

# Information note – Update to payroll jobs and wages (week ending 31 October 2020)

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## Key indicators

Since 14 March...	Employee jobs		Total wages	
	17 Oct	31 Oct	17 Oct	31 Oct
Australia	-3.5	-3.0	-4.3	-4.3
Male	-4.4	-4.2	-6.0	-6.4
Female	-3.8	-3.2	-2.5	-1.8
Accommodation and food services	-16.5	-15.5	-16.4	-15.5
Arts and recreation services	-11.4	-12.8	-10.3	-12.1
Under 20 years	10.2	13.8	29.7	33.1
20–29 years	-5.1	-4.5	0.7	1.1
Victoria	-6.9	-6.0	-5.6	-4.8

## Other relevant updates

- The industries that comprised the 3 clusters have changed slightly from the time of the Annual Wage Review 2019–20 (week ending 30 May).
  - As in previous updates, **Public administration and safety** and **Health care and social assistance** have shifted from the *central* cluster to the *lower* cluster.
  - **Electricity, gas, water and waste services** has shifted from the *lower* to the *central* cluster after recording a small decline in employment since 14 March.
- Accommodation and food services and Arts and recreation services continue to remain the 2 industries most adversely affected.
- There continues to be a larger decline in jobs since 14 March in small (–5.8 per cent) and medium-sized businesses (–5.4 per cent) than large businesses (–0.5 per cent).
- Since mid-March, payroll jobs fell by 6.0 per cent in Victoria and by only 2.0 per cent in the rest of Australia.

## Key COVID-19 dates

- *Week ending 14 March: 100<sup>th</sup> recorded COVID-19 case in Australia (base for payroll data)*
- 22 March: Prime Minister announces Stage 2 lock down changes
- 30 March: Prime Minister announces JobKeeper program
- *Week ending 18 April: decline in employee jobs reaches its trough in the payroll data*
- 8 May: Initial payroll deadline for the JobKeeper program
- *Week ending 30 May: latest period in the Annual Wage Review 2019–20 decision*
- 1 July: Stay at Home restrictions commence for selected Melbourne postcodes
- 8 July: Stay at Home restrictions commence for metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire
- 12 July: Early Childhood Education and Care Relief Package ceased
- 5 August: Stage 4 restrictions in metropolitan Melbourne and stage 3 restrictions in regional Victoria commence (curfew from 2 August)
- 14 September: metropolitan Melbourne moved to the First Step of the roadmap to reopening.
- 17 September: regional Victoria progressed to the Third Step of the roadmap to reopening.
- 28 September: metropolitan Melbourne moved to the Second Step of the roadmap to reopening, including increasing workforce capacity for some industries. JobKeeper extension 1 (modified eligibility test) commences. This lowers the rate from \$1500 to \$750–\$1200 depending on the number of hours an eligible employee works.
- 19 October: metropolitan Melbourne moved to an amended Second Step of the roadmap to reopening, and an amended Third Step for regional Victoria.
- 28 October: metropolitan Melbourne moved to the Third Step of the roadmap to reopening.
- *Week ending 31 October: latest period for payroll data*

## Total jobs and wages

The latest data capture a period where there was further easing of restrictions in Victoria.<sup>1</sup>

Over the whole period from 14 March to 31 October, the number of employee jobs declined by 3.0 per cent and total wages declined by 4.3 per cent (Chart 1).

By mid-July, as restrictions had eased in most states and territories, almost two-thirds of the jobs lost by mid-April were recovered. This number has remained relatively stable to the end of October. Total wages have varied greatly over the period, with the most recent decline coinciding with a reduction in the JobKeeper payment in late September.

Since the last update, employee jobs have edged up particularly in the week ending 31 October, likely driven by the easing of restrictions in Victoria.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See: [Information note – Government responses to COVID-19 pandemic](#), updated 10 November 2020.

<sup>2</sup> The weekly change estimates for the most recent weeks of data contain a higher degree of reporting variability and imputation. The ABS aims to release data as close as possible to the period covered. The ABS recommends exercising caution when focusing on change in the most recent weeks, as these estimates are subject to greater levels of revision in subsequent releases as more complete and newly available data are included over time. See the following link for more information on this issue: <https://www.abs.gov.au/methodologies/weekly-payroll-jobs-and-wages-australia-methodology/week-ending-31-october-2020#data-limitations-and-revisions>.

