Information note—

Usual number of hours worked for full-time employees in Retail trade

This note provides information on the number of usual hours worked per week for full-time employees in Retail trade. The average and range of hours worked is presented for each occupation for which data are available to be released.

Usual number of hours worked

Chart 1 compares the average <u>usual</u> number of hours worked per week for full-time employees across occupations in Retail trade. The number of usual hours worked per week are presented for each quarter and an average over the year is also calculated. Data for 2019 are used as this is not influenced by restrictions placed on business operations due to COVID-19 in 2020.

Usual hours of work refer to a typical period rather than the specified reference period of a survey. Actual hours worked for a specific reference period can differ from usual hours worked as it would capture weeks when employees have worked fewer hours due to sick or annual leave. Analysis of usual hours worked better represents the average number of hours worked by full-time employees as it removes weeks when employees are absent from work for all or part of the week. Full-time employment is defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics as working at least 35 hours per week and such analysis would remove unusually low values.
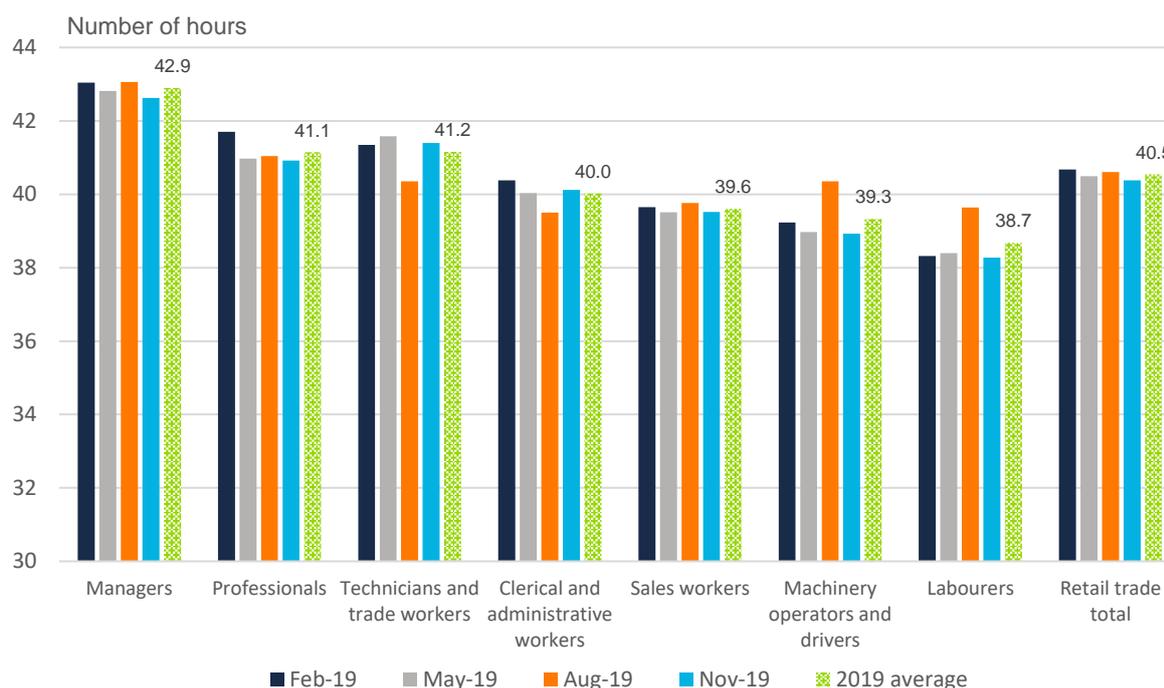
Across the industry, the average number of usual hours worked per week for full-time employees was 40.5 hours in 2019 (varying between 40.4 hours in November and 40.7 hours in February).

Across occupations within Retail trade, the usual number of hours worked per week for full-time employees averaged between 38.7 hours and 42.9 hours. Managers worked the greatest number of usual hours per week (42.9 hours). The next highest were:

- Technicians and trades workers (42.2 hours); and
- Clerical and administrative workers (41.1 hours).

Labourers (38.7 hours) and Machinery operators and drivers (39.3 hours) worked the lowest number of usual hours per week for full-time employees.

Chart 1: Average number of usual hours worked per week for full-time employees, occupations within Retail trade, 2019

Note: Data on Community and personal services workers were not made available for release. Data on industry and occupation are captured quarterly.

Source: ABS, *Microdata: Longitudinal Labour Force, Australia*.

