employment



How many jobs do hourly workers have?



>>> 1% of workers have four or more jobs, indicating a rare but existing trend of managing multiple jobs

Most workers (72%) hold only one job with one employer. However, a significant portion of the workforce (22%) juggles two jobs with different employers, highlighting the prevalence of poly-employment, where workers seek additional income or diversify their work experiences. A smaller percentage of workers (5%) manage three jobs with multiple employers, highlighting the challenges of balancing multiple roles.

Only 1% of workers have four or more jobs, suggesting that while managing multiple jobs is not uncommon, holding more than three jobs is relatively rare and likely driven by specific financial or career needs.

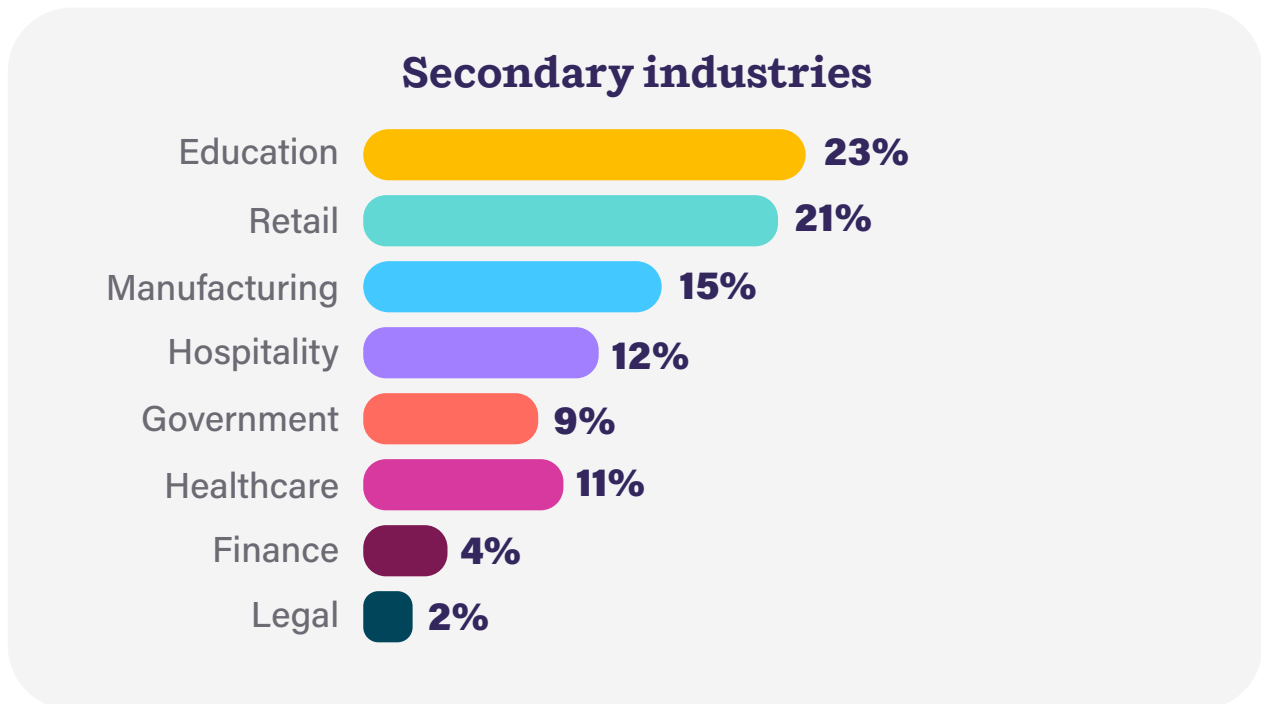
Most workers (68%) hold multiple jobs within the same industry. This indicates that many workers prefer or find it easier to leverage their expertise and skills within a single industry across different employers, possibly to maintain consistency in their professional experience or due to industry-specific opportunities.

68% of workers with multiple jobs work within the same industry across different employers, indicating a preference for industry specialisation

32% of workers hold jobs in different industries, showcasing a trend towards career diversification or cross-industry employment to meet diverse career objectives

32% of workers with multiple jobs are doing so across two or more different industries, reflecting a level of career diversification or the need to explore various fields to meet financial or career goals. This diversification could be driven by various factors, such as the desire for varied work experiences, income maximisation, or finding opportunities in emerging industries. Workers who hold jobs outside of the healthcare, hospitality, manufacturing, or retail industries often find employment in a diverse range of other sectors.

