

Poverty in Australia: some indicators

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- Even with rent assistance, social security payments for an unemployed two-parent family with two children are only 98 percent of the poverty line. For single parents with two children they are 91 percent.

- The average duration of unemployment in August 1996 was almost one year, compared with less than 10 weeks in August 1973. In August 1996, some 220,000 people had been jobless for a year or more. In August 1973 there were less than 6,000.

- Full-time employment as a share of the working-age population fell by 20 percent between 1973 and 1996—representing an effective loss of 2.8 million jobs—whereas the share in part-time work rose by 300 percent.

- The poverty rate among the “working poor”—families with a wage earner—rose from 6.3 percent to 8.6 percent from 1973 to 1996, while the rate among non-aged unemployed families soared from 29.6 percent to 93.7 percent.

- The number of households on public housing waiting lists has grown to about a quarter of a million, but by 1995 new construction was down to 5,000 dwellings a year.



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