

The Australian Work and Life Index 2014

Work-Life Balance in South Australia 2014

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Centre for Work + Life
University of South Australia



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Executive summary

A healthy work-life relationship – a South Australian government strategic goal

The South Australian (SA) Government has identified the improvement of South Australians' quality of life through the maintenance of a healthy work-life balance as one of its 100 State Strategic Targets within the State Strategic Plan (Target 13). A primary goal of this target relates to 'spending quality time with our families'.

The Australian Work-Life Index (AWALI) is the major psychometric benchmark against which progress on this target has been measured. From 2010 onwards, AWALI data has been collected on a biennial basis both nationally and within South Australia. Following the benchmark data collection of 987 South Australian workers in 2010, and the 2012 AWALI survey of 1002 SA workers, this report describes the 2014 survey of 988 SA workers.

The SA Government has identified work-life balance as a central component of a good quality of life. Indeed, the importance of paid work to individuals and households is only likely to increase, with the rising employment participation levels of women, sole parents, younger people combining work and study, and older people transitioning into retirement.

Within the research literature the importance of having a healthy relationship between paid work and other life domains, where paid work is not overly intrusive, has been well established. Physical and mental health, family and community life all benefit from workers' opportunities and capacities to access 'decent jobs' that allow them time for other important life pursuits, such as meeting family, community and personal needs.

The Australian Work and Life Index (AWALI) - overview

This report discusses key findings from the Australian Work and Life Index (AWALI) survey. AWALI is comprised of a composite index bringing together five measures of work-life interference to construct an overall work-life index that is scaled from 0 (lowest work-life interference) to 100 (highest work-life interference). The index provides an easily understood general benchmark of work-life interference.

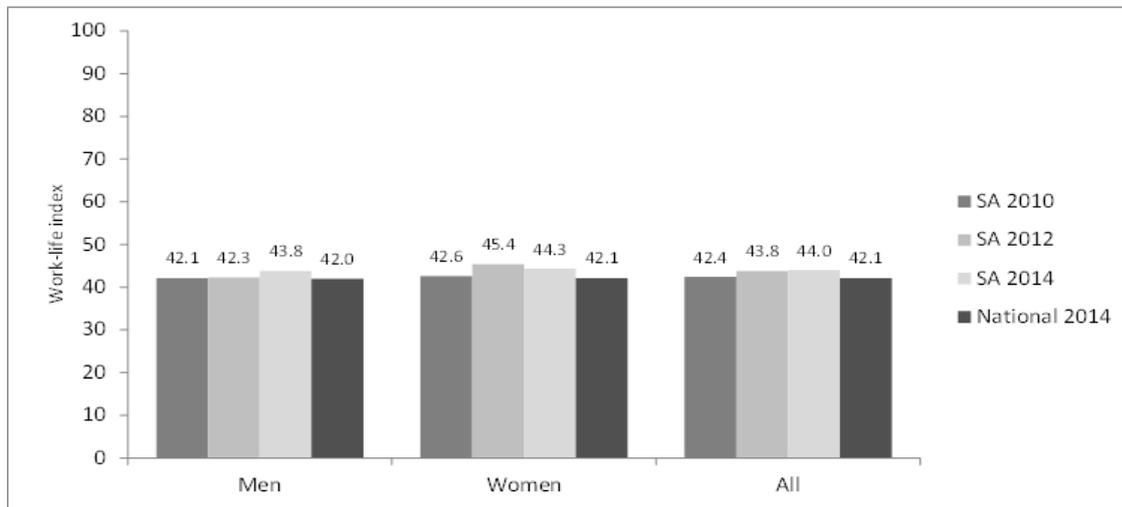
The five items that make up AWALI include: the extent to which paid work interferes with activities outside of work; community connections and time with family and friends (three items); time pressure (one item); and overall satisfaction with work-life balance (one item).

The SA AWALI survey involves a telephone survey of around 1000 SA workers, conducted in February/March biennially since 2010.

Work-life interference in South Australia for 2014

The AWALI survey score for South Australia in 2014 was 44.0 for all employed persons (on a scale of 0 - 100 with 100 being the worst possible score). This score is comparable with previous SA survey scores (43.8 in 2012; 42.4 in 2010, and the national 2014 average score of 42.1).

For most SA workers, other than for a few exceptions, there has been little change from 2012 in their work-life interference levels; the likelihood that they will work long hours (48+), or longer than they prefer; or their experiences of time pressure. Key findings are summarised below.



Work-life index scores by gender, 2010 - 2014

Note. Data includes employees and self-employed.

Work-life outcomes in SA have remained stable over the past four years, with most SA workers being satisfied with their work-life balance

Levels of work-life interference reported by SA workers have remained stable and steady from 2010 to 2014, and this is generally the case on individual work-life survey items and considering the overall (summated) index scores.

The majority of SA workers continue to report being satisfied with their work-life balance: 65.0 per cent of men and women in SA were satisfied with their work-life balance in 2014. This is consistent with previous SA surveys, although lower than the 2014 national average (69.2 per cent satisfied).

Gender differences in work-life interference have lessened in 2014 compared to previous years

In a pattern also observed in the national survey, gender differences in work-life interference have lessened in 2014 (index score for all employed men = 43.8; for women = 44.3) compared to previous years where worse outcomes were observed for women on a number of measures. This general pattern must be interpreted in the context of two additional observations. First, controlling for differences in work hours, employed women report higher work-life interference (index score = 46.6) than men (41.9). Second, a gender difference is also evident in part-time, but not full-time work: women working part-time report more time pressure (56.5 per cent) than men working part-time (27.7 per cent).

Full-time workers in SA have higher work-life interference than the national average in 2014 and SA in 2010

Full-time workers in SA are more likely to report frequent work-life interference (index score = 48.3) than the national average in 2014 (index score = 45.0), and SA workers in 2010 (index score = 45.0).

There is some indication that work-life strains may be intensifying for SA women working full-time. Full-time women are more likely to report work frequently interferes with life activities outside of work in 2014 (32.5 per cent) than 2010 (20.2 per cent), with this difference mainly attributable to an increase from 2010 (20.2 per cent) to 2012 (29.6 per cent).

Part-time workers in SA have index scores equivalent to the national average (SA index score = 38.3; national = 36.7), with little evidence of change over time (2012 SA index score = 37.8).

Many full-timers would prefer to work fewer hours

As well as the actual hours worked, a second important dimension of working time is the hours people would prefer to work, taking into account the effects of associated changes to their income. Full-time workers consistently report a preference to work fewer hours, and this has been observed across the SA and national data collections. In the SA 2014 survey:

- 44.9 per cent of full-time workers working 35 – 47 hours would prefer to work at least half a day less;
- The majority of those working long hours (67.0 per cent) would like also like to work half a day less.

In contrast, a preference to work more hours is common for part-time workers, and most evident for men: 39.0 per cent of part-timers would prefer to work at least half a day more (53.0 per cent of men; 32.9 per cent of women).

There are consistent trends in work-life interference that can be observed in SA, as well as nationally and in similar countries internationally based on gender:

- Longer working hours also have a greater negative impact (higher work-life index scores) on SA women's work-life interference compared to men's;
- Regardless of the actual hours worked, preferring to work fewer hours is associated with higher work-life interference (than working preferred hours or working fewer hours than preferred).

Parenting is associated with increased work-life strains and pressures

It is well-established that parents experience greater work-life interference than those without children. This pattern is also observed in previous SA and national AWALI surveys.

The impact of combining work and care on work-life interference is stronger for women than men: mothers report higher work-life interference than fathers, controlling for gender differences in work hours. This pattern is consistently observed in the SA and national AWALI surveys.

Workers in particular industries and occupations are more likely to report high work-life interference

Certain jobs put workers at increased risk of work-life strains and pressures. These patterns can be observed in the SA and national survey data. The highest work-life interference is reported by:

- Managers and professionals;
- Men working in community and personal service occupations;
- Workers in the construction industry.

SA workers' patterns of requesting and accessing flexible work practices are comparable to the national average

In 2014 one in five SA workers made a request for a flexible work arrangement, reflecting a similar pattern to that observed in the SA 2012 and national 2014 AWALI surveys. The majority of requests – 70.0 per cent – are accepted (in SA and nationally).

Those most likely to make a request are:

- Women with children, especially pre-school aged children;
- Workers in part-time jobs, especially women part-timers;
- Workers in community and personal services occupations.

The most common reasons to make a flexibility request are:

- To meet child-care or family responsibilities and commitments;
- To meet study commitments;
- To increase hours/income.

Of those workers who did not make a request, the majority (60.0 per cent) are content with their current work arrangements. Around 18 per cent did not make a request as they perceived it was not possible to work flexibly in their job.

There is a clear association between having a flexibility request accepted and lower work-life interference.

Reasonable hours that fit with preferences and access to flexible work arrangements are important work-life resources

For all workers, men and women, parents and those without children, three work factors consistently predict lower work-life interference:

- Reasonable working hours – either part-time, or full-time hours that do not exceed 47 hours per week;
- Working hours that fit with needs and preferences;
- Access to flexible work arrangements when needed.

Recommendations for policy and practice

Many of the key findings and observations that are made with regard to South Australians' work-life balance in 2014 reflect well-established patterns that have been observed in the SA and national AWALI surveys. These patterns, in turn, mirror well-established research findings in the Australian and international literature.

With regard to policy and practice, there are four main areas for which there is substantial Australian and international evidence of a positive impact on work-life outcomes (Skinner & Chapman 2013): employee-centered flexibility, paid and unpaid leave, working hours and childcare.

As observed in the SA and national AWALI surveys, employee-centred flexibility (e.g. changing the location or scheduling of work to fit personal circumstances) is associated with less work-life interference. Further, international research provides strong evidence for the positive effects of flexible work practices on work-life balance, health and wellbeing and job outcomes (Nijp et al. 2012).

Flexibility can be offered and supported in a variety of ways such as through:

- Reduced working hours;
- Compressed working weeks;
- Working from home arrangements;
- Flexitime;
- Variable start and finishing times;
- Extended leave options.

The second main policy area related to work-life interaction is paid and unpaid leave, for example access to parental leave or holidays. Providing paid and unpaid family leave is considered best practice to enable workers to meet their paid work and family responsibilities (Baird & Whitehouse 2012, King et al. 2012). Australian research has observed that fathers are unlikely to use unpaid parental leave (Whitehouse et al. 2007), and international analyses report that fathers' uptake is most likely when framed as an individual right with universal eligibility; as a 'use it or lose it' policy, or with high wage compensation and allowances for flexible use (Hegewisch & Gornick 2011).

The third policy area is the length of working hours. AWALI research, and other Australian and international research, suggests a direct relationship between work-life conflict and long working hours or pressure to work long hours (e.g. Holden et al. 2010).

The fourth main policy area relates to childcare. Similar to paid parental leave, access to high quality childcare is considered an essential support for parents' participation in paid work. As Bianchi and Milkie (2010, p. 710) observe: "childcare ... forms the nucleus of what much "work-family" conflict is about – how to care for children adequately when parents need or want to work outside the home".

The SA and national AWALI surveys, combined with international research, provide a strong evidence base for the effectiveness of initiatives to support access and uptake of flexible work practices, high quality childcare, paid and unpaid leave and reasonable working hours.

In reality, evidence-based policy will only be effective if workers are willing and able to access these resources and arrangements. When considering what makes policy effective in practice the notion of unintended consequences must also be recognised. Such consequences include reduced employment participation of women, reduced career opportunities for flexible or part-time workers, and reduced access to preferred roles, tasks and opportunities that both utilise workers' full range of skills and provide opportunity for development and advancement. Whether framed as unintended consequences or overt discrimination, it is crucial to recognise that work-life policies will only be effective to the extent that workers do not experience economic, social or career penalties when using these policies.

Kossek et al. (2010) argue that for work-life policies to be truly effective these policies and practices must be integrated into the mainstream of everyday work practices, rather than seen as issues of special consideration for a certain group of workers. This is the challenge for SA policy makers, employers, unions, professional associations, workers and other stakeholders; to develop cultures, norms and everyday 'normalised' working arrangements that support the modern and diverse workforce of South Australia.

Multifaceted policy approaches are needed that set the foundation for this change. More inclusive employment regulation, better quality part-time work and a greater policy focus on men's uptake of flexible work are likely to alleviate some of the burden and causes of work-life interference.

Section 1: Introduction

Background to this report

Since 2008, SafeWork SA has been a major industry partner and funder of the Australian Work and Life Index (AWALI), conducted as part of a series of Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage projects.

The national AWALI data, collected annually from 2007-2010 and then biennially, has examined how work-life interference is influenced by a range of employment (e.g. job quality, organisational culture, flexibility, unsocial working hours, occupation, industry) and social-demographic factors (e.g. gender, parenting status, age).

In 2010, SafeWork SA funded a survey of 987 South Australian (SA) workers to enable an in-depth examination of South Australians' work-life interference, and to identify the social-demographic and employment groups with the lowest and highest work-life interference. As the national AWALI survey moved from an annual to a biennial schedule from 2010 onwards, the SA survey also followed suit with a survey in 2012 and 2014.

Key findings are summarised in reports available from the Centre for Work + Life website:

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/Research/Centre-for-Work-Life/Our-research/Current-Research/Australian-Work-And-Life-Index>

What AWALI measures

AWALI measures work-life interference that includes, but is not confined to, work-family issues. Those without children also experience spillover from their working lives onto their relationships, recreation, households, health and wellbeing, family life and care responsibilities.

AWALI also measures the effects of work on community connections. Putting more hours into paid work affects our relationships beyond home, including our capacity to build friendship networks in the broader community, but these are generally not investigated in assessments of work-life interference.

AWALI also employs a commonly used single measure of time pressure (feeling rushed or pressed for time) in daily life, which is an indirect measure of work-life fit. Finally, AWALI includes a general assessment of satisfaction with work-life balance.

In sum, AWALI measures perceptions of work-life interference focussing on:

- 'General interference' (i.e. the frequency with which work interferes with responsibilities or activities outside work);
- 'Time strain' (i.e. the frequency with which work restricts time with family or friends);
- Work-to-community interference (i.e. the frequency with which work affects workers' ability to develop or maintain connections and friendships in their local community);
- Satisfaction with overall work-life 'balance';
- Frequency of feeling 'rushed or pressed for time'.

We bring together these five measures of work-life interference to arrive at an overall work-life index that is scaled from 0 (lowest work-life interference) to 100 (highest work-life interference). The index provides an easily understood general measure of work-life interference.

While we recognise that work-to-life and life-to-work interferences have both positive and negative effects, AWALI concentrates upon negative interactions given that these are of most immediate policy interest and that limited resources constrain what we can measure.

The AWALI SA 2014 sample and methodology

The concepts, methods, literature, measures and pilot tests underpinning AWALI are set out in Pocock, Williams and Skinner (2007) *The Australian Work and Life Index (AWALI): Concepts, Methodology & Rationale* available on the Centre’s website at <http://w3.unisa.edu.au/hawkeinstitute/cwl/projects/awali.asp>

AWALI surveys a randomly selected cross-section of the adult South Australian employed population by means of computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI).

The SA AWALI 2014 is a national stratified sample of interviews conducted over four weekends in February/March 2012 by Newspoll. In accordance with Newspoll’s usual practice, respondents were selected by means of a random sample process which includes separate quotas for respondents living in Adelaide city/metropolitan and SA rural/regional areas, respectively. Household telephone numbers were selected using random digit dialling and there was a random selection of an individual in each household by means of a ‘last birthday’ screening question.

The SA survey sample comprises 988 respondents (Table 1). Data is also reported on three additional samples: the SA AWALI 2010 and 2012 surveys and the national AWALI 2014 survey. Statistically significant contrasts are noted in the text. Unless specified otherwise, SA AWALI 2014 data is used in Sections 4 to 7.

Table 1 Sample sizes for SA data collections 2010 – 2014

	SA 2010	SA 2012	SA 2014
All	987	1002	988
Full-time	653	652	613
Men	424	413	393
Women	229	239	220
Part-time	332	350	375
Men	84	104	114
Women	248	246	261

Note. Due to an administrative error, data on employment contract (permanent, fixed-term, casual, employee, self-employed) is not available for SA 2012.

Reporting conventions

In this report we focus on major findings, with particular attention paid to patterns and trends that are likely to be of most interest and relevance. We highlight significant changes over time from SA AWALI 2010 to 2014 surveys, and also instances where the SA AWALI 2014 findings differ from the national AWALI 2014 average.

The following statistical conventions are used in this report. Following Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) conventions, full-time employment is defined as 35 or more working hours per week. All contrasts discussed in the text are statistically significant (i.e. not likely to be due to chance) at $p < .05$ unless stated otherwise. The Dunn-Bonferroni correction was applied to multiple comparisons.

