



# Stat Report 2014/05

## Productivity and Wages in Australia

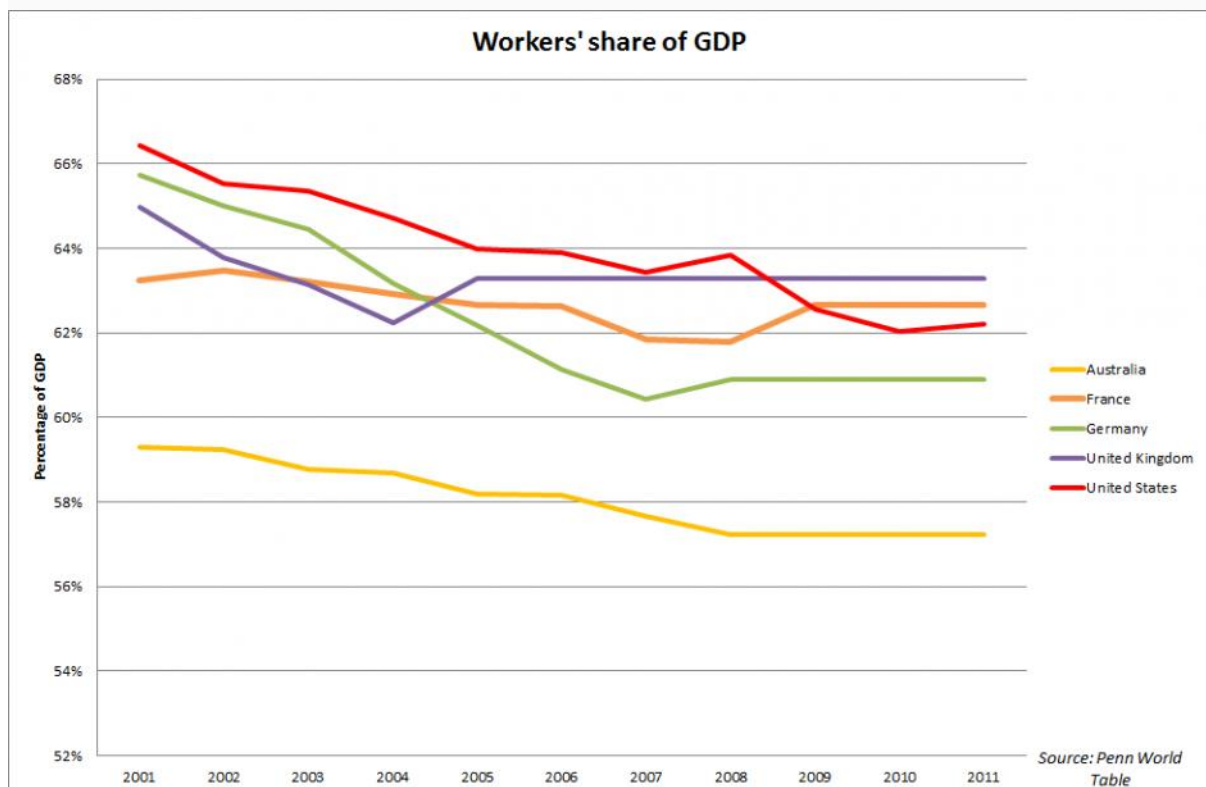
There has been a lot said in recent days about wages and productivity following the Abbott Government's decision to not provide an assistance package to SPC Ardmona. While there are some deeply held feelings about this decision, it has sparked fresh debate about the levels of productivity in Australia and, of course, the so-called wages break out.

It's worth noting that this issue has been kicked along because the Prime Minister and Treasurer made outrageous claims about the wages and conditions for workers at SPC Ardmona. Unfortunately for the Abbott Government such comments have resoundingly come back to hurt them as the truth came out about the actual wages and conditions for the SPC workers.

