

Labour Force, May 2021

Source: ABS Labour Force, released 17 June 2021, 11:30 am AEST.

NOTE: The ABS has suspended trend data due to COVID-19. As a result, all numbers in this brief are seasonally adjusted.

Key data (monthly)

Employment:	Queensland,	32,300	(1.2%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	115,200	(0.9%)
Unemployment:	Queensland,	-17,600	(-5.4%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	-53,000	(-5.1%)
Labour force:	Queensland,	14,700	(0.5%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	62,200	(0.5%)
Underemployment:	Queensland,	-22,200	(-7.7%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	-41,600	(-7.4%)
Hours worked:	Queensland,	9,400	(2.5%)
(thousands, growth)	Australia,	25,200	(1.4%)

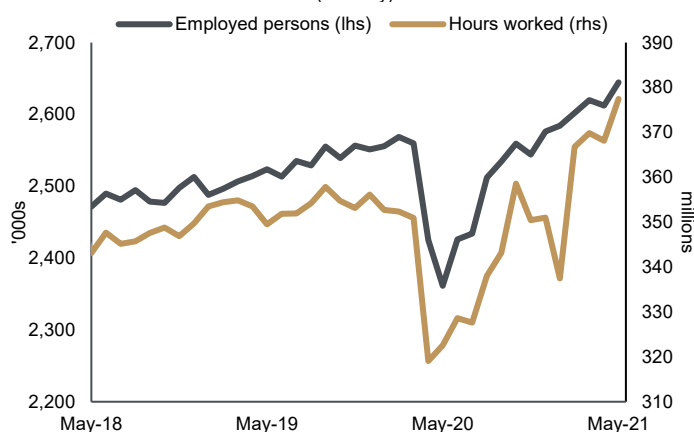
Main findings

Employment in Queensland rose 32,300 persons (1.2%) in May 2021, with a rise in full-time employment (up 38,900 persons) more than offsetting a fall in part-time employment (down 6,600).

Employment in Queensland is 283,300 persons (or 12.0%) above its COVID-impacted low in May 2020 and 84,900 persons (or 3.3%) above the pre-pandemic level of March 2020.

In May 2021, there were 377.4 million hours worked in Queensland, up 2.5% over the month and up 7.5% from March 2020 (Chart 1).

Chart 1: Employment and hours worked, Queensland (monthly)

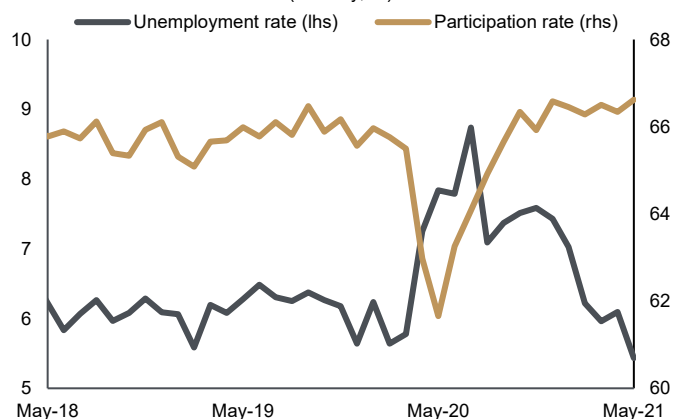


The unemployment rate in Queensland was 5.4% in May 2021, declining sharply from 6.1% in April 2021, and below the pre-pandemic level of 5.8% in March 2020 (Chart 2).

The number of unemployed persons in Queensland decreased 17,600 in May to 152,000, down from a peak of 233,000 persons in July 2020 to be 5,000 persons below the pre-pandemic level in March 2020.

Queensland's participation rate was 66.6% in May 2021, up from 66.3% in April 2021. This equates to 14,700 persons entering the labour force in Queensland. The participation rate in May was 1.1 percentage point higher than March 2020, equating to a total of 79,900 persons having entered the labour force since March 2020.

Chart 2: Unemployment and participation rates, Queensland (monthly, %)



Nationally, employment increased 115,200 persons (or 0.9%) in May 2021 to be 130,400 persons above its pre-pandemic level in March 2020. The monthly increase in national employment was driven by New South Wales (up 75,200), Queensland (up 32,300) and Victoria (up 29,800).

There were 1,814.2 million hours worked in Australia in May 2021, up 1.4% from April 2021 and up 2.9% from March 2020. The national unemployment rate fell from 5.5% in April to 5.1% in May 2021 to be below its pre-pandemic level of 5.3% in March 2020 (Table 1).

Table 1: Labour force outcomes¹, May 2021

	Queensland				Australia			
	May-21 '000	Monthly change '000	%	Yearly change '000	May-21 '000	Monthly change '000	%	Yearly change '000
Employed	2,644.6	32.3	1.2	283.3	13,125.1	115.2	0.9	987.2
Full-time	1,814.6	38.9	2.2	151.8	9,965.2	97.5	1.1	421.3
Part-time	830.0	-6.6	-0.8	131.4	4,160.0	17.7	0.4	565.9
Unemployed	152.0	-17.6	-10.4	-48.8	701.1	-53.0	-7.0	-215.4
Underemployed	214.1	-22.2	-9.4	-90.8	1,028.0	-41.6	-3.9	-663.6
Labour force	2,796.6	14.7	0.5	234.5	13,826.3	62.2	0.5	771.8

	millions	millions	%	millions	%	millions	%	millions	%
Hours worked	377.4	9.4	2.5	54.9	17.0	1,814.2	25.2	1.4	208.4

	May-21	Apr-21	May-20	May-21	Apr-21	May-20
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Unemployment rate	5.4	6.1	7.8	5.1	5.5	7.0
Underemployment rate	7.7	8.5	11.9	7.4	7.8	13.0
Participation rate	66.6	66.3	61.7	66.2	65.9	62.6

Table 2: Interstate comparison¹, May 2021

	Qld	NSW	Vic	SA	WA	Tas	Aus
Employed							
% change on a month ago	1.2	1.8	0.9	0.8	0.1	0.7	0.9
Change on a month ago (no.)	32,300	75,200	29,800	6,800	900	1,800	115,200
% change since May 2020	12.0	7.9	6.5	7.4	8.6	8.3	8.1
Change since May 2020 (no.)	283,300	303,300	209,400	60,300	109,600	19,800	987,200
% change since March 2020	3.3	0.9	0.4	1.5	1.0	0.7	1.0
Change since March 2020 (no.)	84,900	36,900	13,900	12,800	14,100	1,700	130,400
Unemployment rate							
May-21	5.4	5.0	4.8	5.8	4.7	5.7	5.1
April-21	6.1	5.5	5.5	5.7	4.9	6.2	5.5
May-20	7.8	6.4	6.8	7.9	8.0	6.4	7.0
March-20	5.8	5.0	5.2	6.3	5.7	5.0	5.3
Hours worked (millions)							
May-21	377.4	569.1	474.8	115.5	192.7	33.9	1,814.2
monthly % change	2.5	1.2	1.2	-0.1	1.6	-0.9	1.4
% change since May 2020	17.0	11.6	13.3	12.6	11.0	16.6	13.0
% change since March 2020	7.5	0.5	3.5	2.5	1.4	2.5	2.9

1. Note – numbers may not add due to rounding.