Working hours have a clear and consistent impact on work-life interference: as hours increase work-life interference also tends to increase. Therefore, working hours are entered as a covariate in some analyses in which mean scores on the index measure are compared. This means that the effect of working hours on the index scores is statistically removed, or ‘controlled’, to observe the unique effect of another factor (e.g. gender) on work-life index scores. In this type of analysis

we are essentially asking the ‘what if’ question of how work-life interference differs between groups (e.g. men and women) if they worked the same hours. For example ‘what if men and women worked the same hours, would there be any difference in their work-life interference?’.

As a sample drawn from a much larger population the estimates presented in this report, like all survey data, are subject to a degree of sampling bias; that is, the estimates may be different from the figures that would have been reported had all South Australian workers been surveyed. Two strategies have been used to address this issue. All reported estimates have been weighted by Australian Bureau of Statistics data on age, highest level of schooling completed and gender to adjust for differences between the AWALI SA sample and the South Australian population on these key demographics. Secondly, we follow the threshold rule used in the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) study (Heady, Warren, & Harding 2006) which sets a minimum of 20 units (i.e. respondents) that must contribute to the value of a cell for that figure to be considered reliable. Estimates that do not meet this threshold requirement are accompanied by an asterisk indicating that this figure should be interpreted with caution.

The work-life index

To arrive at the AWALI summary work-life index we average and standardise the five measures of work-life interference described above. The five-item work-life index has satisfactory internal consistency (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .82$).

In the 2014 survey the SA average (mean) score on the index for all employed workers is 44.0 (42.1 nationally in 2014). Therefore, scores above the average score of 44.0 indicate a work-life interference that is worse than average and scores below this level indicate a better than average work-life balance.

Section 2: The AWALI 2014 SA sample

This section provides an overview of the SA AWALI 2014 worker sample and their general characteristics. The total sample consisted of 988 workers.

Table 2 shows that the SA AWALI 2014 provides a good representation of the SA labour market at the time of the survey with respect to gender, age, type of employment and part-time/full-time working hours. There is an over-representation of people with a post-school qualification (i.e. vocational certificate, university degree), workers in community/personal service and women in professional occupations. Labourers and young people are under-represented.

Table 2 Overview of the AWALI 2014 SA sample (per cent)

	Men	Women	All	ABS – SA
All	51.2	48.8	100.0	(54.2 men; 45.8 women)
Age group				
18–24	13.0	11.8	12.4	17.1 ^a
25–34	20.4	17.7	19.1	20.8
35–44	23.4	25.4	24.3	21.4
45–54	24.0	25.4	24.6	21.7
55–64	15.1	15.9	15.5	15.4
65+	2.1	1.9	4.0	4.0
Highest level of education				
Post-school qualification	73.5	77.2	75.3	54.9
Secondary school	26.5	22.8	24.7	45.1
Occupation				
Manager	13.5	7.9	10.7	13.5
Professional	22.6	31.7	27.1	20.3
Technician/trade	19.0	2.0	10.7	14.4
Community/personal service	13.7	25.5	19.5	9.7
Clerical and administrative	6.5	20.3	13.3	15.2
Sales	7.3	7.7	7.5	9.0
Machinery operators	9.3	0.4	5.0	6.2
Labourers	8.1	4.4	6.3	11.5
Work status				
Full-time (35+ hrs per week)	77.5	45.7	62.0	66.5
Part-time (< 35 hrs per week)	22.5	54.3	38.0	33.5

Note. ^aIncludes persons aged 15 – 17 years. ABS data sources: ABS Cat. No. 6227.0 Education and Work Australia, May 2013; ABS Cat. No. 6202.0 - Labour Force, Australia, March 2014, Time series spreadsheet, labour force status by sex – South Australia; ABS Cat. No. 6291.0.55.001 - Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery, Mar 2012; ABS Cat. No. 6291.0.55.003 - Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly, Feb 2012, Employed Persons by Sex, Occupation, State, Status in Employment.

Table 3 shows the household and family structure of AWALI SA respondents compared with the national AWALI sample. Most respondents in SA were living in a household with two or more adults (82.7 per cent) and 46.5 per cent of households contained one or more children. In households with children, most children were of school age.

Table 3 Household structure in the AWALI 2014 SA sample (per cent)

	SA 2014	Aust. 2014
Adults in household		
1 adult	17.3	18.0
2 or more adults	82.7	82.0
Marital status		
Married/de facto	64.8	66.9
Divorced, separated, never married or widowed	35.2	33.1
Children in household		
No children	53.5	54.7
1 child	15.9	15.5
2–3 children	29.0	28.0
4 or more children	1.6	1.7
Ages of children¹		
≤ 4	15.0	14.7
5–12	26.7	26.0
13–17	19.2	18.6
Type of household		
Single parent	3.8	4.1
Couple with children	39.6	38.6
Single no children	28.7	31.5
Couple no children	27.8	25.8

Note. ¹Percentage as proportion of total sample.

Section 3: An overview of work-life interference in South Australia 2014

To provide an overview of South Australians' work-life interference, we start by considering men's and women's responses on each of the five work-life items that comprise the work-life index, as well as scores on the overall index measure. Men and women often have very different experiences of putting together their work, home and community lives. Managing long hours in paid work is a more common challenge for men, whereas women are more likely to experience the strains and pressures of combining shorter hours in paid work with primary responsibility for unpaid care and domestic work (Buddender 2010; Sayer, England, Bittman, & Bianchi 2009). We examine similarities and differences in men's and women's experiences of work-life interference, within full-time and part-time employment.

Work-life interference in 2014: Individual work-life index items

As Table 4 shows, around one quarter of South Australian workers feel that work frequently (often/almost always) interferes with life outside work such as family time, social and other activities. Work interfering with community connections and relationships is less common – with around 19 per cent of workers reporting frequent work-community interference. Chronic time pressure (frequently feeling rushed and pressed for time) is more common, and the only item on which there is a statistically significant gender difference. Nearly 60 per cent of women and almost half of men feel chronic time pressure. Nevertheless, the majority of South Australians (65.0 per cent) are satisfied with their work-life balance. These patterns have remained stable from 2010 to 2014, and are also comparable to the national AWALI 2014 survey. There are no statistically significant differences between these three data collections.

Table 4 Work-life interference by gender, SA 2014 (per cent)

	SA 2010 Often/almost always	SA 2012 Often/almost always	SA 2014 Often/almost always	National 2014 Often/almost always
Work interferes with activities outside work				
Men	23.5	23.5	25.4	23.2
Women	18.7	22.5	25.6	20.0
All	21.2	23.0	25.5	22.5
Work interferes with enough time with family or friends				
Men	27.3	27.8	27.4	26.9
Women	22.0	25.1	26.3	23.8
All	24.7	26.6	26.9	25.4
Work interferes with community connections				
Men	17.2	18.6	19.4	19.3
Women	14.6	17.9	19.4	16.8
All	15.9	18.3	19.4	18.1
Feel rushed or pressed for time				
Men	47.4	42.3	48.6	47.2
Women	59.5	56.9	59.3	57.7
All	53.3	49.0	53.6	52.1
Satisfaction with WLB				
Men	69.2	67.2	64.6	70.4
Women	66.1	64.2	65.4	67.7
All	67.7	65.8	65.0	69.2

Note. Response scale on all items except satisfaction scale was never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always. Data in table is combined responses of often and almost always responses. Sample is all employed persons (employees, self-employed).

We turn now to consider how full-time and part-time workers experience their work-life relationship. Considering these groups separately provides a useful insight into men’s and women’s work-life experiences when they are working similar hours. The focus here is patterns of high work-life interference (often/almost always responses).

Work interference with activities outside work

Work frequently interferes with activities outside work for 30.5 per cent of SA full-time workers, with no statistically significant difference between men and women (Figures 1 and 2). Compared to Australian full-time workers in general, SA men and women are more likely to report frequent work-life interference on this measure (30.5 per cent of SA employees; 24.9 per cent of employees nationally). Although these contrasts were of borderline statistical significance ($p = .06/.07$). As expected, part-time workers are less likely to report frequent work-life interference on this measure (17.5 per cent) (Figures 3 and 4). The small sample size for part-time men does not allow for reliable analyses on gender differences.

With one exception, there is no statistically significant difference in the occurrence of frequent (often/almost always) work interference with activities outside of work between the SA 2014 survey and samples of full-time and part-time workers from the national 2014 survey, the SA 2012 survey or the SA 2010 survey, and this is the case for men and women as well as the total sample. The exception to this pattern is full-time women: in SA these women are more likely to report frequent work interference with life activities in 2014 (32.5 per cent) than in 2010 (20.2 per cent) (the contrast between 2010 and 2012 is also statistically significant).

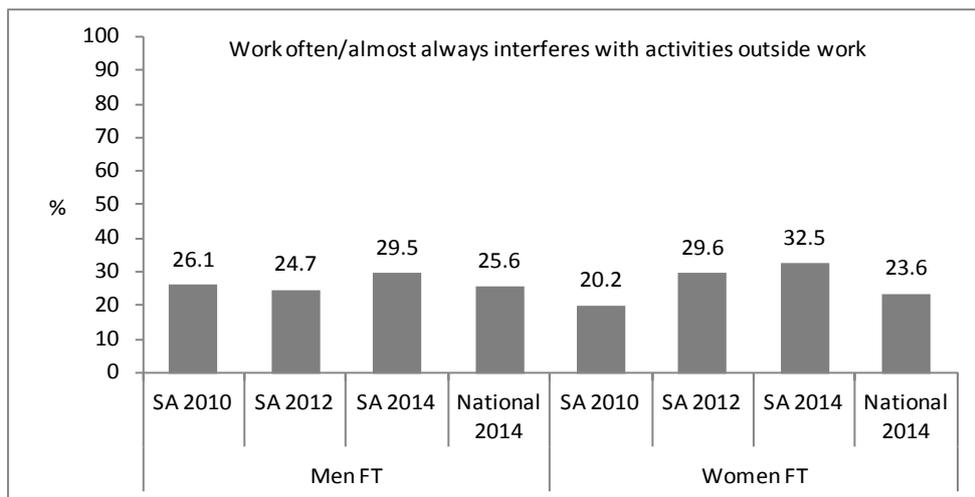


Figure 1 Work interferes with activities outside work, **full-time** employed (men and women)

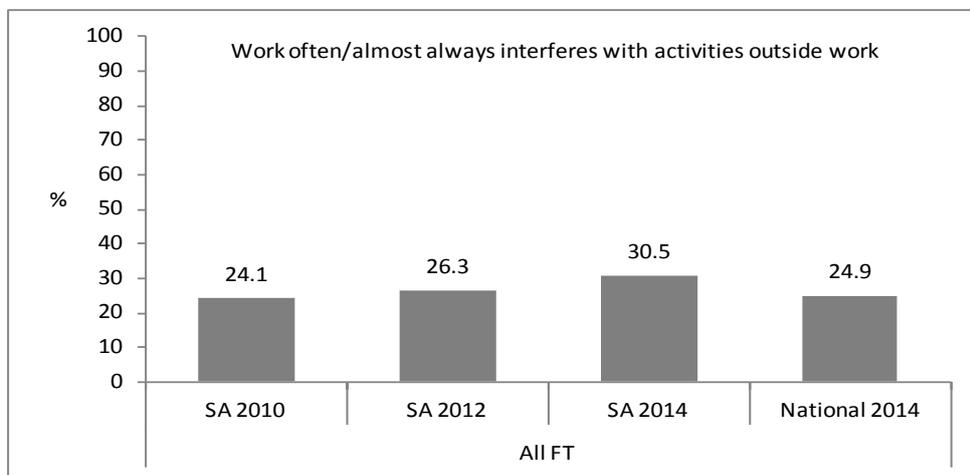


Figure 2 Work interferes with activities outside work, **full-time** employed (all)

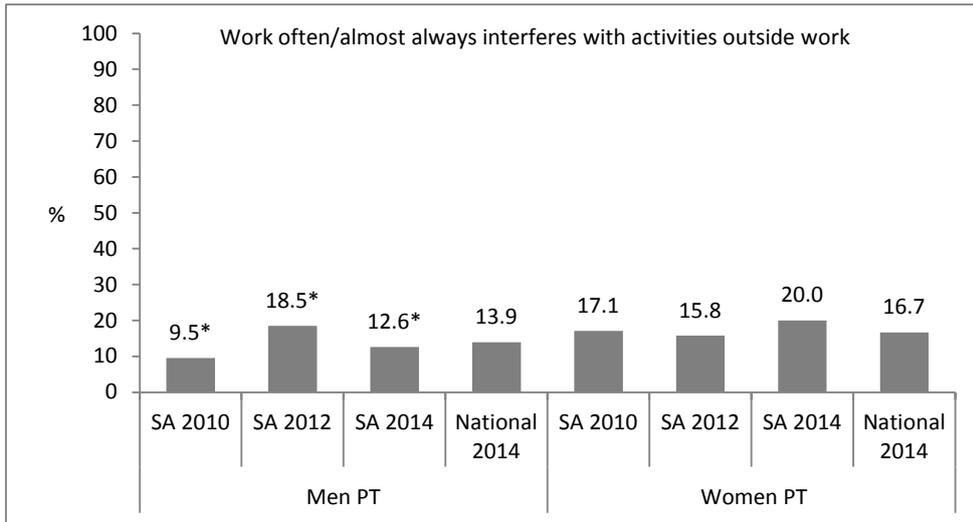


Figure 3 Work interferes with activities outside work, **part-time** employed (men and women)

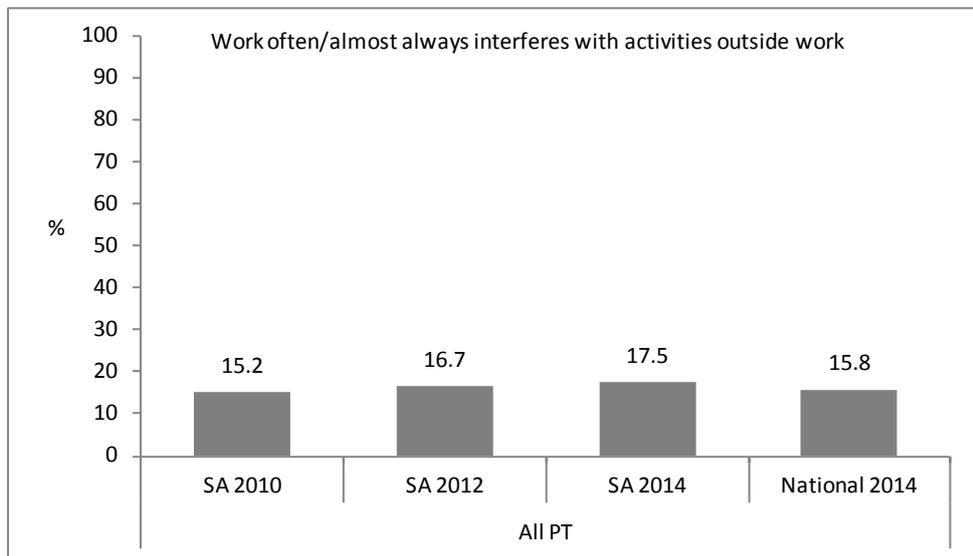


Figure 4 Work interferes with activities outside work, **part-time** employed (all)

Work-related time restrictions with family and friends

Work-related time restrictions are slightly more common, with one third of SA full-time workers reporting that work frequently restricts their family and social time, with little difference between men and women (Figures 5 and 6). Although there is some evidence that SA women are more likely to report frequent time restrictions than the national average for women in full-time work, this contrast did not reach statistical significance. Again, part-time workers are much less likely to report frequent work-related restrictions on social time (16.8 per cent) (Figures 7 and 8).

There is no statistically significant difference in the occurrence of frequent (often/almost always) work-related time restrictions between the SA 2014 and samples of full-time and part-time workers from the national 2014 survey, the SA 2012 survey or the SA 2010 survey, and this is the case for men and women as well as the total sample.