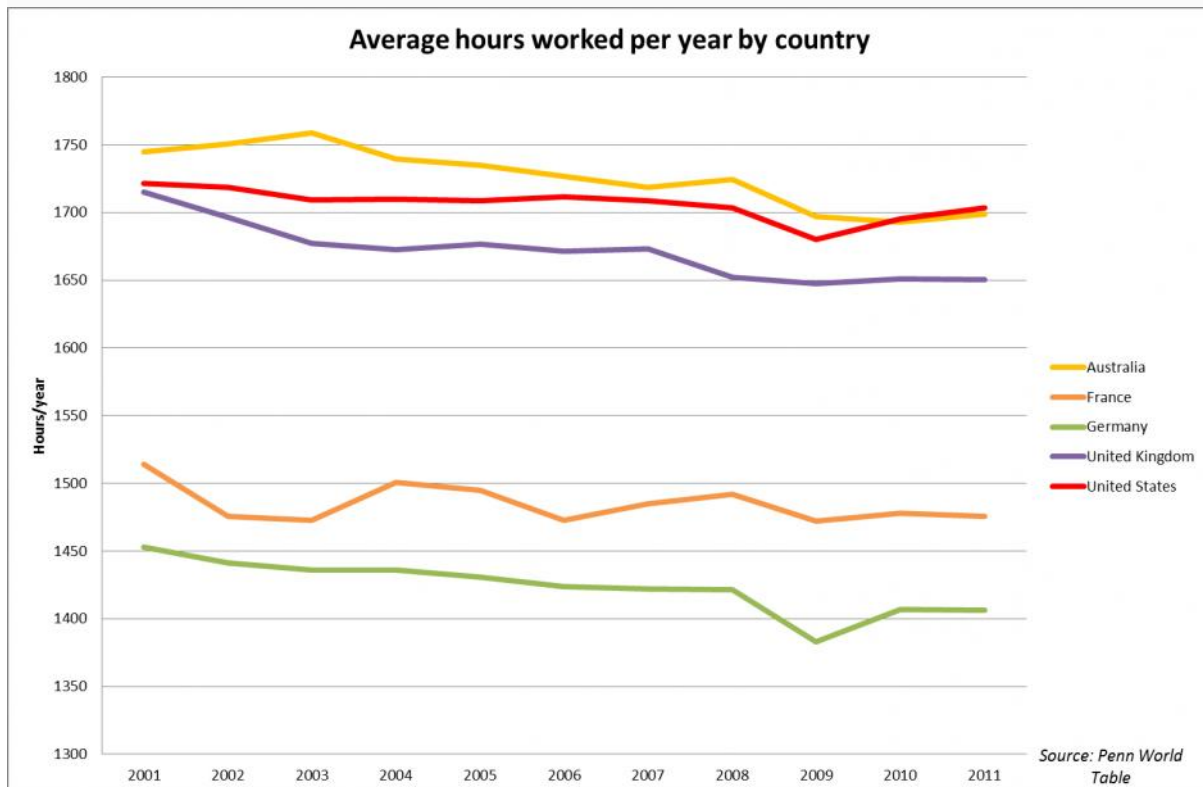
But the debate rages on.

So what really is the story with productivity and wages? It's complicated and depends on the nature of the industry; what is happening domestically and internationally in those industries and markets; and the strength of the Australian dollar, among other things.

However it is safe to say that there is no such thing as a wages break out as being claimed by the Abbott Government. The following graph clearly shows that the workers' share of GDP is declining, and Australian workers are certainly earning far less than workers in other countries, despite nearly two decades of economic growth.



And don't let be said that Australian workers don't work long hours, or that somehow we're a nation of public holiday seekers. The truth is that Australians worked approximately 33 hours per week, on average.



The graph above makes it quite clear that Australian workers are among those that work the longest hours on average, with German workers averaging approximately 27 hours per week. It's also worth noting that Germany has very strong industrial relations laws.

It's very clear that the attacks on workers' wages and conditions by the Abbott Government have nothing to do with productivity or a so-called wages outbreak, and are entirely ideologically driven. Indeed there is already a push by the Employment Minister, Eric Abetz to reintroduce individual agreements, the same kind that undercut pay and conditions.

Watch this space.

## Last Call for Models

The Union is updating and freshening up the various promotional and member materials we produce. We always want to make sure that our members are reflected in our materials.

The photos will be taken by a professional photographer and the following dates have been arranged for the photo-shoot:

- **February 13** – There are two sessions to choose from, with the first session being from **12pm to 2pm** and the second session being **5pm to 6pm**.
- **February 14** – There is only one session running between **12pm and 2pm**.

If you're interested in being in the photo-shoot please contact Alex at [alexs@msav.org.au](mailto:alexs@msav.org.au) or by calling 9623 9623 to arrange a time during one of the sessions.

