

2

PSYCHOLOGISTS WORKING IN NSW

This section documents the number and characteristics of psychologists working in NSW.

- The NSW psychologist workforce is estimated to be 5,266 in total in 2002, an increase of 658 on the estimated workforce size reported in the previous profile of 4,608 in 2001. However due to the technical change in defining the survey population, the actual figure for comparison is 4,712 in 2001, so the growth is estimated to be 554 psychologists, still a very high growth of 11.8%. (after adjusting for non response, see Section 1, "Estimating Workforce Size", p.6). The estimated full time equivalent psychologist workforce (FTE workforce) consists of 5,703.1 FTE in 2002.
- Workforce participation rates for psychologists in NSW are high at 83.3%.
- The proportion of women in the psychologist workforce is 70.5%, with a greater proportion of females in younger age groups. Some 36.9% or just over one third of the female workforce were aged under 40, while 19.7% or nearly one fifth of males were under forty years in 2002. Women are greater in numbers in all age groups except for those 75 years and over, varying from 100.0% of all psychologists in the 20 to 24 age group, to the lowest proportion of 27.8% for those 75 years and older.
- Some 31.8% of the workforce are aged under forty years, 28.4% are aged 40 to 49 years, 31.2% are aged 50 to 59 years, and 8.7% of the workforce are 60 years and older. This indicates an older workforce overall, with the modal age range being 50 to 54 years (ie the age range with the greatest number of working psychologists), followed by 45 to 49 years.
- Some 94.3% of psychologists working in NSW are Australian citizens, with 5.4% permanent residents, and only 0.3% not permanent residents or not stated (but not Australian citizens). Nearly three quarters of psychologists are born in Australia (72.4%), and the most common countries of birth for overseas born psychologists are the UK/Ireland, other Europe and Asia.
- Some 7.2% of psychologists working in NSW are also registered interstate; and some 72.8% are required to be registered in NSW in their current position.
- Some 29.7% of the workforce designate counselling as one of their principal areas of practice in a main job, with 22.0% indicating clinical psychology, 15.0% education, 7.6% in organisational psychology, 6.0% in health, 4.4% working with community groups, 4.1% in forensic psychology, and 3.9% practicing in research. This varies with the second job, with 31.1% in counselling, 26.5% in a clinical role, 10.0% in education, 6.5% in teaching, 5.3% in organisational psychology, and 5.2% in health. Respondents were able to provide multiple responses to the question. Males were much

more likely to work in organisational and forensic psychology, while females were more likely to work in counselling and education.

- The public sector accounted for 64.0% of psychologists in 2002 in their main job while 36.0% work in the private sector in their main job. Some 14.9% of the total workforce work in public schools, and 10.5% work in public tertiary education institutions; while 24.8% in total work in a public sector health setting, including in public hospitals (7.6% of the total), in public community health centres (7.7%), in the public community mental health service (7.0%), and in other public community health centres or services (2.5%). The largest single group were the 23.6% of the total who worked in a private practice/consultancy, followed by 3.5% in mining, industrial, corporate or commercial settings.
- In a second job, this trend is reversed, with 70.8% working in the private sector and 29.2% in the public sector. The largest single group is of psychologists working in a private practice or consultancy (57.5% of the total workforce in a second job), followed by 10.2% in public tertiary education institutions and 11.1% in a health setting in the public sector; in public hospitals (4.5% of the total), in public community health centres (2.5%), in the public community mental health service (2.1%), and in other public community health centres or services (2.0%).
- In a main job, 69.7% were permanent employees, 20.9% were self employed, 5.1% were temporary and 4.3% were casual. In a second job, this was significantly different with 13.5% permanent employees, 61.0% self employed, 18.9% casual and 6.6% temporary.
- Some 87.7% of the workforce indicated service provision/client contact hours in their main job, with the greatest number (30.4%) working 20 to 29 hours per week in this area. Some 76.9% of the workforce indicated hours worked in administration/management with the largest proportion working one to nine hours per week in this capacity. Some 13.9% reported that they taught psychology and only 2.2% of those respondents reported working full time in teaching psychology. Some 25.4% were involved in psychological research, with 5.4% of those respondents full time. Some 28.5% reported providing professional supervision, and 9.2% reported working other hours in a psychological role. There were 845 psychologists who reported working hours in a second job (21.1% of total), and of those 845 reported service provision/client contact hours, 480 reported administration/management hours, 122 provided professional supervision, 166 were teaching psychology, 127 were conducting psychological research and 77 had other activities.
- Some 41.4% of psychologists reported working part time paid hours in their **main job** (paid hours worked less than 35 hours per week). Women were more likely to work part time than men (50.5% of women compared with 28.5% of men). Some 99.3% of psychologists reported working part time paid hours in their **second** job. In terms of total hours worked in a main job, 39.2% of psychologists worked part time, and 60.7% full time. Women again more commonly worked part time total hours in a main job (43.6% compared with 28.5% of men working part time). Some 30.5% of psychologists reported working part time in their **total job hours** for all jobs, with 40 to 44 hours the most common range of total hours worked (24.3% of all psychologists).
- In 2002, the main job for 85.2% of psychologists was located in Metropolitan Area Health Services, with 68.7% in Metropolitan Sydney and 16.5% in other major Metropolitan areas. South Eastern Sydney was the main job location for 21.1% of psychologists with Northern Sydney having 17.5%. Rural Area Health services were the main job location for 14.3% of psychologists, with Northern Rivers having the highest proportion in a rural area at 3.3%. The distribution is similar for a second job.
- Some 31.8% of psychologists worked predominantly with adults in their main job, 20.1% with adolescents, 17.2% with children, and 13.6% with families. A higher proportion worked with adults (42.4%) in a second job. English was the predominant language spoken for 86.6% of psychologists, with 1.3% using Spanish and 1.1% using German, 1.0% each of Greek and Arabic and 0.9% French.