Which secondary industries do hourly workers engage in?



Education is the most common alternative industry, with 23% of workers engaging in educational roles, indicating a strong crossover between traditional industries and the education sector.

Retail also sees significant overlap, with 21% of workers in other industries holding jobs in retail, highlighting the flexibility and availability of retail positions. Manufacturing (15%) and hospitality (12%) are also common secondary industries, reflecting the multifaceted nature of employment for workers with multiple jobs.

Additionally, 11% of workers are engaged in healthcare as a secondary industry, underscoring the widespread demand for healthcare workers. Government positions attract 9% of these workers, suggesting that public sector roles are also a viable option.

15%

struggle to meet their living expenses with their current pay.

49%

can cover their living expenses but have no money left over

35%

can cover their expenses and still have money left over

The percentage of workers who are unable to cover their current living expenses decreased significantly from 22% in 2023 to 15% in 2024, indicating a positive shift in financial stability for some workers.

Meanwhile, the proportion of workers who can cover their living expenses but do not have any money left over also decreased, from 53% in 2023 to 49% in 2024. This suggests that more workers are moving from just getting by to having more financial stability.

Additionally, the percentage of workers who can cover their living expenses and have money left over increased from 25% in 2023 to 35% in 2024, a sizeable improvement in financial well-being for a significant portion of the workforce. This suggests that economic conditions, wage growth, or employment opportunities have likely improved for many workers in Australia, allowing them greater financial flexibility and security.

Financial anxiety is most pronounced among Millennials, with Gen X also experiencing high levels of concern. Gen Z shows significant worry, though less intense than older groups. Baby Boomers are the least likely to worry about their finances daily, reflecting greater financial stability.

The predictability of income based on work schedules varies, with most workers experiencing some level of predictability, though less so than in other regions. About 40% of workers report that their income is very predictable, indicating a stable work schedule that allows them to confidently plan their finances.



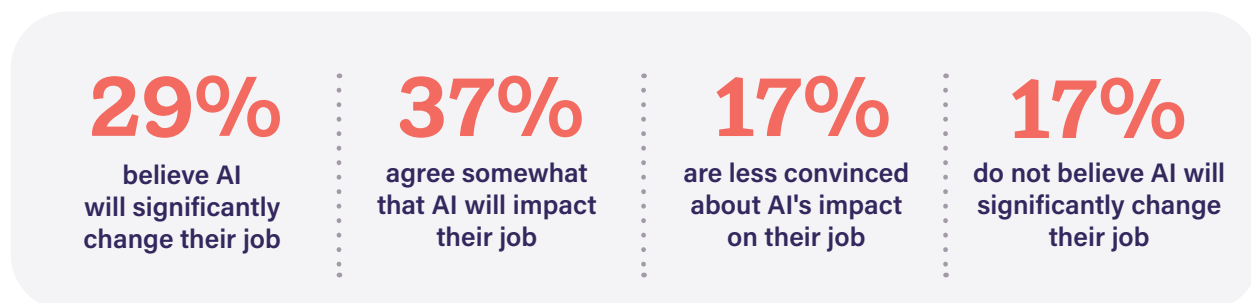
46% find their income fairly predictable, suggesting some variability in their work hours or earnings, but generally within a manageable range. However, 14% of Australian hourly workers face income that is not predictable, highlighting the challenges of inconsistent work schedules and the financial uncertainty that can accompany them. This underscores the importance of stable and predictable work schedules for financial security.



Digital Transformation, Diversity *and* AI

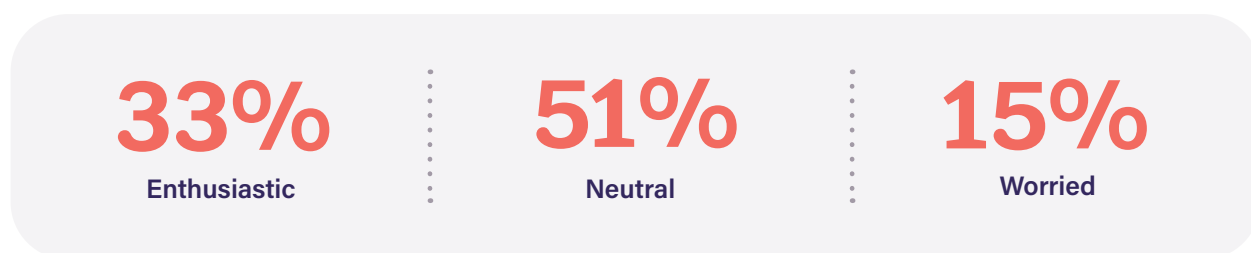


Will AI (Artificial Intelligence) Significantly Change or Impact my job?