**Chart 1: Change in employee jobs and total wages**



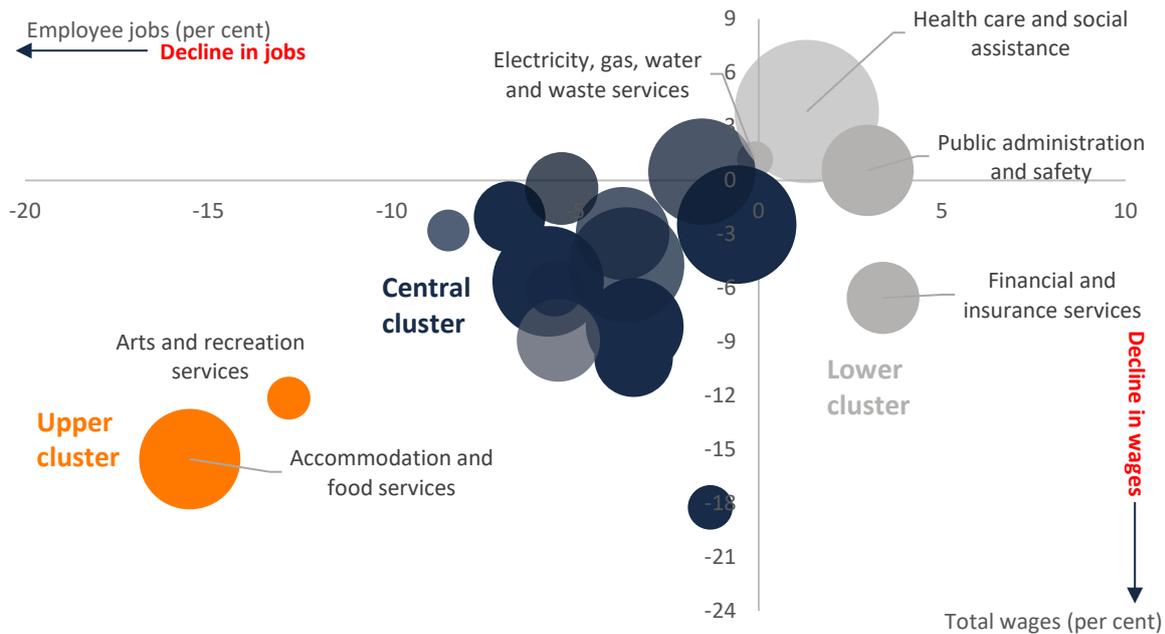
Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia*, Week ending 31 October 2020.

## Industry clusters

The industries that comprised the 3 clusters have changed slightly from the time of the Annual Wage Review 2019–20 (2019–20 Review). As reported in previous updates, the number of employee jobs in Public administration and safety and Health care and social assistance had increased since 14 March and are now part of the lower cluster (Chart 2).

In this update, Electricity, gas, water and waste services shifted from the lower cluster to the central cluster after the number of jobs fell slightly (–0.1 per cent) since 14 March. Accommodation and food services and Arts and recreation services continue to remain the 2 industries most adversely affected according to the change in employee jobs between 14 March and 31 October 2020.

