

Information note – COVID-19 and weekly payroll jobs and wages

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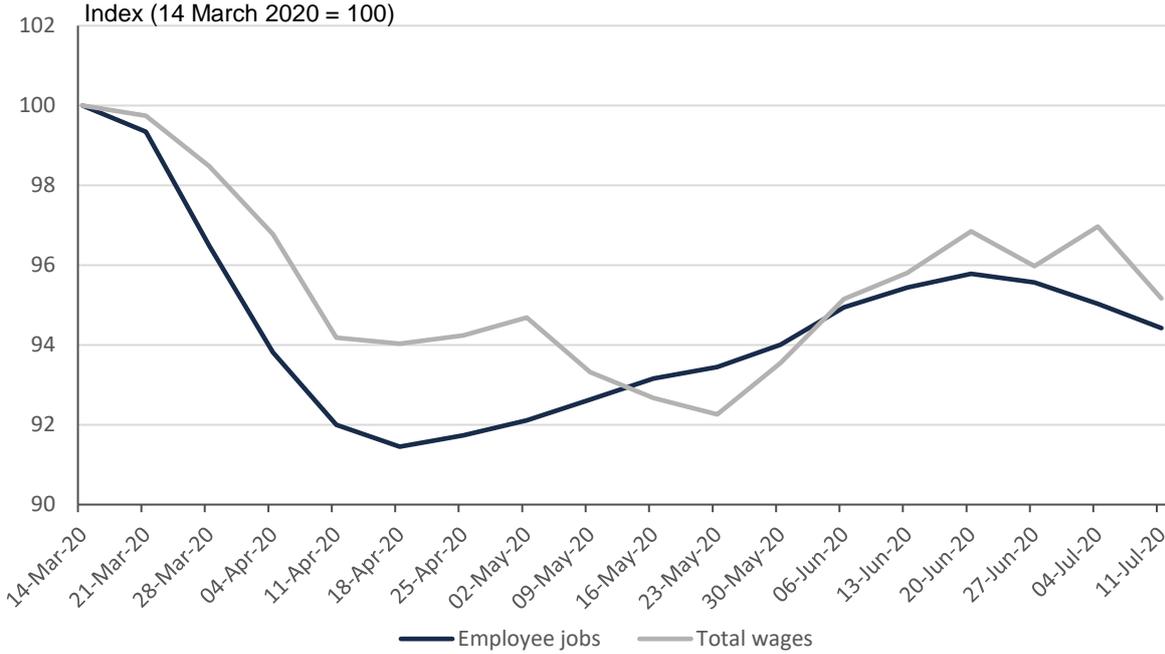
Overview

The latest update to the Australian Bureaus of Statistics' *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia* for the week ending 11 July 2020 covers a period in which COVID-19 restrictions had been broadly eased across most states, including on limits on patrons in pubs, cafes and restaurants, household gatherings, and re-opening of certain businesses (e.g. gyms, pools). However, following a spike of cases in Victoria, restrictions were re-implemented on 20 June, with plans to ease other restrictions delayed. The weekly payroll data capture only the early period in which Stage 3 lockdowns were re-introduced in Victoria (Stay at Home restrictions for some areas from 1 July and metropolitan Melbourne and the Mitchell Shire from 8 July). For more information on these and other restrictions, see the Fair Work Commission note on *Government responses to the COVID-19 pandemic*.¹

Over the whole period from 14 March to 11 July, the number of employee jobs declined by 5.6 per cent and total wages declined by 4.8 per cent (Chart 1).

¹ See [Information note – Government responses to COVID-19 pandemic](#), updated 13 July 2020.

Chart 1: Change in employee jobs and total wages



Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia*, Week ending 11 July 2020, Catalogue No. 6160.0.55.001.