## Don't let the Naphthine Government silence Victorians

In the last edition of STAT Report we had an important piece about the Victorian Government's plans to introduce harsh new laws to further curtail the ability of Victorians to protest and picket over issues of concern.

This is a very serious development and a significant assault on the rights of Victorians to peacefully assemble and to protest the actions of the government.

Just like the federal government, Napthine's government is also critical of any scrutiny it receives and is clearly aimed at making sure unions and community organisations are not able to voice the concerns of people in public spaces.

To make sure the Victorian Liberal National government knows that Victorians won't take this attack on our democracy lying down; the Union will be attending the rally on 18 February at 10am.

Join the Union's contingent at 9:45am outside the Union office at 62 Lygon St.

Details for the rally are:

**Date: Tuesday Feb 18**

**Time: 10am**

**Location: Trades Hall, marching to Parliament House**

**Wear: Blue or White**

There is also a petition to sign and it can be found at [http://www.weareunion.org.au/napthines\\_silencing\\_act](http://www.weareunion.org.au/napthines_silencing_act)

## Union Job Reps Training

The Union strongly values its Job Reps as an essential part of what we do every day – protect and advance the industrial and professional interests of members. As a Job Rep you are the local connection between the Union and members.

To help you better understand your role, the Union provides training and information sessions.

These sessions will help to keep you informed about changes to relevant laws, what's happening in the Union and how to be an effective Job Rep.

The Union also provides opportunities throughout the year to meet up with other Job Reps.

The next Job Rep training day is on **Friday 21 March at 9am for a 9:30am start to 5pm.**

As a Job Rep you can attend training days and activities organised by the Union without losing pay if the training is on a day you would normally be rostered to work.

If you've ever thought of being a Job Rep then this training day is open to you too. If you're interested in being a Job Rep please contact the Union.

**Please contact Alex on 9623 9623 or at [alexs@msav.org.au](mailto:alexs@msav.org.au) to register your attendance.**

## Union Member Benefits

### **ME Bank – Resolutions for a richer new year**

The New Year is a chance to turn a new leaf, break old habits and start fresh ones - and setting a few financial resolutions can add wealth and prosperity to your 2014.

#### Grow some savings

We'd all like to have more money in the bank, and building savings is a lot easier when we set a clear target, like \$50 each week. Next, open a dedicated high interest savings account to give your savings the benefit of healthy interest returns.

#### Reduce card debt

Credit cards are one of the most expensive types of credit available with rates topping 20% p.a.

on some cards. Switching your balance to a low rate card could see you save in interest in the first year alone.

[Read on for more financial resolutions.](#)

### **The ACTU/ME Footy Tipping Competition is back for 2014**

A reminder for union footy tipsters that the ACTU/ME Bank AFL & NRL footy tipping competition is happening again in 2014. The NRL season begins on Thursday 6th March and the AFL kicks off on Friday 14th March. There is a total of \$2000 in prizes up for grabs with the highest tipster in each competition winning a \$1,000 EveryDay Transaction Account.

So union members make sure you go to [www.footytips.com.au](http://www.footytips.com.au) to either register as a new tipster or reactivate your footy tipping profile from previous years and then click on the links below for either comp.

Handy tip: If you're reactivating your tipping profile remember to use your username NOT your email address to log in.

[AFL Tipping Comp](#)

[NRL Tipping Comp](#)

[Click here for full competition details.](#)

### **A night at the movies courtesy of Australian Movie Voucher**

[Australian Movie Voucher](#) would love you to enjoy a night at the movies on them!

If you're a union member who would like to purchase your discount movie tickets directly check out AMV's great website <http://www.theaustralianmovievoucher.com.au/union> for a fantastic deal!

The price for union members is just \$11.00 per ticket and the minimum purchase is five tickets.

**GIVEAWAY:** Email [Member Connect before 5pm AEST on Friday 21st February 2014](#) to go in the draw to win a double pass to the movies courtesy of Australian Movie Voucher.

### **Win DVDs from Madman**

Enter the draw to win one of 3 copies of both '[Prince Avalanche](#)' and '[Restless](#)' we are giving away to 6 lucky union members this month!

