

Labour Force, September 2021

Source: ABS Labour Force, released 14 October 2021, 10:30 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,	30,800	(1.2%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	-138,000	(-1.1%)
Unemployment:	Queensland,	-12,400	(4.9%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	8,900	(4.6%)
Labour force:	Queensland,	18,400	(0.7%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	-129,100	(-0.9%)
Underemployment:	Queensland,	-4,300	(8.2%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	-20,600	(9.2%)
Hours worked:	Queensland,	18,700	(5.4%)
(thousands, growth)	Australia,	15,000	(0.9%)

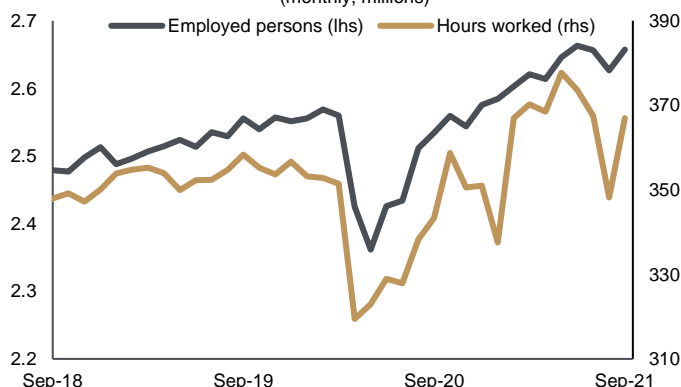
Main findings

Employment in Queensland rose 30,800 persons (1.2%) in September 2021, with a strong recovery in full-time employment (up 56,300) more than offsetting a 25,500 fall in part-time employment. The September results reflect the recovery in the labour market after the snap lockdowns in South East Queensland (31 July to 8 August) and Cairns & Yarrabah (8 to 11 August).

Employment in September was 296,100 persons (or 12.5%) above its COVID-impacted low in May 2020 and 97,700 persons (or 3.8%) above the pre-COVID level of March 2020.

In September 2021, there were 366.9 million hours worked in Queensland, up 5.4% in the month after falling 5.3% in August, to be 4.4% above March 2020 levels (**Chart 1**). Hours worked continues to be the best measure of the impacts of the lockdowns on the labour market, with nearly all hours lost due to the latest snap lockdown in August being recovered in September.

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



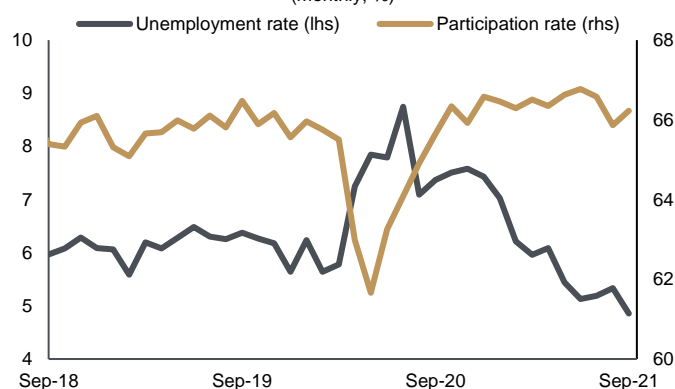
The unemployment rate was 4.9% in September, down from 5.3% in August, below the pre-pandemic level of 5.8% in March 2020 (**Chart 2**) and the lowest unemployment rate since March 2009.

The number of unemployed persons in Queensland decreased by 12,400 persons in September to 135,600 persons, down from a peak of 233,300 persons in July 2020 to be 21,500 persons below the pre-pandemic level in March 2020.

Queensland's participation rate was 66.2% in September 2021, up from 65.9% in August. This equates to 18,400 persons entering the labour force in the month. The participation rate in September

remained higher than March 2020 (65.5%), equating to a total of 76,300 persons having entered the labour force since March 2020.

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



Nationally, employment fell 138,000 persons (-1.1%) in September, to be 110,900 persons (-0.9%) below its pre-pandemic level in March 2020. The monthly fall in national employment was driven by Victoria (down 122,800) and New South Wales (down 24,800) which was only partially offset by increases in Queensland, Western Australia (up 3,600) and Tasmania (up 900).

There were 1,729 million hours worked in Australia in September 2021, up 0.9% from August but 2.0% below March 2020. The national unemployment rate rose marginally to 4.6 (**Table 1**). The ABS noted 'the low national unemployment rate continues to reflect reduced participation during the recent lockdowns, rather than strong labour market conditions.'

Table 1: Labour force outcomes¹, September 2021

	Queensland				Australia					
	Sep-21	Monthly Change	Yearly Change	Sep-21	Monthly Change	Yearly Change	Sep-21	Monthly Change	Yearly Change	
	'000	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	'000	%	
Employed	2,657.5	30.8	1.2	123.3	4.9	12,884.6	-138.0	-1.1	303.5	2.4
Full-time	1,835.8	56.3	3.2	148.0	8.8	8,983.2	26.7	0.3	442.8	5.2
Part-time	821.7	-25.5	-3.0	-24.7	-2.9	3,901.4	-164.7	-4.1	-139.3	-3.4
Unemployed	135.6	-12.4	-8.4	-66.0	-32.7	626.0	8.9	1.4	-299.8	-32.4
Underemployed	228.9	-4.3	-1.8	-66.2	-22.4	1,247.4	-20.6	-1.6	-294.7	-19.1
Labour Force	2,793.1	18.4	0.7	57.3	2.1	13,510.6	-129.1	-0.9	3.6	0.0
	Millions	Millions	%	Millions	%	Millions	Millions	%	Millions	%
Hours Worked	366.9	18.7	5.4	23.6	6.9	1,729.0	15.0	0.9	38.8	2.3
	Sep-21	Aug-21	Sep-20	Sep-21	Aug-21	Sep-20				
	%	%	%	%	%	%				
Unemployment Rate	4.9	5.3	7.4			4.6	4.5	6.9		
Underemployed	8.2	8.4	10.8			9.2	9.3	11.4		
Participation Rate	66.2	65.9	65.6			64.5	65.2	64.8		

Table 2: Interstate comparison¹, September 2021

	Qld	NSW	Vic	SA	WA	Tas	Aus
Employed							
% change on a month ago	1.2	-0.6	-3.5	-0.1	0.3	0.4	-1.1
Change on a month ago (no.)	30,800	-24,800	-122,800	-600	3,600	900	-138,000
% change since May 2020	12.5	1.8	3.8	7.7	11.3	9.7	6.1
Change since May 2020 (no.)	296,100	69,800	121,900	62,500	144,900	23,200	744,900
% change since March 2020	3.8	-4.7	-2.1	1.8	3.6	2.0	-0.9
Change since March 2020 (no.)	97,700	-196,000	-73,400	15,200	49,400	5,100	-110,900
Unemployment rate							
September-21	4.9	4.6	4.8	5.1	4.1	4.8	4.6
August-21	5.3	4.9	4.1	5.0	4.6	5.5	4.5
May-20	7.8	6.4	6.8	7.9	7.9	6.4	7.0
March-20	5.8	4.9	5.2	6.3	5.6	5.0	5.3
Hours worked (millions)							
September-21	366.9	517.7	444.7	119.0	199.0	34.4	1,729.0
monthly % change	5.4	2.7	-3.6	0.2	0.7	0.5	0.9
% change since May 2020	13.6	1.4	6.0	15.9	14.5	18.0	7.5
% change since March 2020	4.4	-8.7	-3.2	5.5	4.6	3.7	-2.0

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