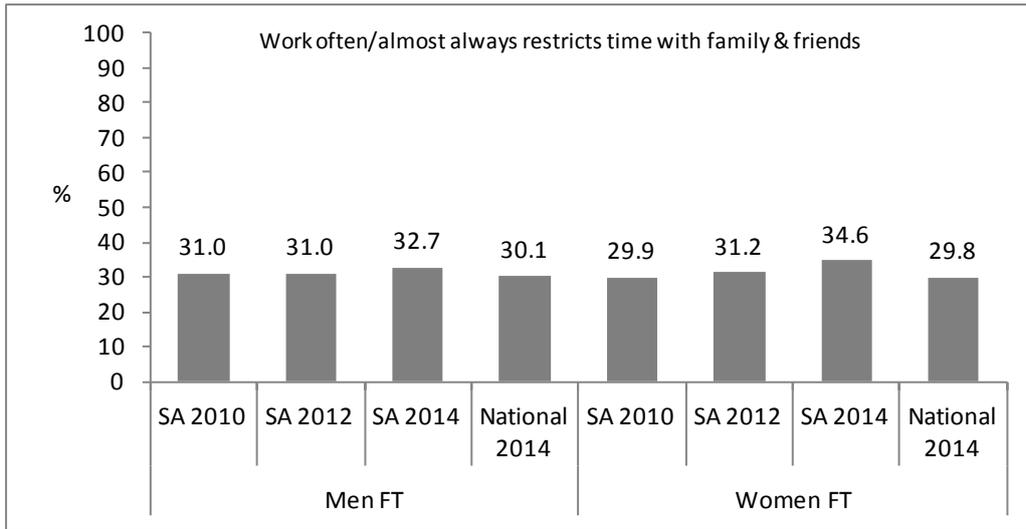


Figure 5 Work restricts time with family/friends, **full-time** employed (men and women)

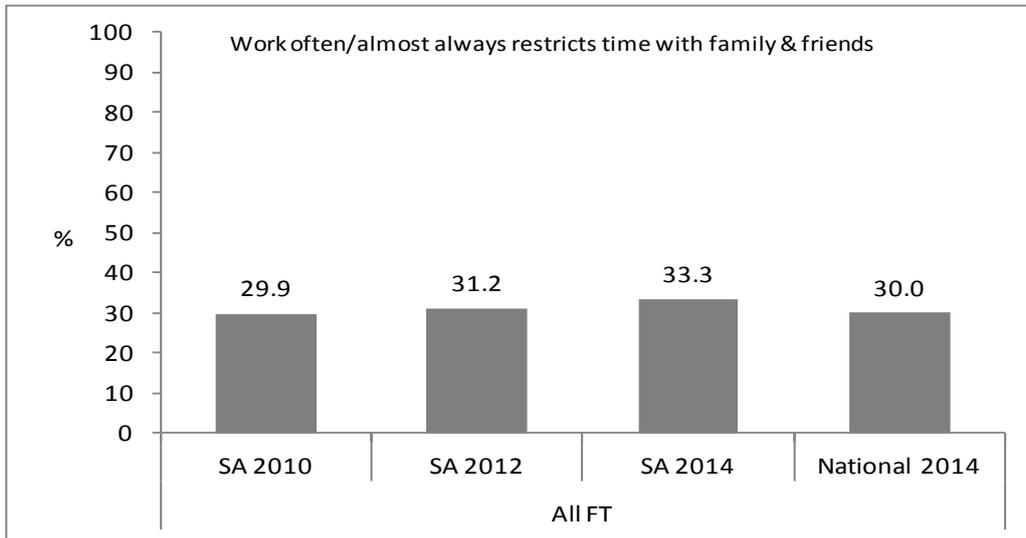


Figure 6 Work restricts time with family/friends, **full-time** employed (all)

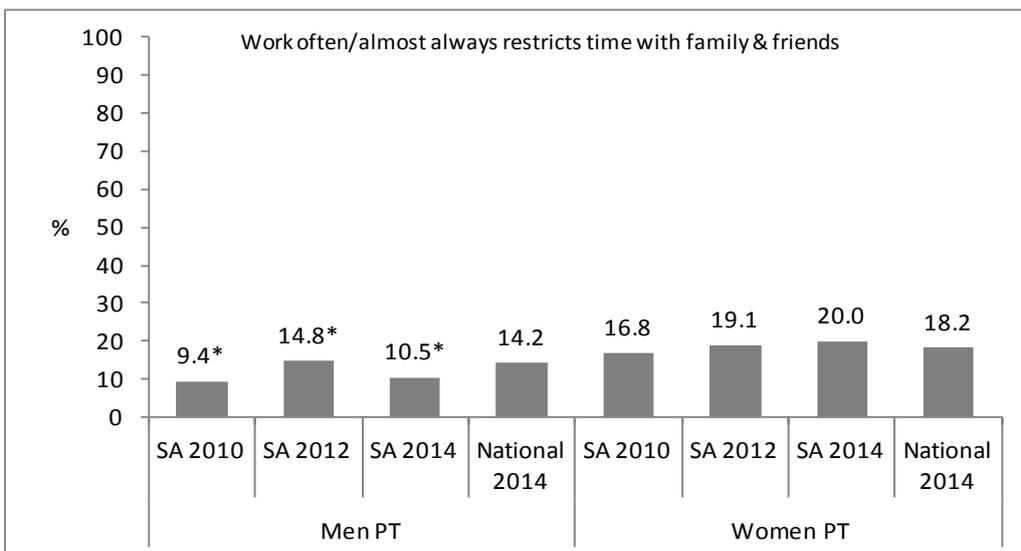


Figure 7 Work restricts time with family/friends, **part-time** employed (men and women)

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size.

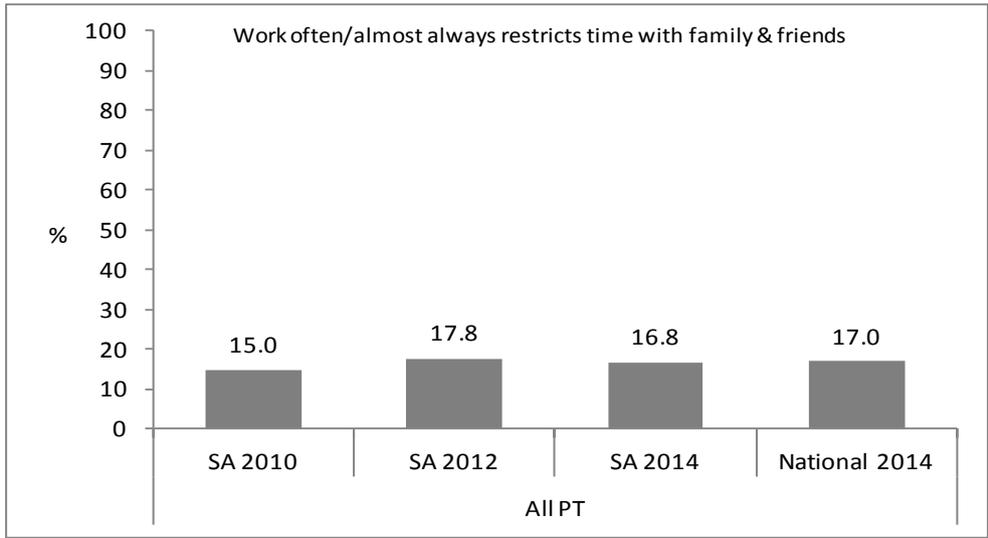


Figure 8 Work restricts time with family/friends, **part-time** employed (all)

Work interference with community connections

Work interferes with the capacity to interact with community for around a quarter of SA full-time workers, with no significant gender differences (Figures 9 and 10). Rates of work-community interference for full-time workers are comparable in SA AWALI 2014 (23.9 per cent) to the national average (22.1 per cent). This type of work-life interference is uncommon for part-timers; around 13 per cent report frequent work-community interference (Figures 11 and 12).

There is no statistically significant difference in the occurrence of frequent (often/almost always) work interference with community activities between the SA 2014 survey and samples of full-time and part-time workers from the national 2014 survey or the SA 2012 survey. The increase in work interference with community connections between full-time SA workers in 2010 (18.4 per cent) and 2014 (23.9 per cent) was significant for all full-time workers (Figure 10), and approached statistical significance for women (Figure 9) ($p = .07$).

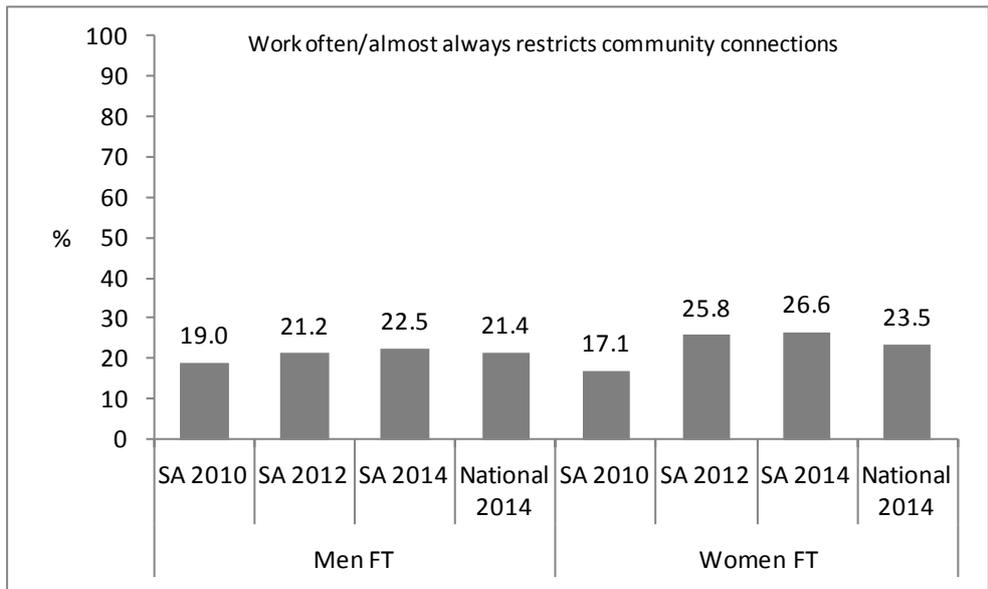


Figure 9 Work interferes with community connections, **full-time** employed (men and women)

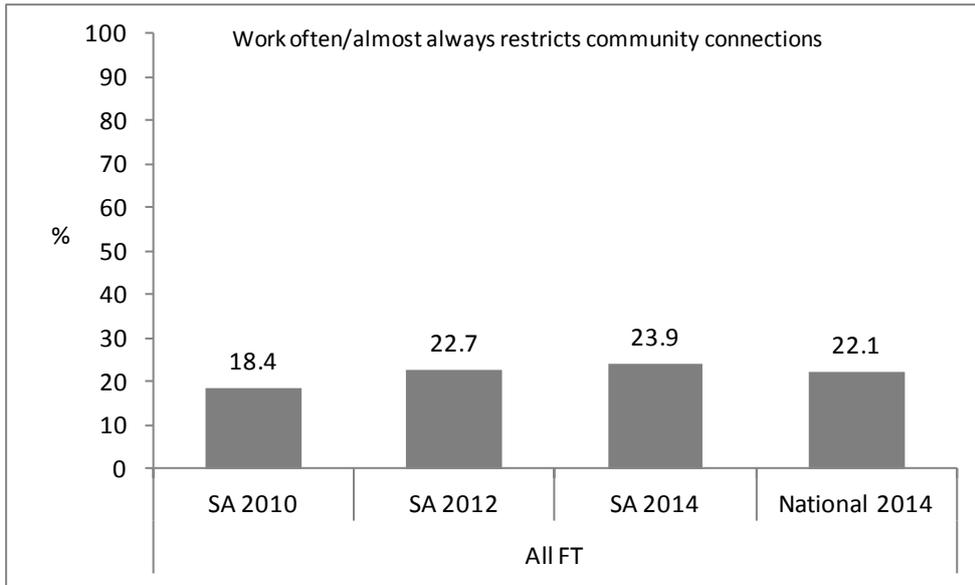


Figure 10 Work interferes with community connections, **full-time** employed (all)

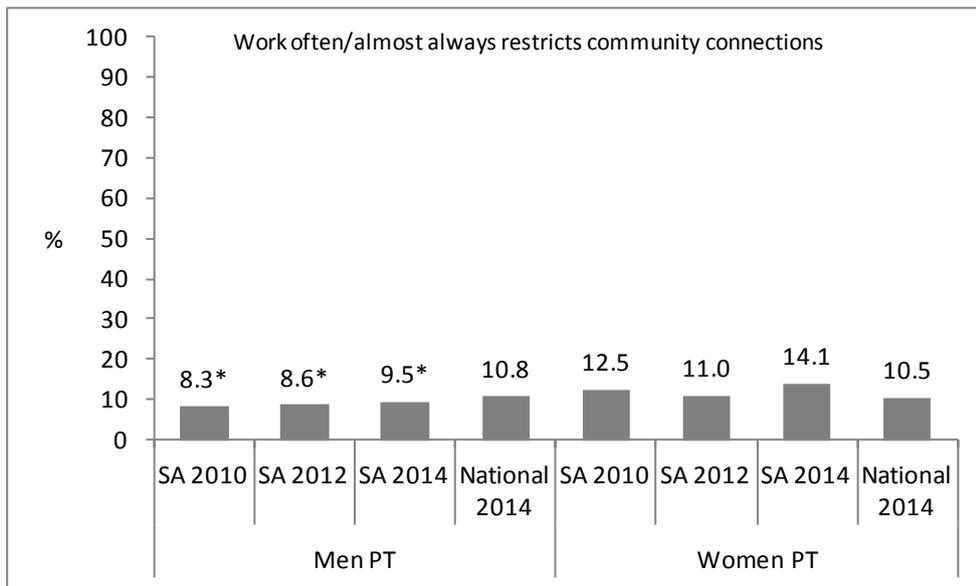


Figure 11 Work interferes with community connections, **part-time** employed (men and women)

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size.

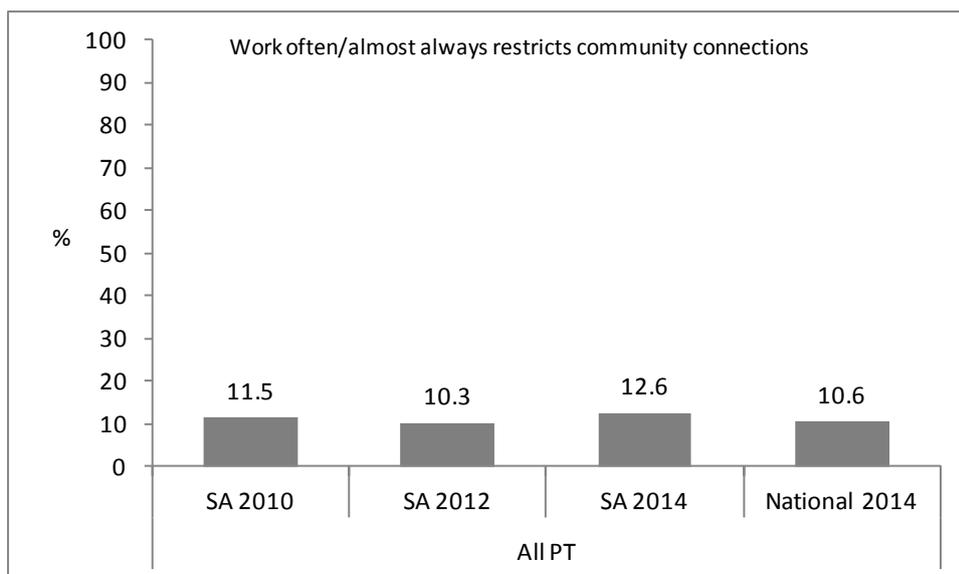


Figure 12 Work interferes with community connections, **part-time** employed (all)

Rushed and pressed for time

Compared to the other types of work-life interference, general time pressure – feeling rushed and pressed for time – is much more common (Figures 13 and 14). This is the case in SA as well as in the national AWALI 2014 data. Just over 60 per cent of women in full-time work are likely to be chronically time pressured and around 55 per cent of men join them, with no statistically significant difference between these groups. Time pressure is much less common for part-time workers (Figures 15 and 16); in 2014 just under half of SA part-timers felt rushed and pressed for time. There are significant gender differences in these patterns. SA women in part-time work are more likely to report chronic time pressure (56.5 per cent) than men (27.7 per cent), and there is no significant difference between part-time and full-time SA women on time pressure (part-time men are the least time pressured of all groups).

There is no statistically significant difference in the occurrence of frequent time pressure between the SA 2014 survey and samples of full-time and part-time workers from the national 2014 survey, the SA 2012 survey or the SA 2010 survey, and this is the case for men and women as well as the total sample. The increase in full-time men’s chronic time pressure from 2012 (46.2 per cent) to 2014 (55.4 per cent) approached significance ($p = .07$). The decline over this period in full-time women’s time pressure was not statistically significant.