Many workers are concerned about AI's impact on jobs. 29% strongly agree that their jobs will change significantly due to AI, and 37% agree somewhat. This indicates a recognition of AI's potential to alter job functions. However, there is also scepticism, with 17% somewhat disagreeing and 17% strongly disagreeing, suggesting mixed feelings about AI's impact on future work.

How do you feel about the potential impact of AI on your job functions?



Younger generations, especially Gen Z, are more concerned about AI and automation impacting their job security and daily tasks. 21% of Gen Z workers are worried about AI's effects, with only 14% feeling very positive about its impact on job security and 11% enthusiastic about its role in their daily work.

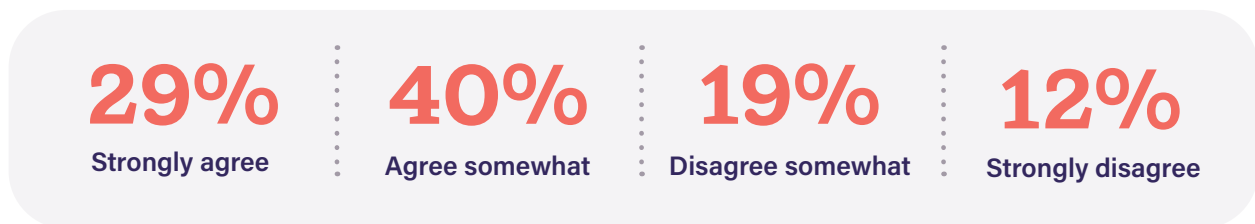
Millennials and Gen X are more optimistic. 45% of Millennials see AI as somewhat positive for job security, and 38% are enthusiastic about its impact on their work. 43% of Gen X view AI positively for job security, with 42% excited about its benefits in their daily tasks.

Baby Boomers are more cautious, with 60% feeling neutral about AI's impact on daily work. While 42% see AI as somewhat positive for job security, only 27% are enthusiastic about its effects on their work routines.

Industry-wise, healthcare and hospitality workers are generally cautious, with 61% in healthcare and 66% in hospitality feeling neutral about AI's impact. Manufacturing workers are the most enthusiastic, with 70% seeing AI as a positive force for productivity, though 8% are still worried about job displacement. In retail, 55% view AI as somewhat positive for job security, and 50% are excited about its potential, though 11% are concerned about its impact on their jobs.

Overall, while younger workers, particularly Gen Z, are more cautious and concerned about AI, Millennials and Gen X are more optimistic, and Baby Boomers remain mostly neutral. Industry-specific views show varying levels of enthusiasm, with manufacturing workers being the most positive about AI's potential.

My employer should invest more in digital tools to help me do my job better



Millennials are the most supportive of increased investment in digital tools, with 77% either strongly agreeing (33%) or somewhat agreeing (44%). This reflects their relationship with technology, having witnessed and adapted to significant technological changes throughout their careers.

Millennials are often seen as the first generation to fully integrate digital tools into their professional lives, and they recognise the value these tools bring to productivity and career advancement.

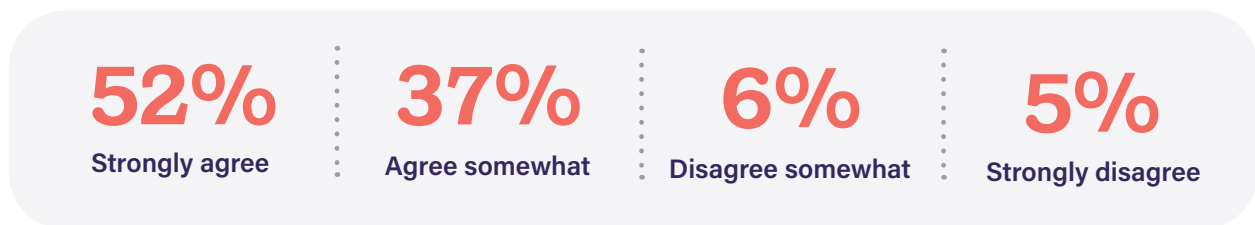
Gen X also shows substantial support, with 74% in favour of more digital tools (30% strongly agree, 44% agree somewhat). This generation appreciates the role of technology in maintaining efficiency and staying competitive, though they may be slightly more cautious than Millennials due to a balance of traditional work habits and the need to keep up with digital advancements.