**Chart 2: Change in employee jobs and total wages between 14 March and 31 October 2020**

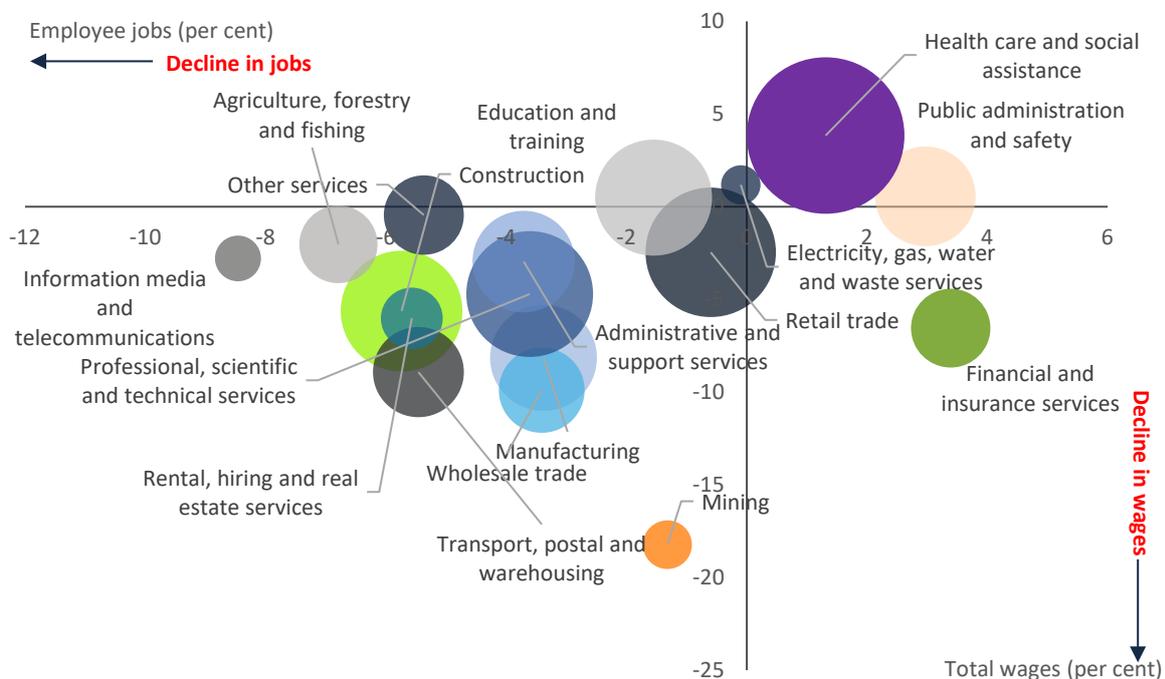


Note: Circle size reflects number of filled jobs (i.e. larger circles represent industries with higher number of filled jobs).

Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia, Week ending 31 October 2020*; ABS, *Labour Account Australia, June 2020*.

Chart 3 presents the change in employee jobs and total wages for industries in the central and lower clusters.

**Chart 3: Change in employee jobs and total wages between 14 March and 31 October 2020**



Note: Circle size reflects number of filled jobs (i.e. larger circles represent industries with higher number of filled jobs). Chart excludes Accommodation and food services and Arts and recreation services.

Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia, Week ending 31 October 2020*; ABS, *Labour Account Australia, June 2020*.

Table 1 compares the change in employee jobs and total wages between 14 March and 30 May 2020 (at the time of the 2019–20 Review) with the latest data to the week ending 31 October 2020 by industry cluster. Since the 2019–20 Review, the number of employee jobs and total wages has improved across most industries.

However, since the week ending 17 October 2020 (not shown in table), employee jobs increased in most industries, particularly for:

- Education and training (3.0 percentage points); and
- Retail trade (2.6 percentage points).

Total wages declined for most industries since the previous update, particularly for:

- Administrative and support services (–2.1 percentage points);
- Electricity, gas, water and waste services (–1.5 percentage points); and
- Mining (–1.4 percentage points).

**Table 1: Change in employee jobs and wages since 14 March**

Industry	Employee jobs			Total wages		
	30 May* (%)	31 Oct (%)	Change (ppts)	30 May* (%)	31 Oct (%)	Change (ppts)
<b>Upper cluster</b>						
Accommodation and food services	-29.1	-15.5	13.6	-25.4	-15.5	9.9
Arts and recreation services	-26.3	-12.8	13.5	-14.0	-12.1	1.9
<b>Central cluster</b>						
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	-9.5	-6.8	2.7	-6.4	-2.0	4.4
Mining	-5.8	-1.3	4.5	-20.8	-18.2	2.6
Manufacturing	-4.0	-3.4	0.6	-11.4	-8.2	3.3
Construction	-5.8	-5.7	0.1	-7.8	-5.6	2.2
Wholesale trade	-4.1	-3.4	0.7	-13.5	-9.9	3.6
Retail trade	-6.3	-0.6	5.7	-4.3	-2.5	1.8
Transport, postal and warehousing	-4.8	-5.5	-0.6	-9.5	-8.9	0.6
Information media and telecommunications	-10.5	-8.5	2.0	-12.0	-2.8	9.2
Rental, hiring and real estate services	-10.1	-5.6	4.5	-13.7	-6.0	7.7
Professional, scientific and technical services	-4.4	-3.6	0.8	-8.4	-4.7	3.7
Administrative and support services	-10.1	-3.7	6.4	-8.1	-3.0	5.1
Education and training	-4.7	-1.6	3.2	0.7	0.5	-0.2
Other services	-9.7	-5.4	4.3	-4.0	-0.5	3.5
Electricity, gas, water and waste services	0.4	-0.1	-0.5	-3.0	1.2	4.2
<b>Lower cluster</b>						
Health care and social assistance	-4.7	1.3	6.0	-3.4	3.8	7.2
Public administration and safety	-4.3	3.0	7.3	-6.3	0.6	6.8
Financial and insurance services	0.5	3.4	2.9	-8.1	-6.6	1.5

Note: \* At the time of the 2019–20 Review.

Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia*, Week ending 31 October 2020.

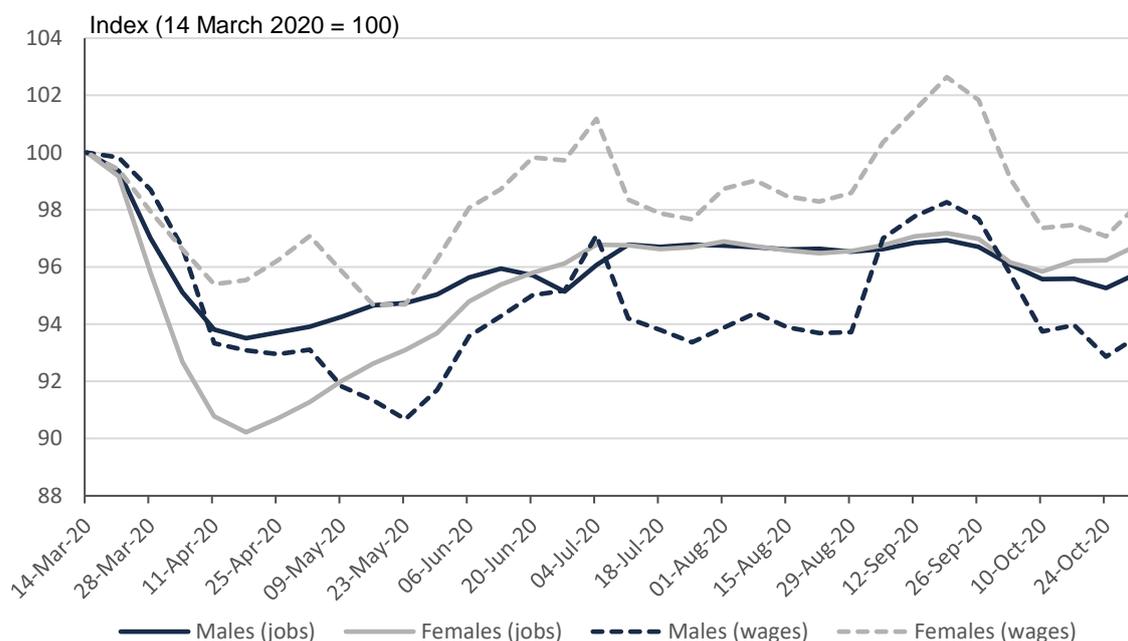
## Sex

The decline in employee jobs troughed at around the week ending 18 April, at 6.5 per cent lower for males and 9.8 per cent lower for females, compared to 14 March (Chart 4). The number of employee jobs have since recovered, particularly for females, with job losses higher among males (-4.2 per cent) than females (-3.2 per cent) between 14 March and 31 October.

Total wages declined more for males than females between 14 March and 23 May, where wages reached its trough. Since then, total wages for females have recovered at a faster rate. The decline in wages between late-September and early October likely reflects the decline in the JobKeeper rate.

Between 14 March and 31 October, total wages for males (–6.4 per cent) declined more than for females (–1.8 per cent).

**Chart 4: Change in employee jobs and total wages, by sex**



Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia*, Week ending 31 October 2020.

## Age groups

Table 2 presents the change in employee jobs and total wages by age group. Between 14 March and 31 October, the age groups most impacted by the decline in jobs were those aged 70+ years (–12.2 per cent), 60–69 years (–6.5 per cent), and 20–29 years (–4.5 per cent). There was considerable improvement in employee jobs for those aged under 20 years between late May and late October, while employee jobs fell significantly for those aged 70+ years over this same period.

Between 14 March and 31 October, total wages declined across all age groups except for those aged under 20 years (33.1 per cent) and 20–29 years (1.1 per cent).

However, since 30 May, there has been an improvement in total wages across each age group except among those aged 60–69 years and 70+ years.