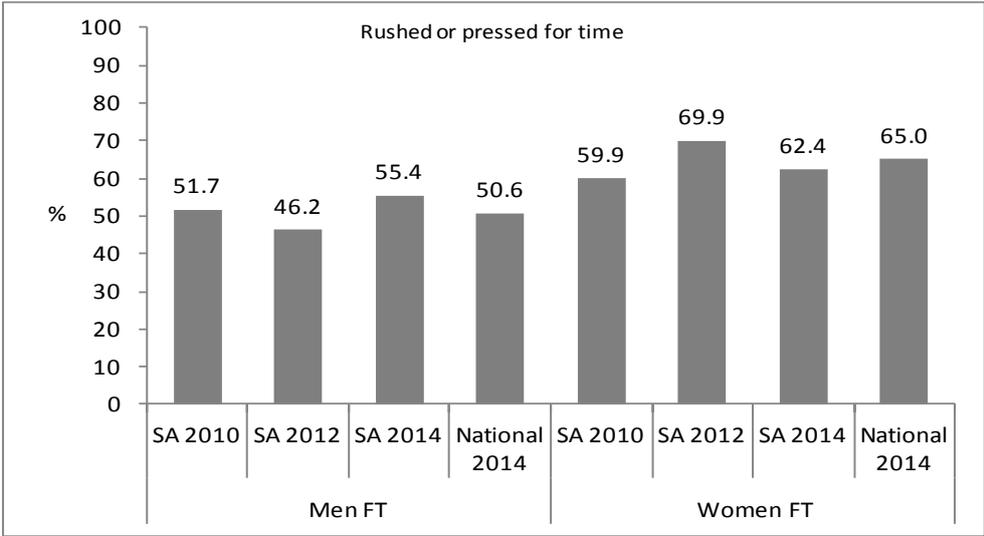


Figure 13 Rushed or pressed for time, **full-time** employed (men and women)

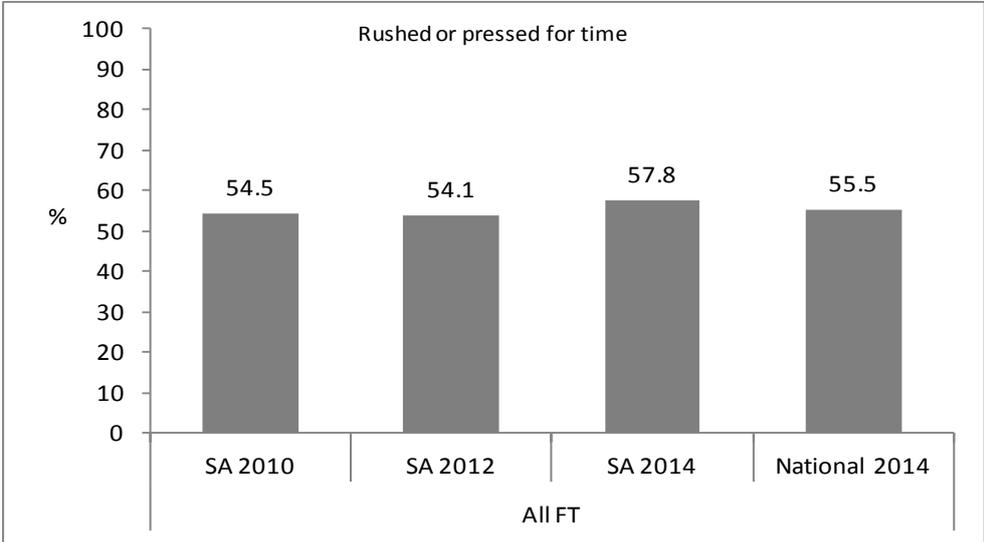


Figure 14 Rushed or pressed for time, **full-time** employed (all)

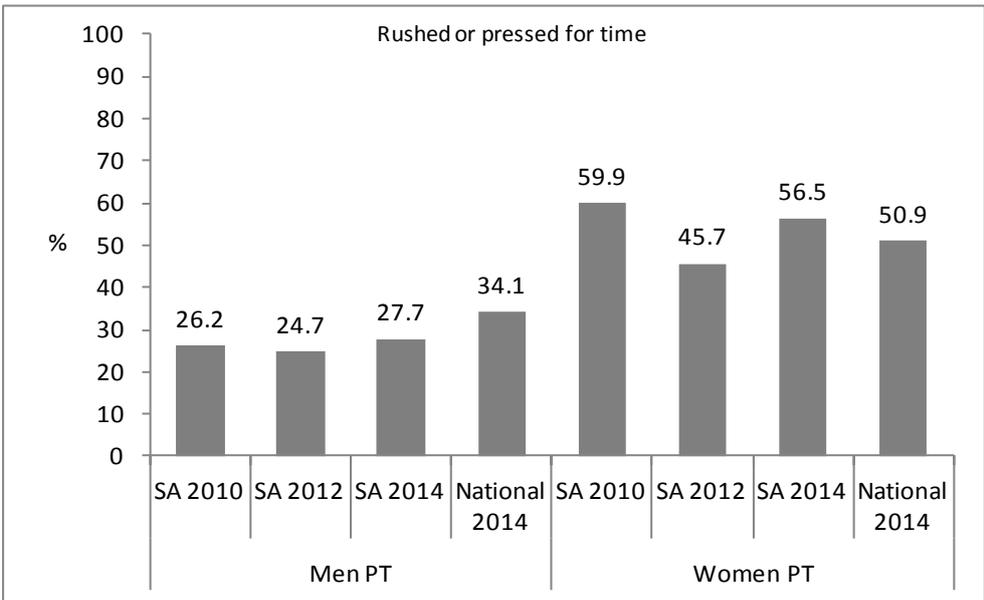


Figure 15 Rushed or pressed for time, **part-time** employed (men and women)

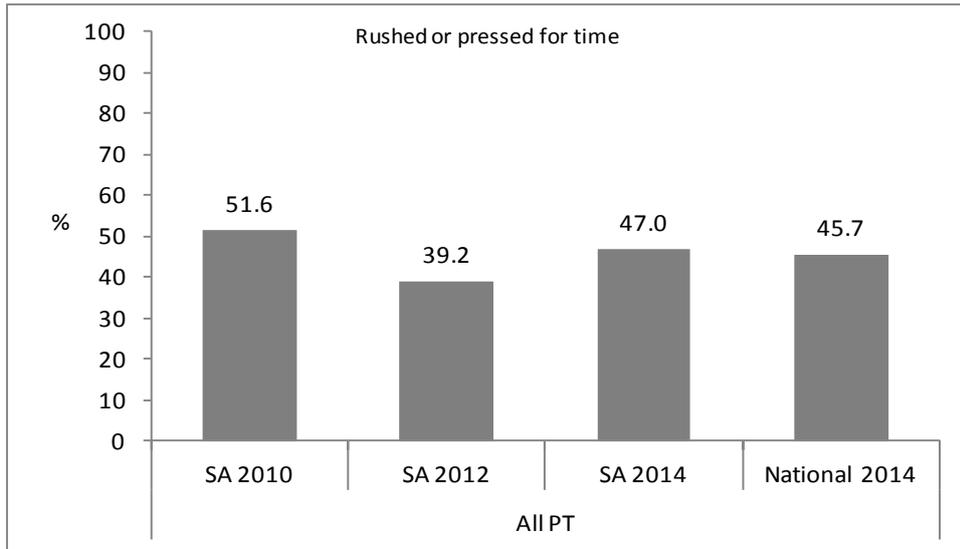


Figure 16 Rushed or pressed for time, **part-time** employed (all)

Satisfaction with work-life balance

Overall, the majority of full-time workers in SA are satisfied with their work-life balance (59.4 per cent), with no statistically significant gender difference (Figures 17 and 18). As expected, part-time workers are more likely to be satisfied with their work-life balance; around three quarters of SA part-timers in 2014 are satisfied, with no significant gender differences (Figures 19 and 20).

SA men working full-time are less likely to be satisfied with their work-life balance (61.3 per cent satisfied) than the 2014 national average for full-time men (69.1 per cent satisfied) (Figure 17). The same contrast for SA and national full-time women is not statistically significant. There is also no significant difference on this item between the SA 2014 sample and the 2010 and 2012 samples.

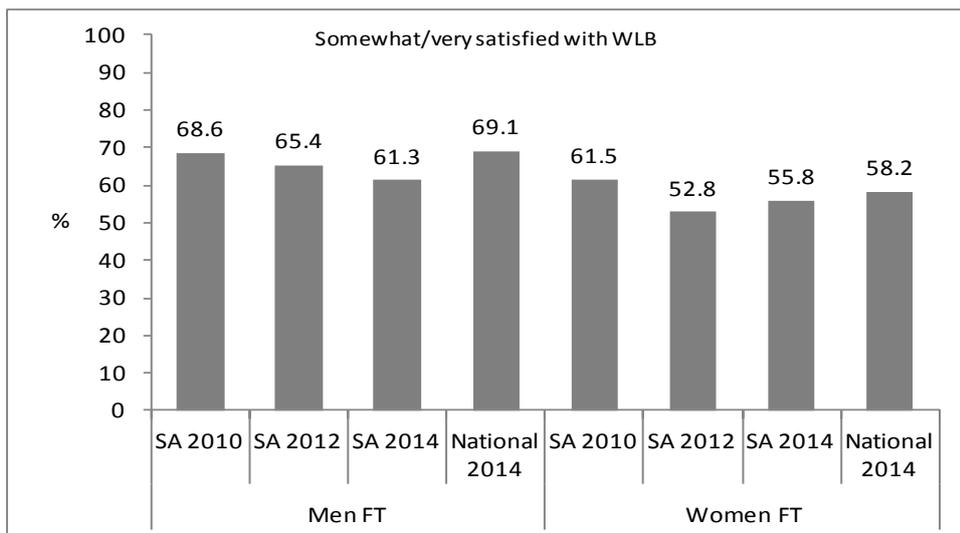


Figure 17 Satisfied with work-life balance, **full-time** employed (men and women)

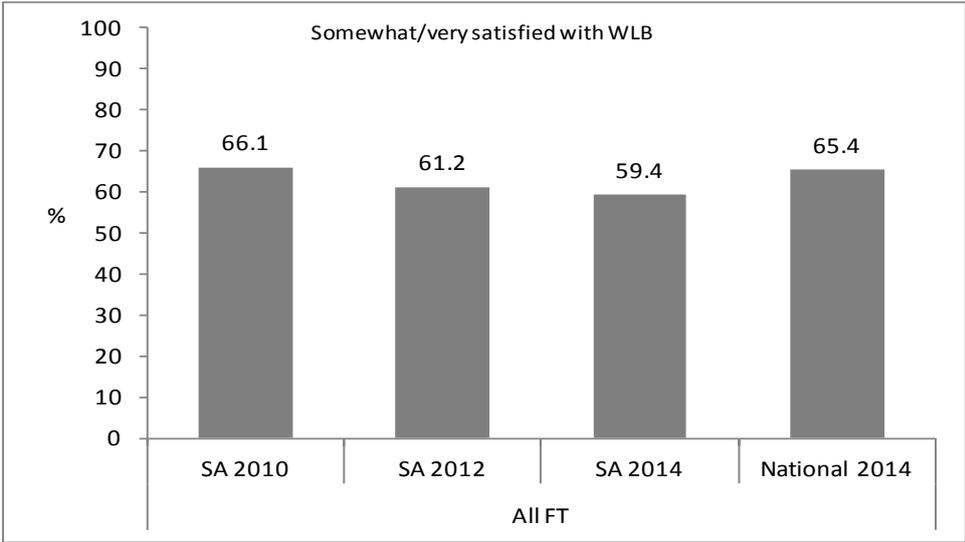


Figure 18 Satisfied with work-life balance, **full-time** employed (all)

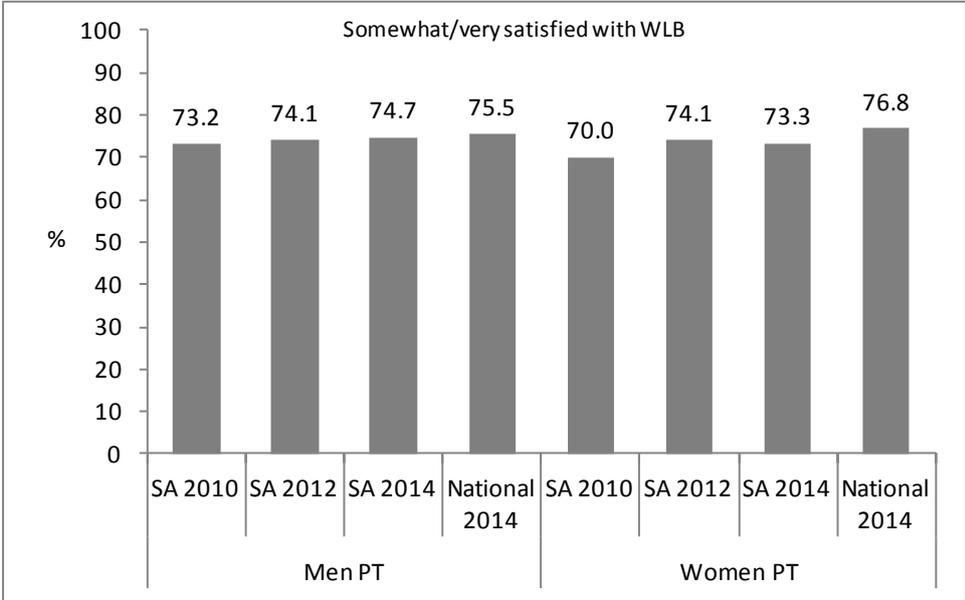


Figure 19 Satisfied with work-life balance, **part-time** employed (men and women)

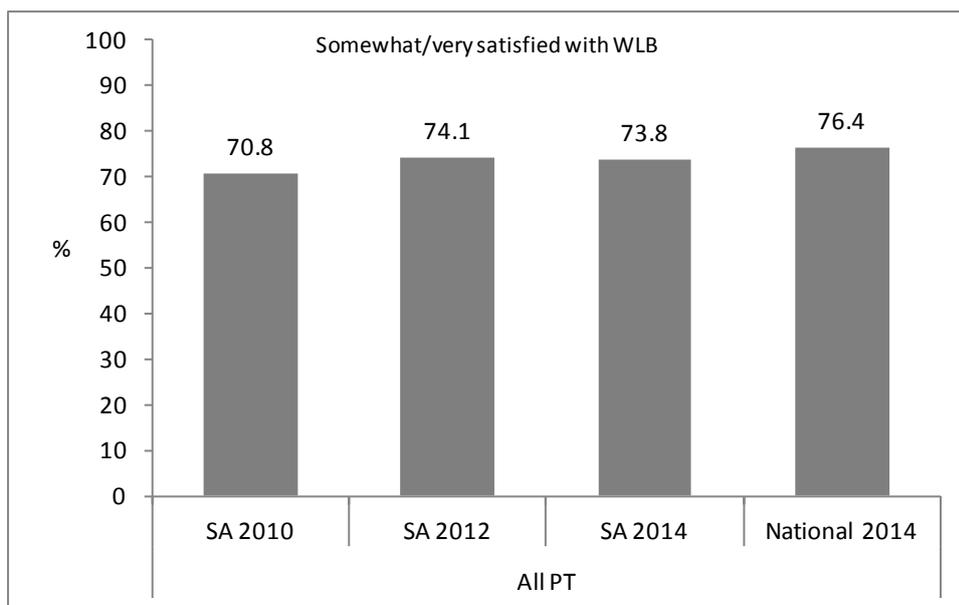


Figure 20 Satisfied with work-life balance, **part-time** employed (all)

South Australians' work-life interference in 2010 – 2014: The work-life index

In this section we report on the work-life index, which is a composite measure of work-life interference that combines the five separate items previously discussed. The index is scaled from 0 (lowest work-life interference) to 100 (highest work-life interference). The index provides an overall indication of the magnitude of work-life interference. We examine index scores for the SA workforce overall and separately for full-time and part-time workers. Appendix Table A1 provides the 95% confidence intervals for each of the SA 2014 index scores provided below.

As Figure 21 shows, there is little change in work-life interference for SA men and women from 2010 (42.4) through to 2014 (44.0). There are no significant changes over time on the work-life index for the SA samples, nor is there a statistically significant difference between SA (44.0) and national 2014 (42.1) index scores, and this is the case for men and women.