Gen Z, while generally supportive, shows more division in their views. 43% agree that more investment is needed (18% strongly agree, 25% agree somewhat), but a significant portion also expresses disagreement (35% disagree somewhat, 22% strongly disagree). This mixed sentiment likely stems from their relatively recent entry into the workforce.

Unlike Millennials, Gen Z has grown up with advanced technology from the start, making them more accustomed to it but possibly less impressed by incremental changes. They might also be more cautious about further changes disrupting their early career stability.

Baby Boomers are the most resistant to increased digital investment, with 61% in favour (24% strongly agree, 37% agree somewhat) and 39% disagreeing to some extent (25% disagree somewhat, 14% strongly disagree). This generation may prefer stability as they reach the last years of their careers.

I prefer to work for an employer who hires people with diverse backgrounds



Younger generations, especially Gen Z, are the most supportive of workplace diversity. 62% of Gen Z workers strongly agree that they prefer to work for an employer that hires people with diverse backgrounds, reflecting their strong commitment to inclusivity and social justice. Millennials also value diversity, with 51% strongly agreeing and 37% agreeing somewhat, as they've grown up in an increasingly global and diverse world.

Gen X shows solid support for diversity, with 50% strongly agreeing and 40% agreeing somewhat. While they value diversity, they might also consider other workplace factors important. Baby Boomers are more divided, with only 43% strongly agreeing and 15% strongly disagreeing, indicating that some in this generation may prioritise other aspects of work over diversity.

Looking at different industries, healthcare leads in supporting diversity, with 59% strongly agreeing that it's important, reflecting the sector's focus on serving diverse patient populations.

Hospitality also shows strong support, with 53% strongly agreeing, recognising the need for a diverse workforce to serve a wide range of customers. Manufacturing workers are supportive, too, with 47% strongly agreeing, but there's a bit more resistance, possibly due to the industry's more traditional environment. Retail has the lowest strong agreement (41%) and the highest disagreement levels, showing mixed views on the importance of diversity in the sector.

Skills Gaps *and* Hiring for the Next Generation



What additional skill sets do workers want to acquire to further their careers?

19% believe that developing industry-specific skills will impact their careers most

19% also see team management skills as critical for their career growth

18% value people skills, such as influence and interpersonal abilities, as essential for career advancement

17% prioritise technical skills, including proficiency in spreadsheets, databases, coding, and managing devices

13% see general business skills, such as bookkeeping and contracts, as important for their career development

12% believe they do not need to acquire any additional skills for their career

Australian workers believe a variety of skills will significantly impact their careers over the next five years. Industry-specific skills and team management are seen as the most critical, with 19% of workers prioritising these areas. This reflects a strong focus on deepening expertise within specific fields and enhancing leadership abilities, which are seen as essential for career advancement.

People skills, which include influence and interpersonal abilities, are also highly valued, with 18% of workers recognising their importance.

This suggests that workers in Australia understand the critical role that effective communication and relationship-building play in career success. Technical skills, such as proficiency in spreadsheets, databases, coding, and managing devices, are prioritised by 17% of workers, highlighting the growing importance of technology in the workplace.

While slightly less prioritised, 13% of workers still consider general business skills important, indicating that foundational business knowledge is still considered valuable. A small percentage of workers (12%) believe they do not need any additional skills, suggesting either confidence in their current abilities or satisfaction with their current career trajectory.

Only 1% of workers preferred other skills not listed, suggesting that the options provided largely encompass the skills workers believe are necessary for their future success.

In Australia, employers' provision of training opportunities varies widely, with a significant portion of workers experiencing training on an irregular basis. The most common scenario is that 26% of workers receive training opportunities on an ad-hoc basis, with no regular schedule. This suggests that while training is available, it may not be consistently offered, potentially leading to gaps in skill development.



>>> 12% of hourly workers in Australia are unaware of the available training.

Regularly scheduled training is less common, with 15% of workers receiving quarterly and 13% monthly training. These figures indicate that while some employers are committed to ongoing development, many workers do not receive the frequent and structured training that could enhance their role effectiveness.

Additionally, 11% of workers receive training bi-annually or yearly, indicating some level of regular training but not as frequent as might be ideal for continuous improvement. 12% of workers report that they never receive training, and another 12% are unsure about the training opportunities available to them, suggesting a need for clearer communication and better access to development resources.