**Table 2: 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 31 Oct (%)	14 March to 18 April (%)	14 March to 30 May (%)	14 March to 31 Oct (%)
Under 20 years	–22.8	–14.0	13.8	2.5	8.2	33.1
20–29 years	–14.2	–10.5	–4.5	–7.4	–5.3	1.1
30–39 years	–6.6	–4.7	–2.9	–5.9	–6.8	–3.6
40–49 years	–5.1	–3.3	–1.9	–6.5	–8.2	–5.8
50–59 years	–4.9	–3.1	–2.4	–6.0	–7.3	–6.3
60–69 years	–6.9	–4.5	–6.5	–5.8	–5.9	–9.2
70+ years	–12.6	–7.3	–12.2	–4.4	–1.9	–12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>–8.5</b>	<b>–5.8</b>	<b>–3.0</b>	<b>–6.0</b>	<b>–6.5</b>	<b>–4.3</b>

Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia*, Week ending 31 October 2020.

## States and territories

Table 3 presents the changes in employee jobs and wages between 14 March and 31 October across the states and territories. Victoria reported the largest decline in employee jobs over the period (–6.0 per cent), followed by Tasmania (–4.6 per cent) and New South Wales (–2.6 per cent). Excluding Victoria, the ABS noted that jobs declined by 2.0 per cent for the rest of Australia over the period.<sup>3</sup>

Since 20 June, when restrictions were re-implemented in Victoria, employee jobs declined in Victoria (–1.3 per cent) while they increased across all other states. However, the decline in Victoria has moderated since mid-October as restrictions were eased.

Over the period between 14 March to 31 October, total wages fell the most in Tasmania (–5.5 per cent), New South Wales (–5.2 per cent), and Victoria (–4.8 per cent). Since 20 June, total wages declined in most states and territories, with the largest decline in Victoria (–2.9 per cent).

**Table 3: Change in employee jobs and total wages, by state/territory**

	14 March to 31 October		20 June to 31 October	
	Jobs (%)	Wages (%)	Jobs (%)	Wages (%)
New South Wales	–2.6	–5.2	1.5	–2.4
Victoria	–6.0	–4.8	–1.3	–2.9
Queensland	–2.0	–3.3	2.4	–0.6
South Australia	–0.8	–0.6	3.7	1.6
Western Australia	–0.4	–4.3	2.9	2.6
Tasmania	–4.6	–5.5	1.6	–1.9
Northern Territory	–0.8	–1.1	2.0	0.9
Australian Capital Territory	–2.4	–1.9	2.6	–0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>–3.0</b>	<b>–4.3</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>–1.3</b>

Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia*, Week ending 31 October 2020.

## Employment size

Employee jobs initially declined across all employment sizes to mid-late April before recovering to early July (Chart 5). The latest data show that the number of employee jobs in small (under 20 employees) and medium-sized businesses (20–199 employees) recovered relatively strongly to early July. Since then, jobs in small businesses were relatively steady until falling from late September. Jobs in medium-sized businesses did not recover by as much and have since improved slightly.

Between 14 March and 31 October, employee jobs declined the most in small businesses (–5.8 per cent) and medium-sized businesses (–5.4 per cent). The overall fall in employee jobs for large businesses (over 200 employees) was relatively small (–0.5 per cent) as they have recovered further in October.

<sup>3</sup> ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia*, Week ending 31 October 2020, Media Release.

**Chart 5: Change in employee jobs, by employment size**



Note: Excludes a small number of businesses where employment size was unable to be sourced from the ABS Business Register.

Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia*, Week ending 31 October 2020, Catalogue No. 6160.0.55.001.

The decline in employee jobs since 14 March was largest in Victoria across all business sizes (Table 4). However, since 17 October, the change in employee jobs in Victoria fared better than businesses throughout Australia.

**Table 4: Change in employee jobs, by employment size**

	Change between 14 March and 31 October (%)	Change between 17 October and 31 October (%)
<b>Small (under 20 employees)</b>		
Australia	-5.8	-1.2
Victoria	-9.4	-0.9
<b>Medium (20-199 employees)</b>		
Australia	-5.4	0.4
Victoria	-9.3	1.4
<b>Large (over 200 employees)</b>		
Australia	-0.5	1.3
Victoria	-2.7	1.7

Note: Excludes a small number of businesses where employment size was unable to be sourced from the ABS Business Register. Care should be exercised when focusing on the most recent movements in payroll jobs

Source: ABS, *Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia*, Week ending 31 October 2020.