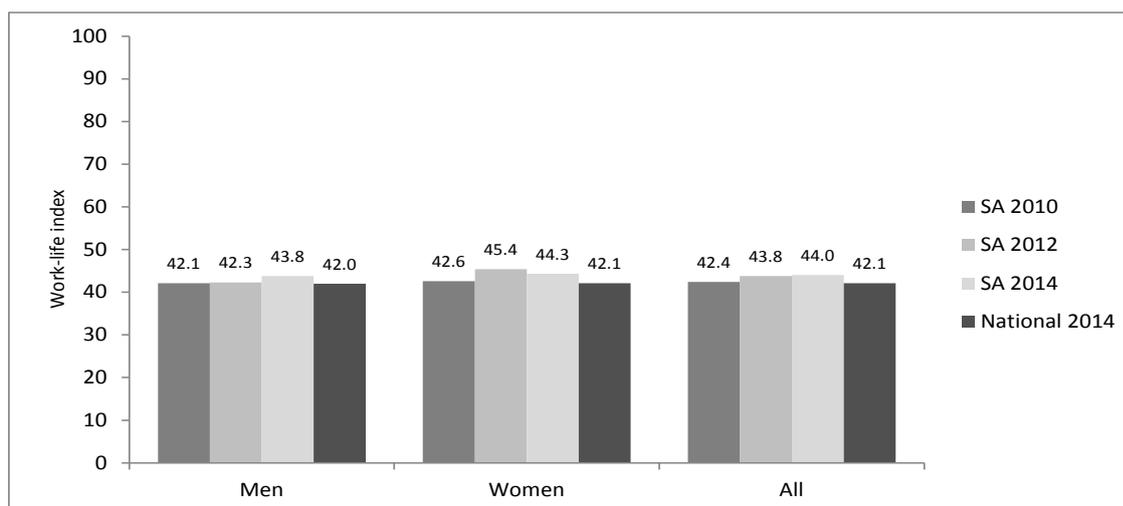


Figure 21 Work-life index scores 2010 - 2014, all employed

Note. Data includes employees and self-employed.

As Figure 21 shows, there is little difference on the work-life index between SA men (43.8) and women (44.3) for the whole sample. A different pattern emerges when we statistically control for gender differences in work hours (i.e., men work longer hours, on average). Controlling for work

hours, SA women have significantly higher work-life index scores (worse work-life interference) than men (SA women = 46.6, SA men = 41.9). This pattern is also evident in the national 2014 survey, with no significant difference between SA and national adjusted scores.

Considering full-time workers, as Figure 22 shows, there has been little change in work-life index scores over time. There is no significant difference between 2014 and previous survey years for full-time men and women, nor is there any gender difference on the work-life index for full-time workers. For the whole sample of SA full-time workers, work-life index scores are significantly higher in 2014 (48.3) than the national average (45.0), and the SA 2010 full-time sample (45.0). These contrasts are not statistically significant for full-time men and women when considered separately.

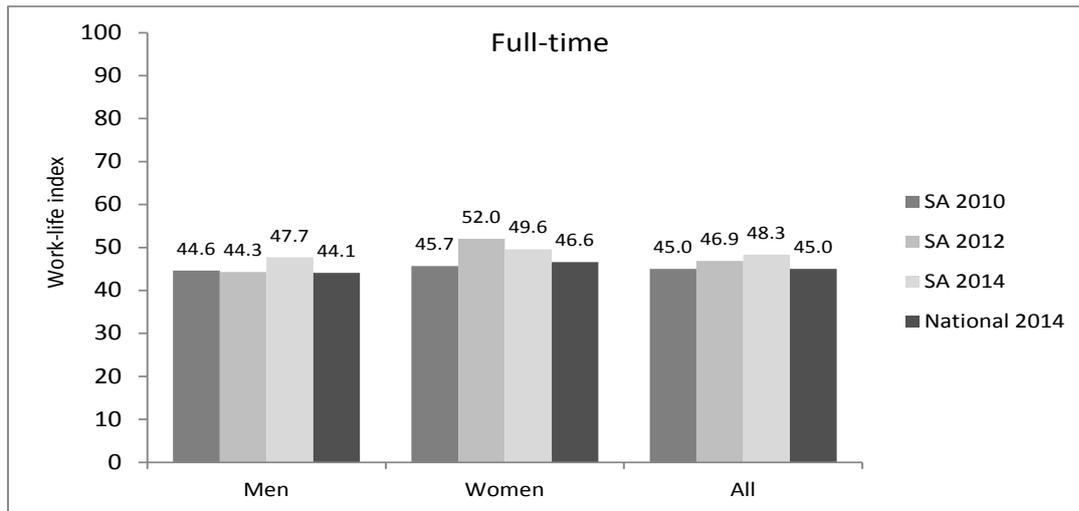


Figure 22 Work-life index scores 2010 - 2014, **full time** employed
 Note. Data includes employees and self-employed.

As observed previously, work-life interference is substantially lower for part-time workers (index score = 38.3) (Figure 23). As with full-timers, there is little change on the work-life index for part-time workers over the survey years from 2010 to 2014. Further, SA part-timers work-life index scores (38.3) are equivalent to the national average (36.7). Part-time women have higher work-life index scores (40.7) than part-time men (33.5); a pattern consistently observed in SA and national AWALI surveys.

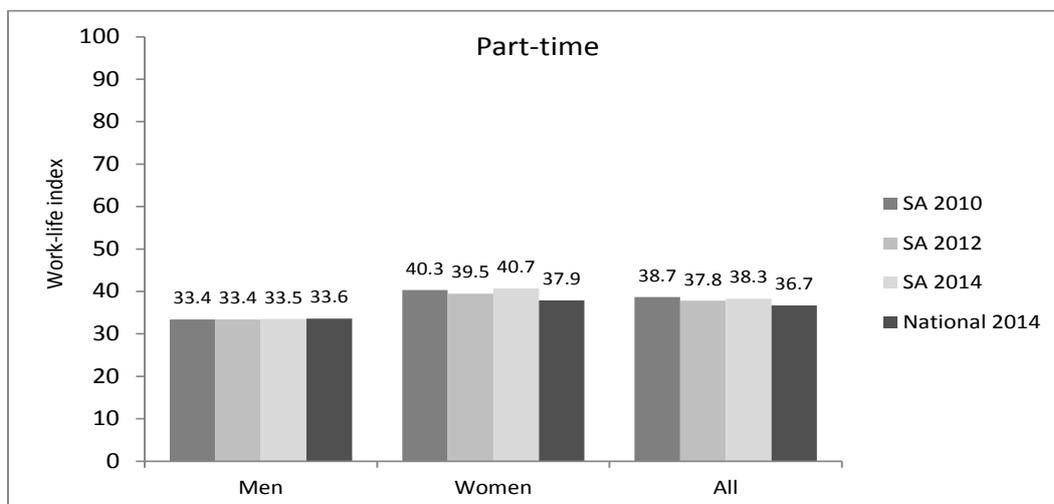


Figure 23 Work-life index scores 2010 - 2014, **part-time** employed
 Note. Data includes employees and self-employed.

Overview of key findings

Levels of work-life interference reported by SA workers, and differences by gender and work hours, are comparable in 2014 to previous SA surveys.

- Around 25 to 30 per cent of workers report frequent work interference with non-work responsibilities and activities.
- Chronic time pressure is common; around half of men and sixty per cent of women frequently feel rushed and pressed for time.
- Nevertheless, the majority of SA workers, around 65 per cent, are satisfied with their work-life balance.

As expected, part-time workers have substantially lower work-life interference (index score = 38.3) than their full-time counterparts (index score = 48.3).

Time pressure is the most common type of work-life interference reported by full-time workers (57.8 per cent are frequently time pressured), especially full-time women (62.4 per cent). Full-time and part-time women report equivalent time pressure, whereas part-time work is associated with less time pressure for men.

Men's and women's reports of work-life interference are more similar in 2014 than previous years (index scores of 43.8 and 44.3, respectively). In past surveys women were observed to have higher work-life interference on particular measures. This pattern is also evident in the national 2014 survey.

- However, controlling for differences in work hours, women report higher work-life interference (index score = 46.6) than men (41.9). This gender difference is also evident in part-time, but not full-time work.

On particular work-life index items there was some evidence of change over time for the SA sample, or a contrast with the 2014 national average. On the overall work-life index measure, however, no significant differences were observed for the whole SA 2014 sample.

- When full-time workers are considered separately, SA full-timers have higher work-life interference (index score = 48.3) than the national average (45.0) and SA full-time workers in 2010 (45.0).

Section 4: Working hours and the ‘fit’ between actual and preferred hours

The number of hours worked, and the extent to which these hours fit with non-work responsibilities, is well established as a major factor impacting work-life interference (see Skinner & Chapman 2013 for a review).

In this section we take an in-depth look at working hours, focusing on two aspects of working time: the length of work hours and the extent to which work hours fit with workers’ preferences. In this report we follow international conventions that define long hours as 48+hours per week. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines these working hours as ‘very long’. The European Parliament’s Working Time Directive places an upper limit on weekly working hours of 48 hours including overtime.

In addition to the absolute number of hours worked, we also consider workers’ preferences with regard to their working hours. Australian and international research has consistently shown that working longer hours than preferred is a stronger predictor of health and wellbeing outcomes than the absolute length of work hours (Barnett 2006; Wooden, Warren & Drago 2009). This most likely reflects the realities of changing needs and preferences over the life course, as capacity and willingness to work particular hours is obviously strongly influenced by workers’ caring responsibilities, and this is especially the case for women. Further, older workers transitioning to retirement may also be less willing or able to work long or full-time hours (Moen 2011).

This section describes patterns of working hours, compares SA employees to their national counterparts, and also examines differences between SA workers in 2012 and 2014.

Shorter and longer part-time and full-time hours

Gendered patterns of working time are well established. In SA, as in Australia in general, men are more likely to work full-time (55.7 per cent; 35.4 per cent of women) and long full-time (22.2 per cent; 10.5 per cent of women) hours, whereas women are more likely to work part-time (54.1 per cent; 22.2 per cent of men) (Figure 24).

There has not been any significant change in these patterns of working hours in SA from AWALI 2012 to 2014, nor is there a significant difference from the national AWALI 2014 data.

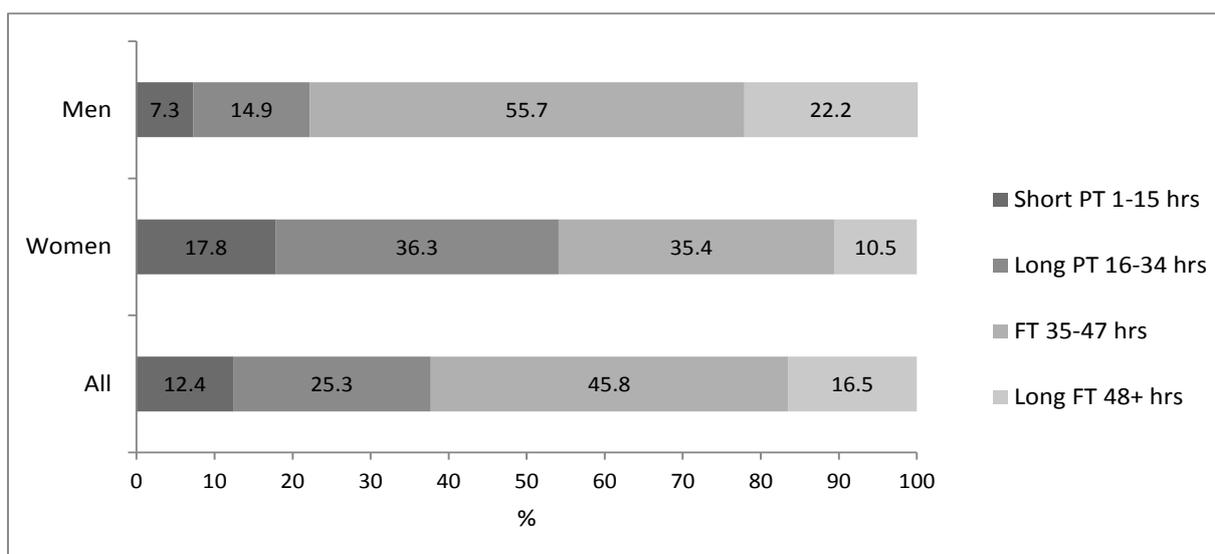


Figure 24 Short and long working hours by gender (per cent), SA AWALI 2014
Note. Data excludes self-employed.

Work-life index scores

The analyses so far have reported the work-life index scores of all employed respondents (employees and self-employed). In the analyses in this section and following sections we focus on employees, unless otherwise specified.

Considering employees only, work-life index scores are comparable to those reported for all employed (Section 3). In 2014 the index score was 44.4 for all SA employees (44.2 for men; 44.6 for women). Full-time employees have higher index scores (47.8 overall; 47.2 for men; 49.1 for women) than part-time employees (39.4 overall; 34.8 for men; 41.4 for women). The difference between SA men and women working part-time is statistically significant. As has been consistently observed in the national and SA AWALI surveys, in part-time work women have higher work-life interference than men.

As Figure 25 shows, there is a clear relationship between longer hours and worse work-life interference. There are gender differences in these patterns. For SA men, there is a clear distinction between part-time hours and working 35 – 47 full-time hours. Whereas for SA women, there is no significant difference in work-life interference between long part-time and 35 – 47 full-time hours. Further, women have higher work-life interference than men in long hours (16 – 34) part-time work and long hours (48+) full-time work.

Compared to the national AWALI participants, SA women have higher work-life interference in short part-time work (index score 36.6 in SA; 29.7 nationally), and SA men have higher work-life interference in 35 – 47 hours full-time work than men nationally (index score 44.6 in SA; 38.5 nationally) and SA men working these hours in 2012 (index score = 40.0). For detailed national data see Appendix Table A3.

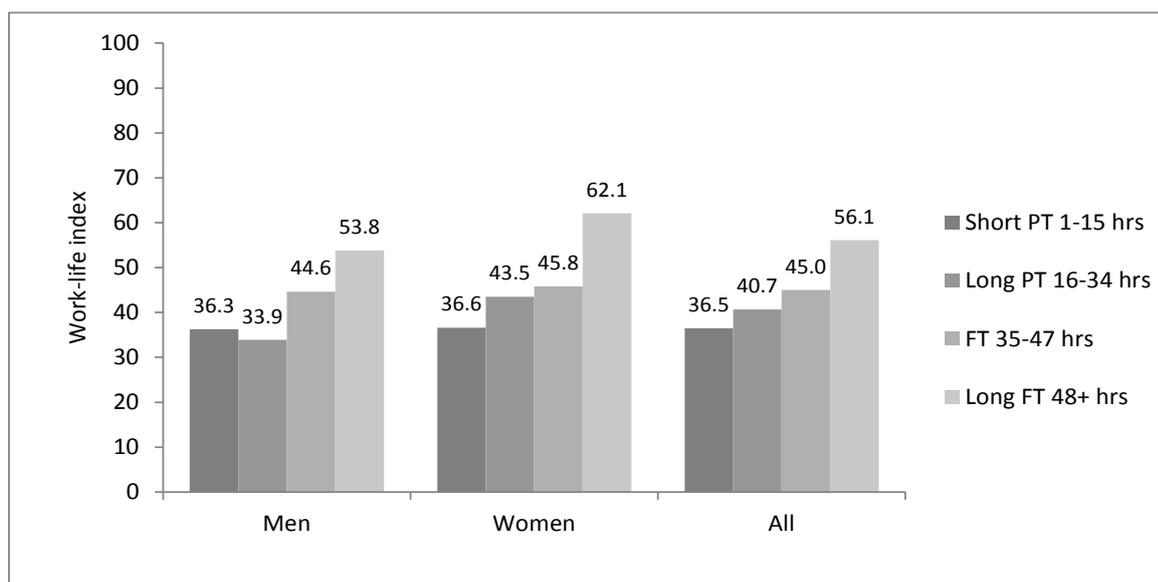


Figure 25 Work-life index scores by short and long working hours and gender, SA AWALI 2014

Note. Data excludes self-employed.

Actual and preferred working hours

We now turn to a second important dimension of working time – the extent to which working hours fit with preferences. Table 5 provides an overview of SA workers' actual and preferred working hours and the degree of fit between them. Men in full-time work would prefer, on average, to work about five hours fewer a week, with full-time women preferring to reduce their hours by a statistically significant seven hours. In contrast, part-time workers tend to prefer more

hours, with men in part-time work preferring around eight additional hours and women around 2.5 more hours.

Overall, SA workers in 2014 had better fit between actual and preferred hours (prefer 1.8 hours fewer) than workers in 2012 (prefer 3.5 fewer). This was the case for men (2014 prefer 4.7 fewer; 2012 prefer 6.7 fewer), whereas there was no difference between 2014 and 2012 for women. There are no significant differences between the SA and national 2014 data on the absolute measure of hours fit with preferences as shown in Table 5. Further, there are no significant differences between SA 2014 data and both SA 2012 and national 2014 data on actual hours or preferred hours.

Table 5 Actual and preferred working hours by gender

	Actual working hours	Preferred working hours	Working hours fit
Men			
Full-time	44.3	39.6	4.7
Part-time	18.9	26.6	-7.9
Total	38.1	36.5	1.7
Women			
Full-time	42.9	34.5	7.4
Part-time	20.7	23.1	-2.5
Total	30.1	28.4	1.7
All			
Full-time	43.8	38.2	5.7
Part-time	20.1	24.2	-4.1
Total	34.2	32.5	1.7

Note. Working hours mismatch = actual minus preferred hours. A positive score occurs when actual hours exceed preferred hours, and a negative score when actual hours are fewer than preferred hours. Data excludes self-employed.

