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ABS data shows underemployment now the norm

The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) is today urging the Federal Government to take drastic action on the decline of full-time permanent jobs in Australia.

The latest Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) employment figures show that more and more people are being forced to get by on casual and/or part-time work.

A staggering 82.3% of all jobs created in the last year were part time. Many people who manage to find work after being unemployed are stuck involuntarily in part-time work and various casual and precarious work arrangements.

The figures show underemployment is now becoming the norm. Since December 2015, businesses have increased the number of part time jobs by around 105,300, while there were 21,500 less full-time positions being offered.

Decent permanent part-time work is important for a proportion of the workforce, but we are seeing a worrying trend of insecure, precarious work for people who need full-time employment.

The following quotes are attributable to ACTU President Ged Kearney:

“The ACTU wrote to Minister for Employment Michaelia Cash in August outlining steps that should be taken to ensure working people can earn a decent living and care for themselves and their families. We did not get a response.

“The latest jobs figures confirm there is an employment crisis in Australia, with more and more working people being forced to take insecure casual or part-time positions over permanent full-time positions.

“The Government needs a jobs plan; where are they going to create jobs and how they are going to do it.

“Any jobs plan needs to come with a solid link to decent education and training for workers that will give them the skills to do the jobs identified for our future.

“A strong, well-resourced public sector is also critical for job sustainability and growth. Provision of public services means our workforce can stay healthy, supported and skilled.

“Australian people want to work more, but in the eight years since the global financial crisis underemployment has risen two percentage points by more than 207,000 people.

“There simply aren’t enough jobs being created to sustain the demand. The time to act has long past.”

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