Range of usual hours worked

Additional statistics can be calculated to better understand the range of usual hours worked per week for occupations in Retail trade beyond the average. These statistics are based on the *distribution* of usual hours worked, where the values are listed from lowest to highest.

The median represents the middle number of the distribution, separating the bottom half from the top half. It can provide another estimate of an average that removes outlier values that are unusually small or large. As full-time employees are defined as working at least 35 hours per week, it can also take into account that many values will be clustered at the lower end.
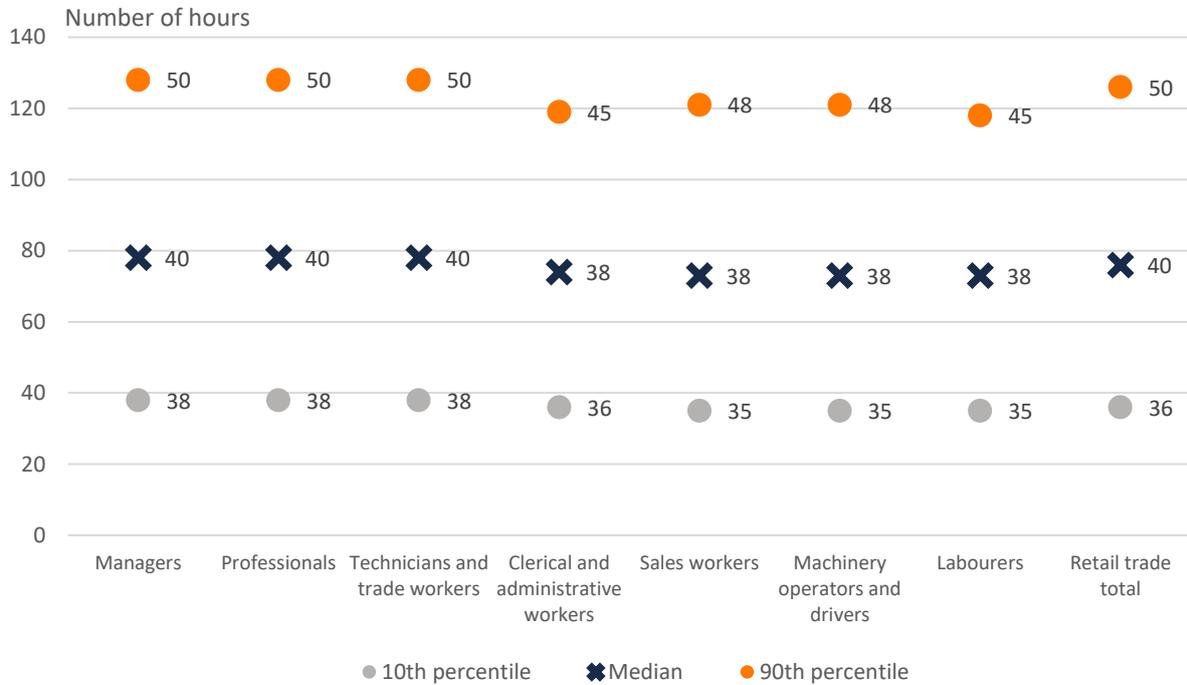
Chart 2 shows that the median number of usual hours worked per week in Retail trade was 40 hours. This was also the case for Managers; Professionals; and Technicians and trades workers. For all other occupations in Retail trade, the median was 38 hours.

To get a representation of the highest and lowest values in the distribution, Chart 2 also presents the values at the 10th and 90th percentiles. These represent the usual number of hours worked that are higher than 10 per cent and 90 per cent, respectively, of employees in the category and remove outlier values. Because of the clustering at the lower end of the distribution, the median tends to be closer to the 10th percentile.

For Retail trade, the 10th and 90th percentiles are at 36 hours and 50 hours, respectively, meaning that for the majority of employees, the usual number of hours worked per week is within this range.

- For Managers; Professionals; and Technicians and trades workers, both the 10th and 90th percentiles were highest, at 38 hours and 50 hours.
- For Labourers, the range of values represented by the 10th and 90th percentiles were lowest, at 35 hours and 45 hours.

Chart 2: Values along the distribution of usual weekly hours worked for full-time employees, occupations within Retail trade, 2019

Note: Data on Community and personal services workers were not made available for release. Data on industry and occupation are captured quarterly.

Source: ABS, *Microdata: Longitudinal Labour Force, Australia*.