The ‘fit’ between actual and preferred hours

We turn now to examining working hours fit with preferences using a different metric, applying the threshold of four or more hours mismatch (i.e. workers prefer to work 4+ hours longer or fewer), to identify which social and employment groups are likely to have a good or poor fit with working hours preferences.

Men and women

As Figure 26 shows, just over half of SA workers do not have a good fit between their actual and preferred hours. Most of those workers – 35.3 per cent overall – would prefer to work at least half a day less, with little difference between men and women. There are no significant differences in findings between these results and the SA 2012 survey or the national 2014 survey.

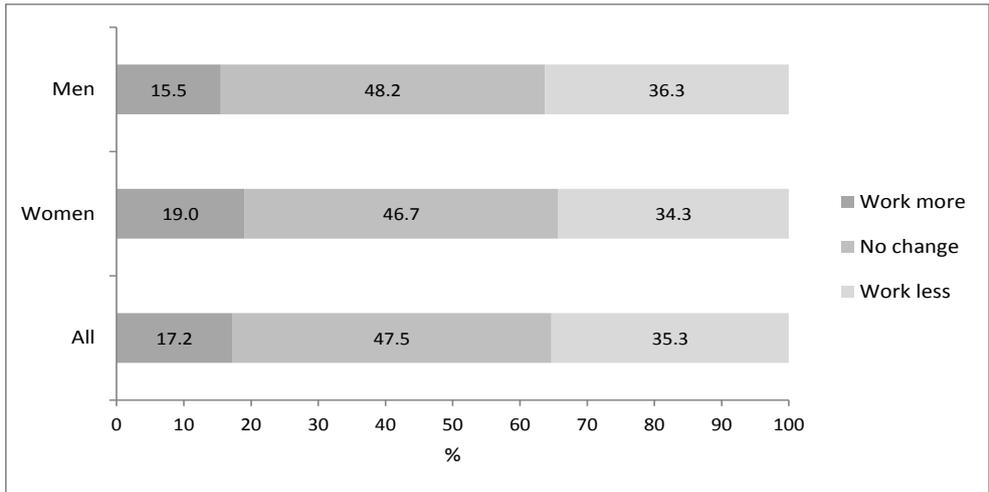


Figure 26 Working hours fit with preferences by gender (per cent)

Note. No change = 0 – 3 hours gap between preferred and actual hours. Work more = prefer to work 4 or more hours more than actual hours. Work less = prefer to work 4 or more hours fewer than actual hours. Data excludes self-employed.

Part-time and full-time workers

As Figure 27 shows, around half of those working either part-time or full-time (35 – 47) hours, have a good fit (within three hours) between their actual and preferred working hours. Around 40 per cent of part-time workers would prefer to work at least half a day longer, a preference that is rare for full-time workers (less than five per cent). This preference for longer hours is more common for men in part-time work (53.4 per cent) than women (32.9 per cent). A preference to work at least half a day less is common for full-time workers, indeed two thirds of those working long full time hours (48+) want to work less. Women in full-time work are more likely to prefer fewer hours than men, and this is the case for those working 35-47 hours (38.3 per cent of men; 55.7 per cent of women) or 48+ hours (64.0 per cent of men; 73.5 per cent of women). There has been little change in these patterns from the SA AWALI 2012 survey, and there is no significant difference with the national AWALI 2014 findings.

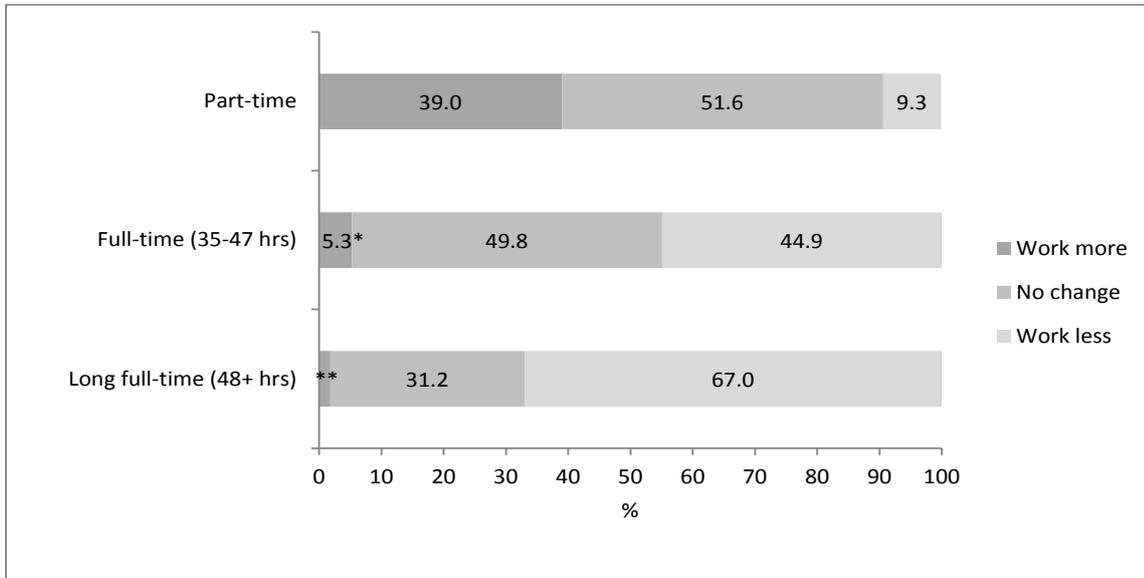


Figure 27 Working hours fit with preferences by working hours (per cent)

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. **Estimate not provided due to very low sample size. No change = 0 – 3 hours gap between preferred and actual hours. Work more = prefer to work 4 or more hours more than actual hours. Work less = prefer to work 4 or more hours fewer than actual hours. Data excludes self-employed.

Full-time workers' preference to change to part-time hours

The previous analyses show that a preference to work fewer hours is common for full-time workers. Another indicator of the extent to which working hours are experienced as too long is to consider full-time workers' preference to change to part-time work, which represents a substantial change to both working hours and also earning potential.

As Table 6 shows, a substantial proportion of women working full-time (36.5 per cent) would prefer to work part-time compared to only 14.8 per cent of men. This increases to 45.1 per cent of mothers in full-time work (31.3 per cent of women without children). In contrast, fathers in full-time work are less likely to prefer part-time hours (8.9 per cent) than men without children (20.0 per cent). There are no statistically significant differences with the national AWALI 2014 survey and SA AWALI 2012 survey.

Table 6 Full-time workers' preference to work part-time by gender (per cent)

	Prefer part-time	Prefer full-time
Men	14.8	85.2
Women	36.5	63.5
All	22.6	77.4

Note. Data excludes self-employed.

Working hours fit with preferences by parenting status

Here we examine working hours fit with preferences for men and women with and without children. As observed previously, men are more likely to be in full-time employment, and to work longer full-time hours, than women. Indeed, 85.5 per cent of fathers are in full-time work compared to 36.3 per cent of mothers. Around 1 in 3 (31.0 per cent) of fathers work long hours (48+ hours) compared to less than 1 in 10 (8.3 per cent) of mothers. As Figure 28 shows, around 35 per cent of men and women prefer to work fewer hours, regardless of their parenting status. Around 20 per cent of men and women without children prefer more hours. Given their over-representation in long hours jobs, fathers are least likely to prefer more hours (9.7 per cent; 16.1 per cent of mothers). These patterns are comparable to the SA AWALI 2012 and the national 2014 survey.

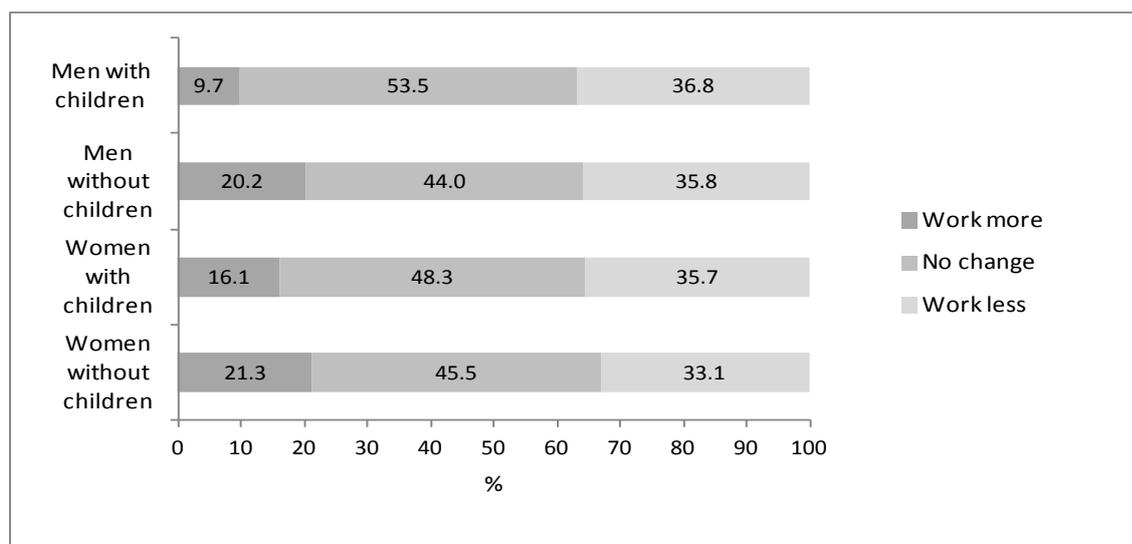


Figure 28 Working hours fit with preferences by parenting status and gender (per cent)

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. No change = 0 – 3 hours gap between preferred and actual hours. Work more = prefer to work 4 or more hours more than actual hours. Work less = prefer to work 4 or more hours fewer than actual hours. Data excludes self-employed.

In the AWALI national reports we consider different types of households, distinguishing between partnered and un-partnered men and women with and without children. However, the distribution of the AWALI 2014 SA sample did not support this analysis, particularly due to small numbers of sole parents.

Work-life interference and hours ‘fit’ with preferences

There is a clear relationship between working longer hours than preferred and higher work-life interference (Figure 29). Indeed, work-life interference is similar for those with a good working hours’ fit with preferences (index score = 38.8) and for those who would prefer more hours (index score = 38.1). For men, work-life scores are very similar for those working longer than preferred or working long hours (48+). Whereas for women, working long hours (48+) has a stronger negative impact on work-life interference (index score = 62.1, Figure 25).

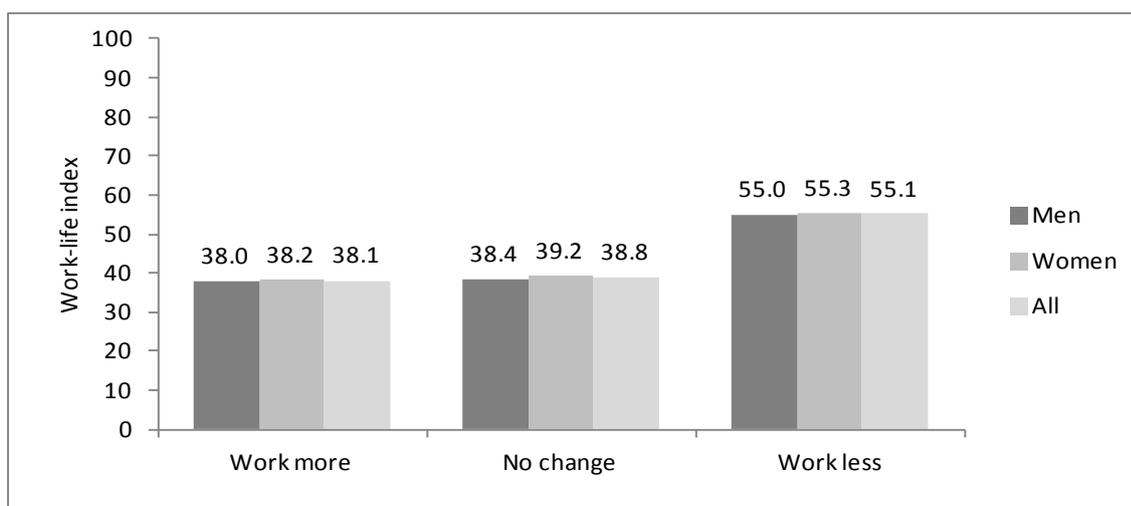


Figure 29 Work-life index scores by working hours fit

Note. No change = 0 – 3 hours gap between preferred and actual hours. Work more = prefer to work 4+ more hours than actual hours. Work less = prefer to work 4 or more hours fewer than actual hours. Data excludes self-employed.

Overview of key findings

Working hours and their fit with preferences are two well-established influences on work-life interference. There are also well-established gender patterns around working times:

- As with Australia in general, men in SA work longer hours than women; they are more likely to be in full-time work and to work longer full-time hours;
- Longer working hours have a stronger negative impact on women’s work-life interference.

When we consider the extent to which these working hours fit with preferences, there is evidence of an unmet need for a shorter working week:

- Men and women working full-time would prefer to work at least 5 hours fewer per week;
- Men in part-time work would prefer to work 8 hours more per week, and women 2.5 hours;
- 35.3 per cent of workers would prefer to work at least half a day less, with little difference between men and women.

Those in full-time work are most likely to prefer fewer hours:

- 44.9 per cent of full-time workers working 35 – 47 hours would prefer to work at least half a day less;
- The majority of those working long hours (67.0 per cent) would also like to work half a day less.

Many women (36.5 per cent) working full-time would prefer to make a substantial change by moving to part-time work.

Similarly, around 36 per cent of parents would prefer to work at least half a day less; this is the case for mothers and fathers despite substantial differences in their working hours.

There is a clear relationship between working longer hours than preferred and higher work-life interference.

These patterns are very similar to the AWALI SA 2012 survey and the national 2014 survey.

Section 5: Social characteristics and work-life interference

In the analyses so far we focused on describing South Australian men’s and women’s work-life arrangements and experiences, examining measures of work-life interference, length of working hours and their fit with preferences. In this section we continue to compare and contrast men’s and women’s experiences as we consider additional social characteristics that can impact on the way our working lives are arranged, and the impact on life outside of work. Specifically, we examine how age, parenting status, household income and geographic location (urban, rural/regional) are associated with work-life interference.

Age

Here we consider how work-life interference differs across the life course, from young people who are often studying or in the early stages of their careers, to those in their 30s and 40s who are consolidating career paths and trajectories, while many older workers are transitioning into retirement. Family dynamics and composition also differ across these age groups. For many there is a transition from pre-family formation, to family formation and early years of parenting, to the parenting of young adults living in the family home. It is well established that for workers aged in their thirties and forties, the combination of peak periods of activity in work and family domains is particularly associated with work-life strains.

Working hours also fluctuate across the life course. Excluding those in the youngest and oldest age groups, men’s average working hours are consistently between 35 and 40 hours across age groups, and women’s between 30 and 34 hours.

It is useful to statistically control these differences in working hours to examine the unique effects of age (independent of working hours) on work-life interference. As Figure 30 shows, controlling for differences in work hours, work-life interference is fairly stable across age cohorts with a peak for women in the 35 – 44 age group (index score = 51.0; 41.1 for men). This gender difference is the only statistically significant contrast between men and women. A reduction in work-life interference in the oldest age cohort (65+) is evident for men and women. These patterns mirror those observed in the SA 2012 survey and the national 2014 AWALI surveys, with one exception. SA men aged 55 – 64 years have higher work-life interference in 2014 (42.5) than in 2012 (34.0).

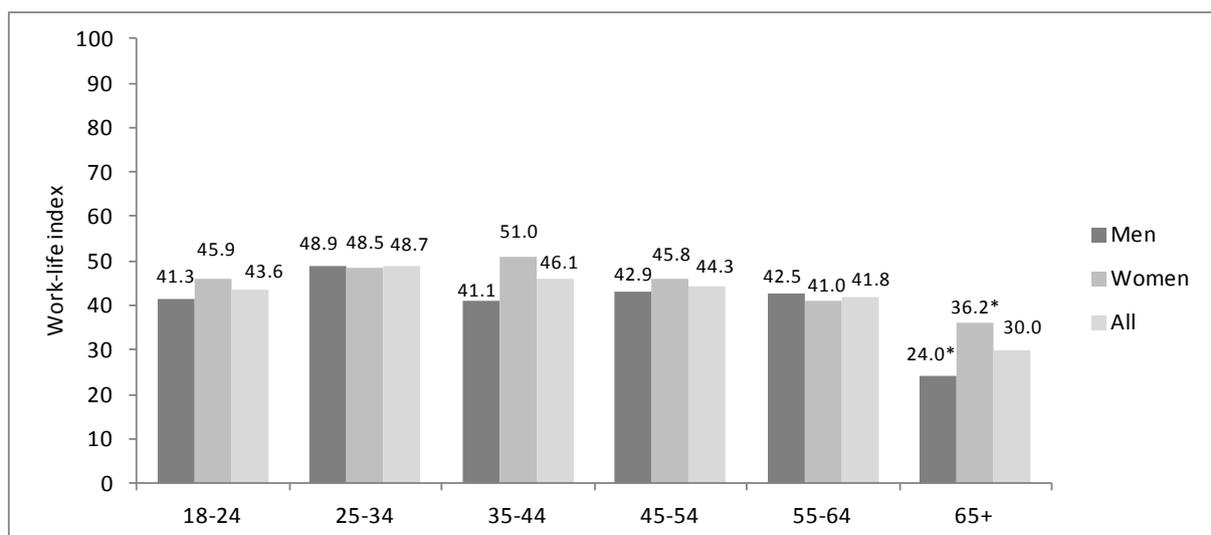


Figure 30 Work-life index scores by age and gender

Note. Index scores adjusted for working hours. Data excludes self-employed.