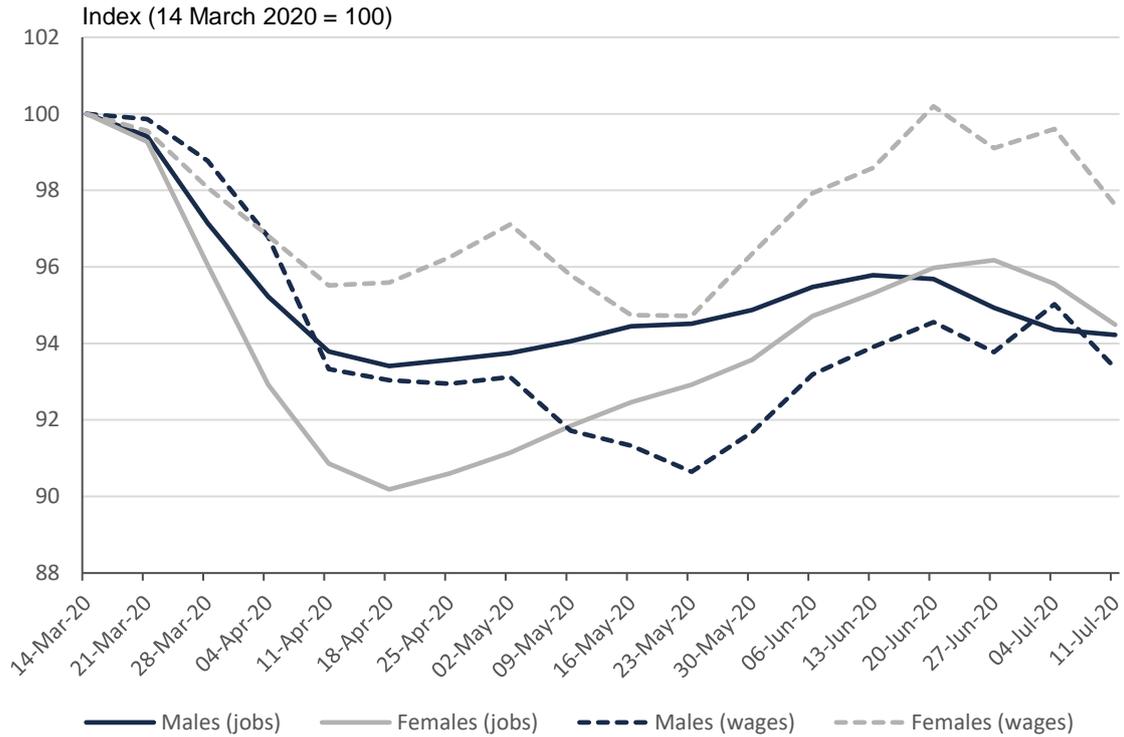
Sex

The decline in employee jobs troughed at around the week ending 18 April, at 6.6 per cent lower for males and 9.8 per cent lower for females, compared to 14 March (Chart 2). The number of employee jobs have since recovered, particularly for females. Between 14 March and 11 July, employee jobs declined by 5.8 per cent for males and by 5.5 per cent for females.

The change in total wages has somewhat followed the trend in jobs. Following an initial decline during April and a slight recovery in early May, total wages fell again towards the end of June for both males and females. Total wages have since increased, though remain below the level at 14 March.

Between 14 March and 11 July, the decline in total wages for males (-6.6 per cent) was greater than for females (-2.4 per cent).

Chart 2: Change in employee jobs and total wages, by sex



Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia*, Week ending 11 July 2020, Catalogue No. 6160.0.55.001.

Age groups

Table 1 presents the change in employee jobs and total wages by age group. Between 14 March and 11 July, the age groups most impacted by the decline in jobs were those aged 70+ years (-11.3 per cent) and 20-29 years (-7.9 per cent). There was considerable improvement in employee jobs for the 2 youngest age groups, particularly those aged under 20 years in July.

Across most age groups, the decline in total wages had occurred by mid-April before stabilising. Between 14 March and 11 July, total wages declined across most age groups except for those aged under 20 years (19.1 per cent).

Table 1: Change in payroll jobs and wages since 14 March 2020, select dates, by age group

Age group	Employee jobs			Total wages		
	14 March to 18 April (%)	14 March to 30 May (%)	14 March to 11 July (%)	14 March to 18 April (%)	14 March to 30 May (%)	14 March to 11 July (%)
Under 20 years	-22.9	-14.5	-1.8	1.2	7.3	19.1
20–29 years	-13.8	-10.4	-7.9	-7.4	-5.5	-1.2
30–39 years	-6.5	-4.6	-4.7	-5.9	-6.8	-4.2
40–49 years	-5.2	-3.3	-3.8	-6.5	-8.1	-6.5
50–59 years	-5.0	-3.1	-3.7	-5.9	-7.1	-6.3
60–69 years	-7.0	-4.6	-6.2	-5.7	-5.8	-5.9
70+ years	-12.5	-7.5	-11.3	-4.5	-1.9	-3.0
Total	-8.5	-6.0	-5.6	-6.0	-6.4	-4.8

Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia, Week ending 11 July 2020*, Catalogue No. 6160.0.55.001.

States and territories

Table 2 presents the changes in payroll jobs and wages between 14 March and 11 July across the states and territories. Victoria reported the largest decline in employee jobs (–7.3 per cent), followed by Tasmania (–6.8 per cent), and the ACT (–6.4 per cent). Since 20 June, total jobs have declined the most in Victoria (–2.7 per cent).

Similarly, between 20 June and 11 July, total wages have declined across most states and territories, with Victoria experiencing the largest decline (–2.8 per cent). The exception was the Northern Territory, where wages rose (0.7 per cent) over the period.

Table 2: Change in employee jobs and total wages between 14 March and 11 July, by state/territory

	14 March to 11 July		20 June to 11 July	
	Jobs (%)	Wages (%)	Jobs (%)	Wages (%)
New South Wales	-5.3	-4.3	-1.3	-1.9
Victoria	-7.3	-4.8	-2.7	-2.8
Queensland	-5.0	-4.7	-0.8	-1.3
South Australia	-5.5	-4.1	-0.9	-0.6
Western Australia	-3.1	-7.0	-0.1	-0.2
Tasmania	-6.8	-6.9	-0.9	-1.9
Northern Territory	-3.7	-3.3	-1.6	0.7
Australian Capital Territory	-6.4	-3.2	-1.7	-0.5
Total	-5.6	-4.8	-1.4	-1.7

Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia, Week ending 11 July 2020*, Catalogue No. 6160.0.55.001.