

Fact Sheet 1: Labour force participation

The disparity in labour force outcomes between people with disability and other Australians is particularly stark for those with intellectual disability.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)²⁰

The ABS found that for people with intellectual disability²¹;

- Unemployment of 20% is more than double the rate for people with disability in general (9.4%); and more than four times the rate for people without disability (4.9%).
- The employment to population rate for people with intellectual disability is 31%; less than the rate for all people with disability (47.7%) and those without disability (78.5%).

Table 1: Labour force status by disability 2012

Disability Group	Population	Employment to Population Rate	Unemployment Rate
Intellectual Disability	317,900	31.0%	20.0%
All People with Disability	2,204,000	47.7%	9.4%
People without Disability	13,117,900	78.5%	4.9%

People with intellectual disability with profound or severe limitations²² have a low 'employment to population' rate (23.7%) and a high rate of 'not in the labour force' (73.9%).

People with intellectual disability with mild or moderate limitations²³ have a low employment to population rate (27.5%), a high unemployment rate (34.8%), and a high rate of 'not in the labour force' (58.8%).

Table 2: Labour force status by intellectual disability by core activity limitation 2012

	Profound / Severe	Rate %	Mild / Moderate	Rate %	Other Disability	Rate %
Employed	34,700	23.7%	28,700	27.5%	34,500	51.6%
Unemployed	4,100	10.3%	14,600	34.8%	8,300	20.2%
In Labour Force	40,000	27.3%	41,900	40.2%	41,000	61.3%
Not in Labour Force	108,400	73.9%	61,300	58.8%	24,800	37.1%
Total	146,600		104,300		66,900	

²⁰ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013) 44300DO001_2012 Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2012

— Australian Bureau of Statistics (2014) 4433.0.55.003 Intellectual Disability, Australia, 2012

— Australian Bureau of Statistics (2015), 4433.0.55.006 Disability and Labour Force Participation, 2012

²¹ The ABS counts people with difficulty learning or understanding as people with intellectual disability. This is different from a diagnosis of intellectual disability. We suspect the ABS count is an overestimate and probably includes people without intellectual disability but who have a learning disability.

²² Profound = always needs help; severe = sometimes needs help

²³ Moderate = needs no help, but has difficulty with tasks; mild = no help and no difficulty with tasks