Parenting

As observed in Section 4, there are well established patterns of working hours for men and women with parenting responsibilities, with fathers working substantially longer hours (41.4 hours) than mothers (27.9 hours). When we account for these differences in working hours, mothers have higher work-life interference (index score = 52.3) than fathers (index score = 44.9) (Figure 31), indicating that parenting responsibilities are associated with greater difficulties and strains in combining work and care for women than men. There are no gender differences in work-life interference for employees without children. There are no statistically significant differences with the national AWALI 2014 survey and SA AWALI 2012 survey.

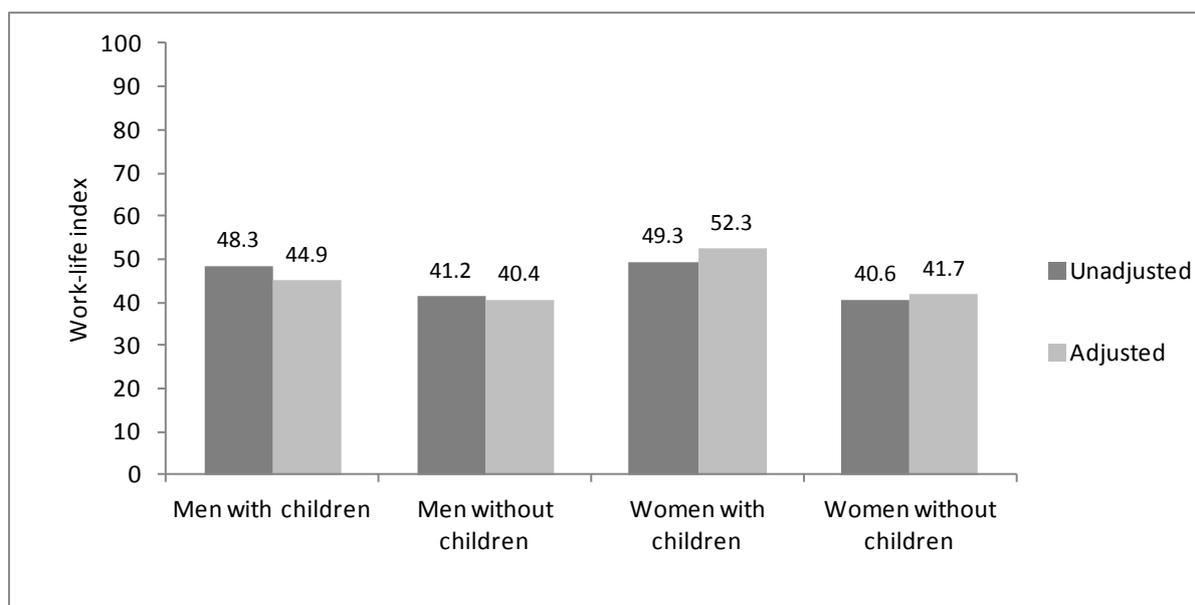


Figure 31 Work-life index scores by parenting status and gender

Note. Index scores adjusted and unadjusted for working hours. Data excludes self-employed.

Household income

The income available to the members of a household can have both positive and negative implications for work-life balance. Benefits include economic security and the capacity to purchase goods and services that save time (e.g. cleaning, gardening, ready-made meals). On the other hand, a higher income usually means longer hours, and those with a higher income tend to be in managerial and professional occupations – groups of workers who are consistently observed to have high work-life conflict.

In the SA 2014 survey, as observed in 2012, there was a pattern of increased work-life interference associated with higher household income, particularly between those with household incomes of greater than \$60,000 compared with those earning less than \$60,000. This is mainly a function of working hours, as there is no significant difference between income groups on the adjusted index scores (controlling for the effect of working hours). There are no significant differences on work-life interference in each of the income groups in 2014 compared to the SA 2012 survey. Adjusting for work hours, the highest two income groups in SA (\$60k+) (index score = 46.7) have higher work-life interference than the national average for this income group (index score = 42.5).

Geographic location

There were no significant differences in work-life interference between those residing in urban areas (index score = 44.6) and those residing in rural/regional areas (index score = 42.6). This was the case for men and women.

Overview of key findings

Of the social demographics considered in this section, it is not surprising that those characteristics that relate directly or indirectly to parenting responsibilities showed the strongest and most consistent association with work-life interference.

Work-life interference is higher for men and women with parenting responsibilities (adjusted index score = 44.9 and 52.3, respectively) compared to those without children (aged under 18 years) (adjusted index score = 40.4 and 41.7, respectively).

The impact of combining work and care on work-life interference is stronger for women than men:

- Mothers report higher work-life interference than fathers, controlling for differences in work hours;
- Women's work-life index scores are higher than men's in the age cohort of 35– 44 years (index score = 51.0 and 41.1, respectively), which corresponds with the peak period of family formation/parenting.

These patterns are not unique to South Australia, but reflect well established gendered patterns of work-life interaction observed in Australia and other similar countries.

Section 6: Employment characteristics and work-life interference

In this section we consider how four key employment characteristics – occupation, industry, sector and size of firm – are related to work-life interference. Working hours and their scheduling, workplace cultures including gender balance, and the nature of work itself can vary substantially between occupations and industries. Here we examine how these factors – as represented by the four broad employment characteristics – impact on work-life interference for SA men and women.

Occupation

As Table 7 shows, two occupations have higher work-life index scores (unadjusted) than the SA average: managers (56.2) and professionals (45.8). To some extent these higher scores reflect their longer working hours compared to most other occupations. However, managers also have higher index scores when occupational differences in work hours are taken into account (51.5), indicating that the unique requirements and demands of a managerial role are associated with increased work-life interference (beyond the effect of long hours alone).

Table 7 Work-life index scores adjusted and unadjusted for working hours by occupation

	Working hours	Index (unadjusted)	Index (adjusted)
Men			
Managers	46.5	56.1	50.4
Professionals	41.1	44.1	40.9
Technicians & trades workers	41.8	42.5	39.0
Community & personal service	34.4	53.3	53.1
Clerical and administrative workers	37.4	42.4	41.0
Sales workers	28.0	39.5	42.3
Machinery operators and drivers	39.1	31.7	29.4
Labourers	31.5	41.2	42.4
Women			
Managers	42.9	56.5	52.5
Professionals	33.6	47.1	47.3
Technicians & trades workers	32.6	**	**
Community & personal service	24.8	41.7	46.0
Clerical and administrative workers	29.6	44.0	46.1
Sales workers	22.7	42.5	47.8
Machinery operators and drivers	30.0	**	**
Labourers	32.8	**	41.6
All			
Managers	45.0	56.2	51.5
Professionals	36.7	45.8	44.1
Technicians & trades workers	40.8	41.5	36.3
Community & personal service	28.4	46.0	49.5
Clerical and administrative workers	31.7	43.6	43.6
Sales workers	25.6	40.9	45.1
Machinery operators and drivers	38.9	32.4	45.6
Labourers	31.9	41.1	42.0

Note. **Estimate not provided due to inadequate sample size. Data excludes self-employed.

That managers and professionals have higher work-life interference than workers in other occupations has consistently been observed across SA and national AWALI surveys. In 2014 SA men working in community and personal service occupations also reported high work-life interference, which also represents a significant increase from 2012. Compared to the national

AWALI 2014 estimates, the following SA groups have higher work-life interference than the national average: male managers, male community and personal service workers, female clerical and personal service workers and male sales workers.

Industry

Work-life interference also differs across industry groups although these differences did not reach statistical significance, most likely due to the small sample sizes for some of the industry groups (Table 8). There was a statistically significant difference in work hours; with the longest hours reported by workers in manufacturing, electricity/gas, water and waste services and construction.

Considering those SA industry groups for which a sufficient sample size was available for a reliable estimate, construction had the highest unadjusted work-life index scores, which were also significantly higher than the SA 2014 average. As Table 8 shows, there are a number of other industry groups that have a work-life index score above the SA average (44.4 for all employees), however these estimates should be interpreted with caution due to sample size limitations.

These patterns are also evident in the SA 2012 and national 2014 surveys. SA construction workers also have higher work-life interference in 2014 than 2012. Compared to the national average in 2014, SA workers have significantly higher work-life interference in the industries of construction (SA 49.1; AU 40.0), financial/insurance/real-estate services (SA 48.4; AU 42.5), administration and support services (SA 46.1; AU 39.3) and public administration and safety (SA 46.9; AU 40.6) (unadjusted index scores).

Table 8 Work-life index scores adjusted and unadjusted for working hours by industry

	Working hours	Index score unadjusted	Index score adjusted
Agriculture/forestry and fishing	39.6	**	**
Mining	**	**	**
Manufacturing	42.0	42.0	34.6
Electricity/gas water and waste services	43.9	47.6*	48.2*
Construction	41.1	49.1	44.1
Wholesale/retail trade	26.5	39.1	42.7
Accommodation and food services	27.5	44.7	48.1
Transport/postal and warehousing	39.3	41.2	43.6
Information media/telecommunications	35.3*	47.2*	49.5*
Financial and insurance services/real estate	35.7	48.4*	47.5*
Rental/hiring and real-estate	**	**	**
Professional/scientific and technical services	35.7	42.3	41.1
Administrative and support services	27.6	46.1	48.7
Public administration and safety	38.3	46.9	45.0
Education and training	34.8	47.4	46.0
Health care and social assistance	32.0	43.7	43.9
Arts and recreation services*	25.8*	49.0*	53.0*
Other services	30.7*	34.0	37.3

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. **Estimate not provided due to inadequate sample size.

Employment type

In many ways self-employment can be a qualitatively different way of engaging in paid work compared to being an employee. Self-employment provides the opportunity for greater control over the timing, arrangement and conduct of work. On the other hand, with increased autonomy comes greater responsibility, for example with regard to business administration and finance. Here we examine the work-life outcomes of employees and self-employed workers in full-time and part-time employment. Note that the sample size of self-employed SA women was small (<25). The findings for self-employed women should be interpreted with caution.

As observed in the national survey, self-employment is more common for men (12.9 per cent) than women (5.5 per cent). Self-employed men work longer hours in full-time employment (52.5; 44.3 for employee men) and part-time employment (22.7; 18.9 for employee men). The sample size of self-employed SA women was not sufficient to support analysis by part-time and full-time hours. Overall, self-employed women worked shorter hours (26.2) than employee women (30.1).

Work-life index scores are comparable for employees and self-employed workers in SA, and this is the case for men and women. There is no evidence that self-employment is associated with particular work-life advantages or strains in South Australia. This was also observed in the national 2014 survey.

Type of employment contract

Just as self-employment can be a qualitatively different way of engaging in paid work compared to being an employee, employment on a casual contract is also a qualitatively different type of employment relationship compared to fixed-term or ongoing/permanent employment.

In SA the majority (80.8 per cent) of employees were on permanent or ongoing contracts, with slightly more men (84.6) than women (76.8) on these secure employment arrangements. Casual work is a more common form of employment for women (23.2 per cent; 15.5 per cent of men). Comparatively fewer employees are on fixed-term contracts (12.1 per cent). This distribution across employment contracts is comparable to the national average observed in AWALI 2014.

Casual employment is less secure and often more variable than fixed-term or permanent employment. On average, casual employees work fewer hours (19.4) compared to those on fixed-term (35.8) or permanent contracts (38.2) (Table 9).

On the work-life index unadjusted for these differences in work hours, there is clearly worse work-life interference for permanent employees compared to fixed-term employees and casuals. Work hours account for the majority of this effect: controlling for work hours (adjusted index) removes this significant difference in work-life outcomes. Indeed, casuals have higher work-life interference when differences in work hours are controlled.

When we control for differences in work hours, women report higher levels of work-life interference compared to men in each type of employment contract, although the contrast did not reach statistical significance for casual employees. Overall, these patterns are comparable to those observed in the SA 2012 and national 2014 surveys.

Table 9 Work hours and work-life index scores by type of employment contract

	Work hours			Index score unadjusted			Index score adjusted		
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All
Permanent/ongoing	42.0	33.7	38.2	46.0	46.1	46.0	42.0	46.3	44.1
Fixed-term	39.5	32.3	35.8	40.5	44.1	42.4	37.7	45.0	41.4
Casual	20.0	18.9	19.4	38.9	40.8	40.0	46.3	48.6	47.5

Overview of key findings

There are clear patterns of work-life interference across occupational and industry groups.

Those most likely to experience high work-life interference are:

- Managers and professionals (unadjusted index scores = 56.2 and 45.8);
- Men working in community and personal service occupations (unadjusted index scores = 53.3);
- Workers in the construction industry (unadjusted index scores = 49.1).

There is no difference on the work-life index for employees and self-employed workers, whether differences in work hours are statistically controlled or not.

Casual workers have shorter hours, and hence are less likely to report work-life interference. When differences in work hours are statistically controlled, casuals report slightly worse work-life interference (adjusted index score = 47.5) than those on fixed-term or permanent contracts (adjusted index scores = 41.4 and 44.1, respectively).

These patterns are consistent with SA AWALI 2012 and the national 2014 AWALI.

Section 7: Requesting flexibility

The changing nature of 21st century workforces in OECD countries has seen a plethora of innovative practices and research about flexibility in workplaces (Christensen & Schneider, 2010). There is evidence that flexibility can help reduce labour turnover, and increase employee satisfaction and organisational commitment (Dorio, Bryant & Allen, 2008: 157-76). At the labour market level, flexibility facilitates the workforce participation of women and carers, thus adding to labour supply – a particularly salient fact in the face of an ageing population and rising dependency ratios. At the personal level, international reviews have shown strong evidence for the positive effects of flexible work practices on work-life balance, health and wellbeing (Nijp et al. 2012; Skinner & Chapman 2013).

In Australia, from 1 January 2010 working parents of pre-schoolers or children under 18 with a disability, gained a Right to Request (RTR) flexible work arrangements as part of the National Employment Standards (NES) in the *Fair Work Act 2009*. Eligibility was broadened in mid-2013 to all carers, that is all parents or guardians of a school aged or younger child, those with a disability, those 55 years or older, those experiencing family or domestic violence, or caring for someone experiencing such violence (Fair Work Ombudsman 2013). This Commonwealth law does not apply to employees in the South Australian public sector, local government and prescribed government enterprises; these employees fall under the South Australian *Fair Work Act 1994*.

The Australian law creates a duty for employers to ‘reasonably consider’ such a request. Employees with more than one year of service, and casuals with long term and ‘reasonable expectation’ of continuing employment on a regular and systemic basis, are eligible to exercise this right. Requests must be in writing, give details of the change sought and reasons for the request. In turn, employers must respond in writing within 21 days, formally granting or refusing the request. They are able to refuse requests on ‘reasonable business grounds’.

The work-family policy reform provided by the *Fair Work Act 2009* has been recognised as an important, but modest, step towards both gender equality and decent quality work in Australia (Pocock, Charlesworth & Chapman 2013). The Australian approach follows the UK ‘soft’ approach, given that it lacks any effective enforcement or appeal mechanisms, providing little protection or support to the most vulnerable in the workforce such as the low paid or those in non-unionised workplaces (Pocock et al. 2013).

In this section we examine SA workers’ requests for flexible work arrangements. Our focus here is on all requests for flexibility, not just those made under the RTR provisions. We describe the types of flexibility requests that workers made in the 12 months prior to the survey (March 2014), what they asked for and the reasons given for requesting flexibility. We also examine the outcomes of these requests – whether a request was fully or partially accepted or declined, and the resulting implications for work-life interference.

We compare these 2014 findings to the results of the SA 2012 survey, and the national 2014 survey. The national 2014 survey contained a subset of these flexibility questions, whereas the SA 2014 flexibility questions replicate the SA 2012 items.

