

2

PSYCHOLOGISTS WORKING IN NSW, 2003

This section documents the number and characteristics of psychologists working in NSW in 2003.

- The NSW psychologist workforce is estimated to be 4,654 in total in 2003, an increase of 820 from the estimated workforce size of 3,834 in 2001, a very high growth of 21.4%. (after adjusting for non response, see Section 1, "Estimating Workforce Size", p.4 and the Appendix). The estimated full time equivalent psychologist workforce (FTE workforce) consists of 4,950 FTE in 2003.
- Workforce participation rates for psychologists in NSW are high at 84.3%.
- The proportion of women in the psychologist workforce is 71.4%, with a greater proportion of females in younger age groups. Some 37.5% or just over one third of the female workforce were aged under 40, while 19.2% or nearly one fifth of males were under forty years in 2003. Women are greater in numbers in all age groups except for those 70 years and over, varying from 100.0% of all psychologists in the 20 to 24 age group, to the lowest proportion of 33.3% for those 75 years and older.
- Some 32.2% of the workforce are aged under forty years, 27.2% are aged 40 to 49 years, 31.0% are aged 50 to 59 years, and 9.7% 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 94.7% of psychologists working in NSW are Australian citizens, with another 5.0% 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 (73.1%), and the most common countries of birth for overseas born psychologists are the UK/Ireland, other Europe and Asia.
- Some 7.4% of psychologists working in NSW are also registered interstate; and some 73.0% are required to be registered in NSW in their current position.
- Some 29.3% of the workforce indicate counselling as one of their principal areas of practice in a main job, with 21.4% indicating clinical psychology, 15.2% education, 8.3% in organisational psychology, 5.9% in health, 4.7% working with community groups, and 4.0% in each of forensic psychology and research. This varies to some extent with the second job, with 31.1% in counselling, 27.2% in a clinical role, 11.2% in education, 6.3% in teaching, 5.3% in organisational psychology, and 5.1% in health. Respondents were able to provide multiple responses to the question. Males were more likely to work in organisational and forensic psychology, while females were more likely to work in counselling and education.
- Some 86.0% of the workforce indicated service provision/client contact hours in their main job, with the greatest proportion (32.1% of total) working 20 to 29 hours per week in this area. Some 77.6% of the workforce indicated hours worked in administration/management with the largest proportion

working one to nine hours per week in this capacity (45.9%). Some 13.4% reported that they taught psychology and only 2.4% of those respondents reported working full time in teaching psychology. Some 29.5% were involved in psychological research, with 4.2% of those respondents full time. Some 32.3% reported providing professional supervision, and 14.8% reported working other hours in a psychological role. There were 808 psychologists who reported working hours in a second job (19.7% of total), and of those 808 reported service provision/client contact hours, 542 reported administration/management hours, 165 provided professional supervision, 119 were teaching psychology, 148 were conducting psychological research and 147 had other activities.

- Some 45.0% 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 (49.6% of women compared with 32.7% of men). Some 22.5% of psychologists reported working part time paid hours in their **second job**. In terms of total hours worked in a main job, 40.3% of psychologists worked part time, and 59.7% full time. Women again more commonly worked part time total hours in a main job (44.8% compared with 28.6% of men working part time). Some 30.7% 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 (25.3% of all psychologists).
- The public sector accounted for 62.5% of psychologists in 2003 in their main job while 37.5% work in the private sector in their main job. Some 14.9% of the total workforce work in public schools, and 10.1% work in public tertiary education institutions. Nearly one quarter or 24.4% in total work in a public sector health setting, including in public hospitals (7.5% of the total), in public community health centres (7.2%), in the public community mental health service (7.5%), and in other public community health centres or services (2.2%). The largest single group were the 24.2% of the total who worked in a private practice/consultancy, followed by 4.2% in mining, industrial, corporate or commercial settings.
- In a second job, this trend is reversed, with 71.3% working in the private sector and 28.7% in the public sector. The largest single group is of psychologists working in a private practice or consultancy (57.1% of the total workforce in a second job), followed by 11.0% in public tertiary education institutions and 8.9% in a health setting in the public sector; in public hospitals (4.8% of the total), in public community health centres (1.7%), in the public community mental health service (1.4%), and in other public community health centres or services (1.0%).
- In a main job, 69.0% were permanent employees, 21.6% were self employed, 4.6% were temporary and 4.8% were casual. In a second job, this was significantly different with 13.1% permanent employees, 58.8% self employed, 21.2% casual and 6.9% temporary.
- In 2003, the main job for 85.5% of psychologists was located in Metropolitan Area Health Services, with 69.8% in Metropolitan Sydney and 15.7% in other major Metropolitan areas. South Eastern Sydney was the main job location for 20.9% of psychologists with Northern Sydney having 17.6%. Rural Area Health services were the main job location for 14.4% of psychologists, with Northern Rivers having the highest proportion in a rural area at 3.3%. The distribution is similar for a second job. Data were also reported on the location of up to three private practice addresses, with an increasing proportion reporting a rural location with the second and third private practice.
- Some 32.2% of psychologists worked predominantly with adults in their main job, 20.0% with adolescents, 16.9% with children, and 13.2% with families. A higher proportion worked with adults (45.0%) in a second job. English was the predominant language spoken for 85.6% of psychologists, with 1.5% using Spanish and 1.3% each using Arabic and German, 1.2% Greek, 1.0% French and 0.9% Cantonese.