

Labour Force, October 2021

Source: ABS Labour Force, released 11 November 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,	-7,800	(-0.3%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	-46,300	(-0.4%)
Unemployment:	Queensland,	8,100	(5.1%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	81,800	(5.2%)
Labour force:	Queensland,	300	(0.0%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	35,500	(0.3%)
Underemployment:	Queensland,	-8,000	(7.9%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	40,500	(9.5%)
Hours worked:	Queensland,	-700	(-0.2%)
(thousands, growth)	Australia,	-1,500	(-0.1%)

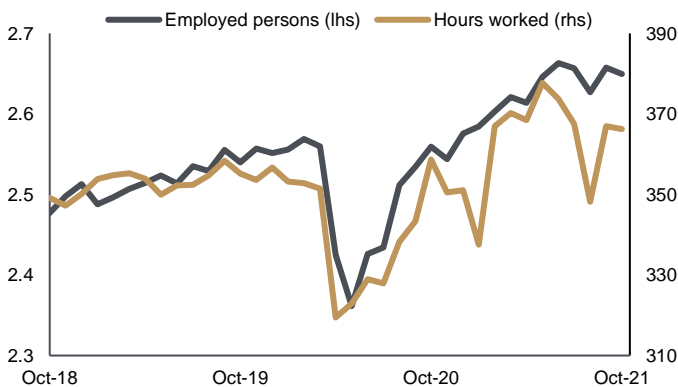
Main findings

Employment in Queensland fell 7,800 persons (-0.3%) in October 2021, with a decline in full-time employment (down 8,600) more than offsetting a small increase in part-time employment (up 800).

Employment in October was 288,300 persons (or 12.2%) above its COVID-impacted low in May 2020 and 90,000 persons (or 3.5%) above the pre-COVID level of March 2020.

In October 2021, there were 366.2 million hours worked in Queensland, down 0.2% in the month, but still well above March 2020 levels (up 4.2%, **Chart 1**). Hours worked continues to be the best measure of the impacts of lockdowns on the labour market.

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

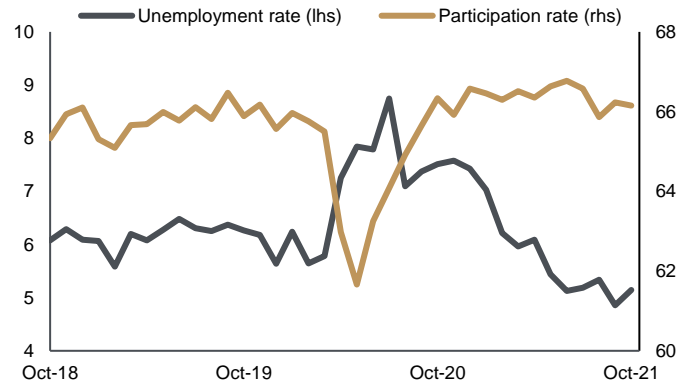


The unemployment rate in Queensland was 5.1% in October, up slightly from 4.9% in September, but below the pre-COVID level of 5.8% in March 2020 (**Chart 2**).

The number of unemployed persons in Queensland rose 8,100 persons in October to 143,700 persons. The number of unemployed persons is down from a peak of 233,300 persons in July 2020 to be 13,400 persons below the pre-pandemic level in March 2020.

Queensland's participation rate was 66.2% in October 2021, unchanged from September. An additional 300 persons entered the labour force in the month, with a total of 76,600 persons having entered since March 2020. The participation rate in October remained higher than March 2020 (65.5%).

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



Nationally, employment fell 46,300 persons (-0.4%) in October, to be 160,300 persons (-1.2%) below its pre-COVID level of March 2020. The monthly fall in national employment was driven by Victoria (down 49,600) and was only partially offset by an increase in New South Wales (up 21,700), as restrictions in the state began to ease during the reference period.

There were 1,727 million hours worked in Australia in October 2021, down 0.1% from September and 2.1% below March 2020. The national unemployment rate rose from 4.6% in September to 5.2% in October (**Table 1**).

Queensland's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was below the national rate for the first time since February 2016. The ABS noted the increase in the national unemployment rate 'show that people were preparing to get back to work, and increasingly available and actively looking for work – particularly in New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory.'

Table 1: Labour force outcomes¹, October 2021

	Queensland				Australia			
	Oct-21 '000	Monthly change '000 %	Yearly change '000 %		Oct-21 '000	Monthly change '000 %	Yearly change '000 %	
Employed	2,649.7	-7.8 -0.3	90.4	3.5	12,835.2	-46.3 -0.4	94.1	0.7
Full-time	1,827.2	-8.6 -0.5	116.1	6.8	8,941.2	-40.4 -0.4	306.4	3.5
Part-time	822.5	0.8 0.1	-25.7	-3.0	3,894.0	-5.9 -0.2	-212.3	-5.2
Unemployed	143.7	8.1 5.6	-64.1	-30.9	707.3	81.8 13.1	-242.3	-25.5
Underemployed	220.9	-8.0 -3.5	-43.4	-16.4	1,287.4	40.5 3.3	-141.3	-9.9
Labour force	2,793.4	0.3 0.0	26.3	1.0	13,542.5	35.5 0.3	-148.2	-1.1
	millions	millions	%	millions	%	millions	millions	%
Hours worked	366.2	-0.7 -0.2	7.5	2.1	1,727.2	-1.5 -0.1	-6.2	-0.4
	Oct-21	Sep-21	Oct-20		Oct-21	Sep-21	Oct-20	
	%	%	%		%	%	%	
Unemployment rate	5.1	4.9	7.5		5.2	4.6	6.9	
Underemployment rate	7.9	8.2	9.6		9.5	9.2	10.4	
Participation rate	66.2	66.2	66.3		64.7	64.5	65.7	

Table 2: Interstate comparison¹, October 2021

	Qld	NSW	Vic	SA	WA	Tas	Aus
Employed							
% change on a month ago	-0.3	0.6	-1.5	0.3	-0.3	-0.8	-0.4
Change on a month ago (no.)	-7,800	21,700	-49,600	2,400	-4,400	-2,000	-46,300
% change since May 2020	12.2	2.4	2.1	8.0	11.0	8.8	5.7
Change since May 2020 (no.)	288,300	91,500	69,100	65,000	140,500	21,200	695,400
% change since March 2020	3.5	-4.2	-3.7	2.1	3.3	1.2	-1.2
Change since March 2020 (no.)	90,000	-174,200	-126,200	17,600	45,000	3,100	-160,300
Unemployment rate (%)							
October 2021	5.1	5.4	5.6	5.3	3.9	5.1	5.2
September 2021	4.9	4.6	4.8	5.1	4.1	4.8	4.6
May 2020	7.8	6.4	6.8	7.9	7.9	6.4	7.0
March 2020	5.8	4.9	5.2	6.3	5.6	5.0	5.3
Hours worked (millions)							
October 2021	366.2	537.7	426.4	117.2	196.9	34.4	1,727.2
monthly % change	-0.2	3.9	-4.0	-1.5	-1.0	0.0	-0.1
% change since May 2020	13.4	5.3	1.6	14.2	13.3	18.0	7.4
% change since March 2020	4.2	-5.2	-7.1	3.9	3.5	3.7	-2.1

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