Types of flexible work practices used in past 12 months

We start by examining the types of flexible work practices that respondents have used over the past year (Table 10). The most common form of flexibility in use is part-time work: around 60 per cent of SA women and around one quarter of SA men had worked part-time in the preceding 12 months, or part thereof. Interestingly, of those who were working full-time when surveyed, 17.5 per cent (11.2 per cent of men and 28.9 per cent of women) had worked part-time

at some point in the past 12 months. Moving between part-time and full-time work involves a substantial change in work arrangements.

Changes to working time on a lesser scale are also common. These include reducing hours for a limited period or working only school term times. Just under 20 per cent of SA workers had used these types of time flexibilities in the preceding 12 months. Flexi-time, where there is flexibility in the scheduling of work around a set of core hours, is also common, with 22.3 per cent of workers using flexi-time in the preceding year. There are some gender differences in the types of flexibilities used. Women are more likely to work part-time (62.8 per cent) than men (27.6 per cent). Women are also more likely to work school term time only (22.9 per cent; 12.5 per cent of men) and to work from home on a regular basis (16.5 per cent; 11.1 per cent of men).

Table 10 Types of flexible work arrangements used in the 12 months to March 2014 by gender (per cent)

	Men	Women	All
Worked part-time	27.6	62.8	44.8
Flexi-time	20.1	24.7	22.3
Work school term-time only	12.5	22.9	17.6
Reduced hours for limited period	17.7	21.6	19.6
Worked from home on a regular basis	11.1	16.5	13.7
Compressed working week	13.1	11.0	12.1
Annualised hours	10.5	9.5	10.0
Job share	4.1*	9.8	6.9
Other arrangement	9.6	10.4	10.0

Note: *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. Table excludes self-employed persons. This question not included in SA 2012 survey.

Requests for a flexible work arrangement

As Table 11 shows, around 20 per cent of SA workers had made a request for a flexible work arrangement in the past 12 months, which is equivalent to the national average, and the rate of SA employee requests in 2012.

Table 11 Made a request to change work arrangements by gender, age and parenting, (per cent)

	SA 2012	SA 2014	AU 2014
All	19.8	20.2	20.1
Men	14.0	15.1	15.4
Women	26.6	25.6	25.1
Age			
18 – 24 years	29.6	35.6	30.1
25 – 34 years	22.4	24.1	21.8
35-44 years	25.2	16.2	20.1
45 -54 years	12.9	15.4	16.2
55 – 64 years	12.4*	14.4*	14.7
65+ years	**	**	**
Children under 18 years			
Men	15.8	13.2	14.4
Women	32.2	36.1	29.2
Preschool children (< 5 years)	27.3		26.0
Men	16.2*	**	15.2
Women	45.8	42.9	40.6
No children under 18 years			
Men	12.7	16.1	16.3
Women	22.1	17.1	21.8

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. **Estimate not provided due to inadequate sample size. Table excludes self-employed persons.

As consistently observed in the national survey and the SA 2012 survey, women with children are much more likely to make a flexibility request (36.1 per cent) than those without children (17.1 per cent), whereas parenting status makes no (statistically significant) difference to men’s request rates. Workers in the younger and mid-aged groups are more likely to make a request than older workers (45+ years), which most likely reflects their need to vary work arrangements to accommodate study or care/family commitments. Indeed, women with a preschool-aged child are most likely to make a flexibility request – 42.9 per cent of SA mothers. Similarly, the proportion of SA mothers who have requested flexibility (36.1 per cent) is almost triple that of SA fathers (13.2 per cent). The patterns of requesting by gender, age and parental status are comparable to the national data, with no statistically significant differences.

Requests by working hours

As observed in the SA 2012 and the national 2014 surveys, flexibility requests are much more likely to be made by part-time (32.3 per cent) than full-time workers (12.7 per cent) in the SA 2014 survey (Table 12). Around one third of SA women working part-time have made such a request, compared to just under 17 per cent of their full-time counterparts. This is an important observation, as it is women in full-time work that are most likely to experience high levels of work-life conflict and time pressure (Section 3). Yet they are also less likely to request a change to their work arrangements to better support their work-life balance. Men working full-time are least likely to make a request – with just 10.5 per cent of these SA men making a request.

Even though there are some differences in the estimates for SA compared to Australian workers in the national 2014 AWALI survey and SA workers in the 2012 survey, these contrasts did not reach statistical significance. This may be due to the comparatively small sample size of SA workers who requested flexibility. Although there does appear to have been a decrease in the rate of requesting by full-time women in SA from 2012 to 2014, sample size limitations prevent significance tests from being conducted. Therefore this pattern should be interpreted with caution.

Table 12 Requests to change work arrangements by working hours (per cent)

	Men			Women			All		
	SA 2012	SA 2014	AU 2014	SA 2012	SA 2014	AU 2014	SA 2012	SA 2014	AU 2014
Full-time	11.9	10.5	13.2	22.1	16.7	16.2	15.2	12.7	14.3
Part-time	22.0*	30.7	24.8	30.8	33.0	33.6	28.1	32.3	31.1

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. Table excludes self-employed persons.

Requests by occupation

Rates of request-making did differ significantly by occupation, and this is mainly due to the higher than average rate of requests reported by community and personal service workers (Table 13). In the national samples, these workers were the second most likely group to make a flexibility request. This most likely reflects the high numbers of women (who are often combining work and care) working in this sector. There were no statistically significant differences between the SA 2014 survey and the SA 2012 and national AWALI 2014 surveys, respectively.

Table 13 Requests to change work arrangements by occupation (per cent)

	SA 2012	SA 2014	AU 2014
Managers	18.8	**	17.3
Professionals	22.4	18.5	19.4
Technicians and trades workers	10.4*	11.3*	13.4
Community and personal service workers	20.7	32.6	24.9
Clerical and administrative workers	19.5	15.6*	20.8
Sales workers	35.6	27.6*	30.7
Machinery operators and drivers	**	**	14.3*
Labourers	22.2*	26.8*	17.0

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. **Estimate not provided due to inadequate sample size. Table excludes self-employed.

Work arrangement requested

As Table 14 shows, SA workers requested a range of changes to their work arrangements in the 12 months prior to the AWALI survey (March 2013 – March 2014). The most common requests were to change the scheduling of work (e.g. change work days) (46.3 per cent), work part-time (42.6 per cent) or to reduce hours for a limited time period (25.7 per cent) or over a longer time period (29.4 per cent). Interestingly, working more hours is also a common request – over 20 percent of SA employees who requested a change wanted to increase their hours. There are some gender differences in these requesting patterns. Whilst women are more likely to request part-time work (50.0 per cent) than men (30.8 per cent), there are no significant gender differences in the rates of other types of requests.

Table 14 Type of change requested by gender (per cent)

	Men	Women	All
To change work schedule	46.2	46.4	46.3
Work part-time	30.8	50.0	42.6
To reduce hours over longer term	30.8*	28.6	29.4
Reduced hours for a limited time	21.2*	28.6	25.7
Work more hours	21.2*	23.8	22.8
Flexi-time	19.2*	21.4*	20.6
Compressed working week	**	13.1*	14.7
Extended leave	**	13.1*	14.0
Work from home on a regular basis	**	13.1*	11.0*
Job share	**	**	9.6*
Work school terms only	**	**	8.1*
Annualised hours	**	**	**
Other arrangement	19.2*	17.9*	18.4

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. **Data not provided due to small sample size. Proportion of respondents who made a request to change work arrangements. Multiple responses possible on this question (i.e. respondents could choose more than one reason). This question not included in the 2012 SA AWALI survey. Table excludes self-employed persons.

Reason for making a request

We turn now to consider the main reasons why SA workers are requesting flexibility. As Figure 32 shows, the most common reasons for requesting flexibility are to meet study (21.8 per cent) or child-care needs (14.7 per cent). Interestingly, a need or preference to increase income is also a common reason (13.9 per cent), which was also the case in the SA 2012 survey. Around 12 per cent of SA workers requested a change to their work arrangement in order to spend more time with their family, and a minority requested a change as a result of health problems (6.0 per cent). These top five reasons for making a request were also observed in the 2012 SA survey. This question was not included in the national 2014 survey.

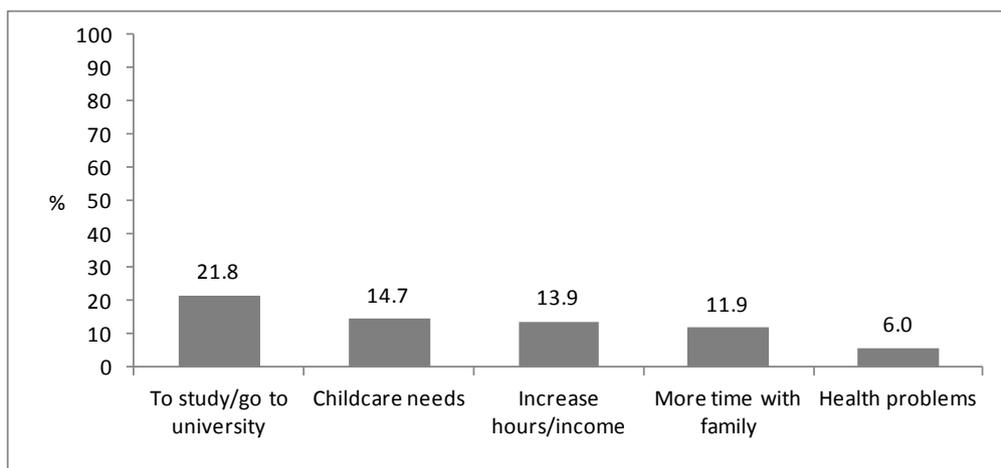


Figure 32 Top five reasons for requesting a change to work arrangements (per cent)

Note. Figure excludes self-employed persons.

Outcome of requests

The majority of requests – 70 per cent - made by SA workers are fully granted, with no difference between men and women in acceptance rates (Figure 33). Very few SA employees reported having a request declined; so few that the sample sizes were insufficient to provide a reliable estimate.

As observed in 2012, there is some indication that the acceptance rate of flexibility requests is higher in SA than the national average, however these contrasts (men, women, all) did not reach statistical significance which may be due the smaller sample size of SA requesters.

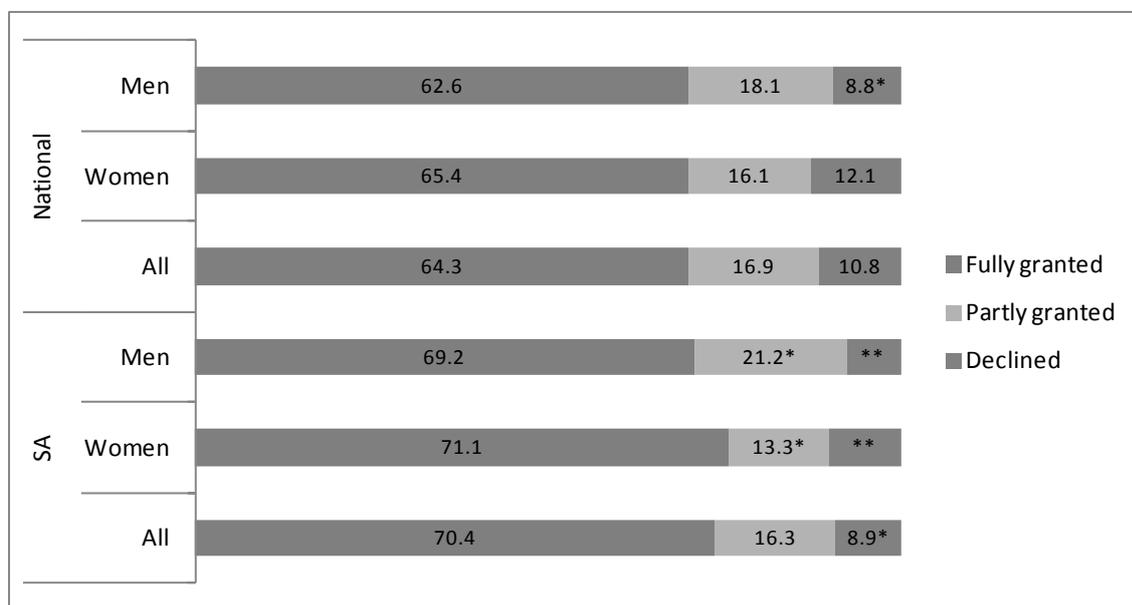


Figure 33 Request outcomes by gender (per cent)

Note. *Estimate unreliable due to insufficient sample size. **Estimate not provided due to inadequate sample size. Figure excludes self-employed persons.

Request outcomes and work-life interference

As consistently observed in the SA 2012 and national 2012/2014 surveys, there is a clear association between having a flexibility request fully granted and lower work-life interference. The index scores for SA employees whose request was fully granted is 48.2, compared to 55.8

for those whose request was partially granted. This contrast did not reach statistical significance, most likely due to the small sample size (n = 20) of SA employees who had a request partially granted. It was not possible to analyse employees who had a request rejected due to inadequate sample size for this group (< 15 employees). Nevertheless the national AWALI data has consistently demonstrated that having a flexibility request fully granted is associated with lower work-life interference compared to a request that is partially granted or declined.

Why workers do not make a request

The majority of SA workers, around 80 per cent, did not make a flexibility request in the past 12 months. Here we examine the reasons why workers did not ask for flexibility. AWALI survey respondents were presented with a range of possible reasons for not making a request. In the national survey the two most common reasons given for not making a request were that they were content with their current work arrangements, or they believed that flexibility was not possible in their job (due to the nature of the work, or they believed their boss would not allow it).

Table 15 shows that for the majority of SA workers (60.6 per cent) who did not request flexibility the reason for this was their contentment with their work arrangements. The second most common reason was a belief that flexibility was not possible or available (18.1 per cent). There are no statistically significant gender differences in the 2014 survey, nor are there any significant differences compared to the SA 2012 estimates, or the national 2014 survey.

Table 15 Reasons request not made by gender (per cent)

	SA 2014			AU 2014		
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All
Content with arrangements	60.6	60.7	60.6	61.1	60.5	60.8
Flexibility not possible ^a	19.8	15.6	18.1	15.8	14.4	15.1

Note. ^a'Flexibility not possible' collated from response options 'not convinced employer would allow it', 'job does not allow it' and 'flexibility not possible or available'. Table excludes self-employed persons.

Overview of key findings

South Australian workers request flexible work arrangements, and have their requests accepted, at comparable rates to the national average:

- 1 in 5 SA workers made a request for a flexible work arrangement in the last 12 months;
- The majority –70 per cent – had this request fully accepted.

Those most likely to make a request are:

- Women with children (36.1 per cent), especially pre-school aged children (42.9 per cent);
- Workers in part-time jobs (32.3 per cent), especially women part-timers (33.0 per cent);
- Workers in community and personal services occupations (32.6 per cent).

The most common reasons to make a flexibility request are:

- To meet child-care or family responsibilities and commitments (14.7 per cent);
- To meet study commitments (21.8 per cent);
- To increase hours/income (13.9 pe cent).

Of those workers who did not make a request, the majority (around 60 per cent) are content with their current work arrangements. Around 18 per cent did not make a request as they perceived it was not possible to work flexibly in their job (nature of the work, or believed their boss would not allow it).

There is a clear association between having a flexibility request accepted and lower work-life interference.

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Appendix

Table A 1 95% confidence intervals for SA 2014 work-life index scores by gender and work hours, **all employed**

	Men		Women		All	
	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
All	41.6	46.0	42.0	46.6	42.4	45.6
Full-time	45.2	50.2	46.1	53.1	46.5	50.8
Part-time	29.3	37.6	37.8	43.7	34.5	39.7

Note. Data for all employed persons (employees + self-employed).

Table A 2 95% confidence intervals for SA 2014 work-life index scores by gender and work hours, **employees**

	Men		Women		All	
	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
All	41.7	46.4	42.1	46.9	42.6	46.0
Full-time	44.6	49.8	45.5	52.7	45.9	50.4
Part-time	30.1	39.4	38.3	44.4	35.3	40.8

Note. Data excludes self-employed persons.

Table A 3 Work-life index scores by short and long working hours and gender

	SA	AU
Men		
Short PT 1- 15 hrs	36.3	37.2
Long PT 16 – 34 hrs	33.9	31.8
FT 35 – 47 hrs	44.6	38.5
Long FT 48+ hrs	53.8	53.7
Women		
Short PT 1- 15 hrs	36.6	29.7
Long PT 16 – 34 hrs	43.5	41.4
FT 35 – 47 hrs	45.8	43.1
Long FT 48+ hrs	62.1	58.8
All		
Short PT 1- 15 hrs	36.5	32.0
Long PT 16 – 34 hrs	40.7	39.1
FT 35 – 47 hrs	45.0	40.4
Long FT 48+ hrs	56.1	55.0

Note. Data excludes self-employed.