#### Prince Avalanche

An odd couple of sorts, Alvin (Paul Rudd), meditative and stern, and his girlfriend's brother Lance (Emile Hirsch), dopey and insecure, leave the city behind to spend the summer in solitude repainting traffic lines down the center of a country highway ravaged by wildfire.

As the two begin their gradual journey across the landscape, swapping stories and butting heads, what unfolds is a humorous yet moving examination of an unlikely friendship

To win a copy of 'Prince Avalanche' email [memberconnect@actu.org.au](mailto:memberconnect@actu.org.au) before 5pm AEST on Friday 21st February 2014.

#### Restless

Based on the bestselling novel by William Boyd, enter a cloak and dagger world where everyone and everything is under suspicion. Haunted by the death of her brother at the hands of fascist thugs, Russian émigré Eva Delectorskaya is recruited to be a British secret agent by the shadowy figure, Lucas Romer. After proving her merit in the field, she is sent on the most dangerous mission of her life. She must use any means necessary to manipulate the American press and draw the States into World War II.

To win a copy of the 'Restless' email [memberconnect@actu.org.au](mailto:memberconnect@actu.org.au) before 5pm AEST on Friday 21st February 2014.

## Frequently Asked Questions about Maternity and Parental Leave

We've been receiving a number of enquiries regarding maternity and parental leave, especially around the notice period before taking leave and what happens with returning to work after maternity or parental leave. So here we provide some general information regarding some of the most frequently asked questions about maternity and parental leave.

The National Employment Standards (NES) contains legal entitlements to unpaid parental leave. The NES can be supplemented by your EBA which often makes determining the notice requirements and right to return from maternity leave difficult. The EBAs also contain provisions for paid maternity leave. In many cases, maternity leave is only available where a female employee has more than 12 months continuous service with the employer. In the public sector, previous service with another public sector employer may count as service. The entitlements of casual employees are even more complex.

### **How much notice do I have to give that I want to take maternity leave?**

You need to give at least ten weeks' notice of the expected date of birth, and at least 4 weeks' notice of the intended starting date of maternity leave.

### **Can I extend my maternity leave beyond 12 months?**

Yes, you have the right to request the extension of the period of maternity leave by giving the employer written notice of the request for extension at least 4 weeks before the end date of the leave. The employer must respond in writing within 21 days, and can only refuse the request on reasonable business grounds. If your request is refused, the employer must include details of the reasons for refusal in the written response.

### **Can I go back to work part time?**

YES. You have a right to request that you return to work on a part time basis from maternity leave, so that you can effectively meet your responsibilities as a parent, until your child is school age. The employer can only refuse the request on reasonable business grounds.

Note: This does NOT mean that you have to give up your substantive full time position in order to go part-time while your child is under school age.

### **Can my role be changed while on maternity leave?**

NO. You must be allowed to return to your substantive classification. If your substantive position no longer exists, relevant organisational change provisions will apply that is, consultation with you and the Union must occur before any proposed change is implemented.

If you have any questions, contact the office on 9623 9623 or [enquiry@msav.org.au](mailto:enquiry@msav.org.au).

## Your Union is on Facebook

Keep up to date with what's happening by liking us on Facebook

[Medical Scientists Association of Victoria](#) | [Victorian Psychologists Association Inc](#) | [Association of Hospital Pharmacists](#)

Benefits for Union Members

As a union member, you can take advantage of

Keep Blood Safe

the collective buying power of more than 1.9 million members to get discounts on a great range of products and services. ACTU Member Connect makes sure the products and services are from companies you can rely on to deliver high-quality products with reliable customer service.

There is more information about a range of other benefits union members can access at <http://www.memberconnect.com.au/> or you can call ACTU Member Connect on 1300 362 223.

## Hotline

Do you have a story about how changes at the Red Cross Blood Service are already affecting your work, or could likely affect your work?

Send them to [alexs@msav.org.au](mailto:alexs@msav.org.au) or call 0432 364 515 - we'll make sure you remain anonymous.

**Sign the petition at:**  
<http://bit.ly/KeepBloodSafe>

Join the campaign at:  
<http://www.facebook.com/KeepBloodSafe>

## Share STAT Report

Is there a copy of STAT Report on your Union noticeboard or in your staff room?

If not print out a copy and leave it on the noticeboard or in the staff room for your colleagues.



[follow on Twitter](#) | [friend on Facebook](#)

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