Legal Rights *and* Compliance



54%

are well-versed in
the Fair Work Act

43%

have heard of the Fair
Work Act but lack
detailed knowledge

3%

have never heard of
the Fair Work Act

A majority of workers (54%) report that they know the Fair Work Act well, indicating a strong understanding of the legislation and its implications for their employment rights. An additional 43% of workers have heard of the Fair Work Act but are not familiar with the details, suggesting that while they know its existence, they may lack in-depth knowledge about its specific provisions. Only a small minority, 3%, have not heard of the Fair Work Act, indicating that awareness of this important legislation is widespread among workers in the region.

54% prioritise higher rates of pay for work on evenings, weekends, and public holidays as the most important regulation

41% value the ability to request flexible working hours

40% consider overtime pay for work outside maximum daily and weekly hours important

39% prioritise leave (i.e. parental, annual, long-service, personal or carer's) and related entitlements

34% see minimum wage regulations as important

32% consider maximum daily and weekly hours of work important for maintaining a fair work environment

18% Prioritise notice of termination and redundancy pay

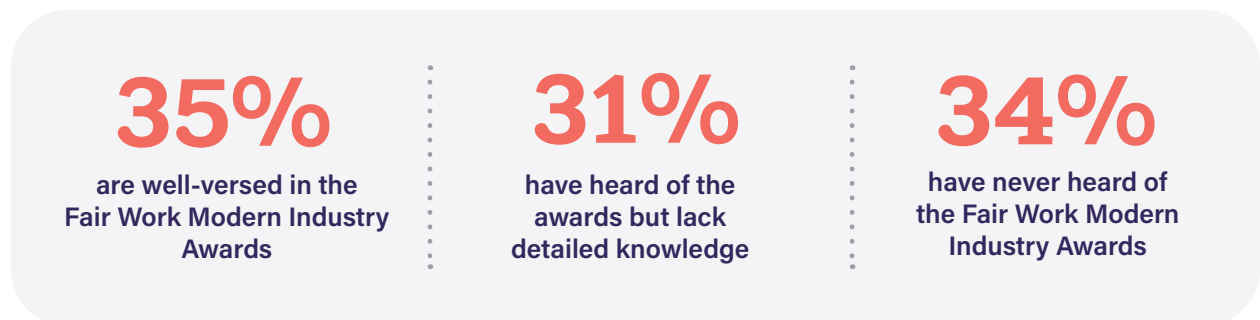
2% do not consider any of these regulations important

According to workers, the Fair Work Act's most important part is the higher pay rates for work during evenings, weekends, and public holidays, with 54% selecting this as a top priority.

This preference highlights the value workers place on being fairly compensated for working during less desirable hours. Overtime pay for work outside maximum daily and weekly hours is also highly valued, with 40% of workers identifying this as important, underscoring the significance of being compensated for additional work.

The right to request flexible working hours is another key priority, with 41% of workers emphasising its importance, reflecting the desire for greater control over their work schedules.

Other important regulations include leave entitlements (39%) and minimum wage requirements (34%). Notice of termination and redundancy pay is less of a priority, with 18% considering it important, and only 2% of workers indicated that none of these regulations are important to them.



About 35% of workers report that they know the Modern Industry Awards well, indicating a solid understanding of these specific regulations. Another 31% of workers have heard of the awards but are unfamiliar with the details, suggesting some awareness but a lack of comprehensive knowledge. However, 34% of workers have never heard of the Fair Work Modern Industry Awards, highlighting a considerable portion of the workforce that may be unaware of industry-specific employment standards.



Conclusion

The State of Hourly Work Survey results show a landscape where workers face both challenges and opportunities as they navigate their professional and personal lives. It highlights key trends shaping the hourly work experience, revealing the diverse needs and perspectives across generations, industries, and job types.

As the hourly work landscape continues to evolve, employers must remain responsive to the changing needs of their workforce. By addressing financial insecurity, investing in technology, fostering diversity, and providing robust training opportunities, employers can create a more supportive and productive work environment.

The State of Hourly Work Survey Results speak to the resilience and adaptability of workers. With the right strategies in place, employers can harness their potential to build a thriving hourly workforce that is prepared to meet the challenges and opportunities of the future.



**Thriving Workplaces in
Every Community.**

[#StateOfHourlyWork](#)

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