



Recruitment Insights Report – May 2023

May 2023
Recruitment activity¹
51%

Monthly change: ▲1% pt.
Yearly change: ▼8% pts.

May 2023
Recruitment difficulty rate²
67%

Monthly change: ▲5% pts.
Yearly change: ▼1% pt.

May 2023
Expect to increase staff³
24%

Monthly change: ▲4% pts.
Yearly change: ▼8% pts.

Key findings from the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey (REOS)

- Results from the May 2023 REOS indicate that recruitment activity and recruitment expectations increased in May, reversing some of the declines recorded the previous month. The trend in the key series of recruitment activity, recruitment difficulty rate and expectation to increase staff, however, remain below the peaks experienced in 2022.
- In May 2023, recruitment activity rose by 1 percentage point over the month to 51% of employers recruiting and is 8 percentage points lower than a year ago.
 - In Capital Cities, 49% of employers recruited in May 2023, an increase of 1 percentage point over the month and 9 percentage points lower than in May 2022.
 - Recruitment activity in Rest of State areas rebounded by 2 percentage points over the month to 55%, above the rate in Capital Cities. Despite this increase, recruitment activity in Rest of State areas remains 5 percentage points lower than a year ago.
- While there was a rise in the proportion of employers reporting recruiting for new positions only (up by 6 percentage points to 28%), the proportion of employers reporting increasing their staffing levels was steady at 14% in May 2023. Furthermore, 10% of employers decreased their staffing level this month, an increase of 2 percentage points since a month ago.
- The recruitment difficulty rate rose by 5 percentage points to 67% of recruiting employers in May 2023 (representing 34% of *all* employers), its highest level since November 2022.
 - In Capital Cities 65% of recruiting employers had recruitment difficulty, up by 6 percentage points over the month.
 - In Rest of State areas recruitment difficulty increased by 3 percentage points to 69% in May 2023, its highest level since November 2022.
- The proportion of employers who expected to increase staffing levels over the next three months increased by 4 percentage points to 24% in May 2023. This result, however, remains well below the results two months ago (30% in March 2023) and a year ago (32% in May 2022).
- A small proportion (3%) of employers expected to decrease staffing in the next 3 months, a fall of 1 percentage point from last month, although it remains 1 percentage point higher than a year ago.

¹ Recruitment activity (or the 'recruitment rate') is the proportion of all employers who are either currently recruiting or who had recruited in the previous month.

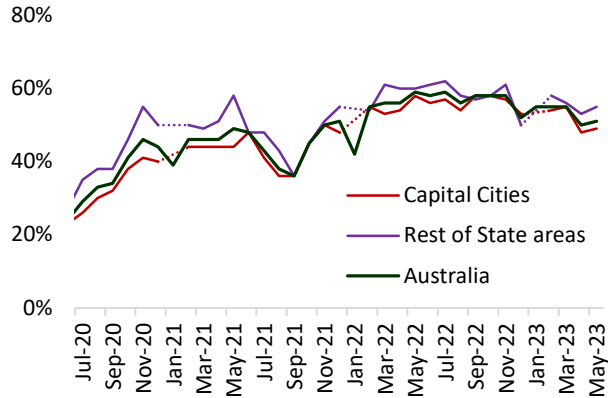
² The recruitment difficulty rate is the proportion of recruiting employers who experienced difficulty hiring staff in their most recent recruitment round.

³ The 'expect to increase staff' figure is the proportion of all employers who expect to increase staff numbers over the next three months.

Recruitment indicators – key charts

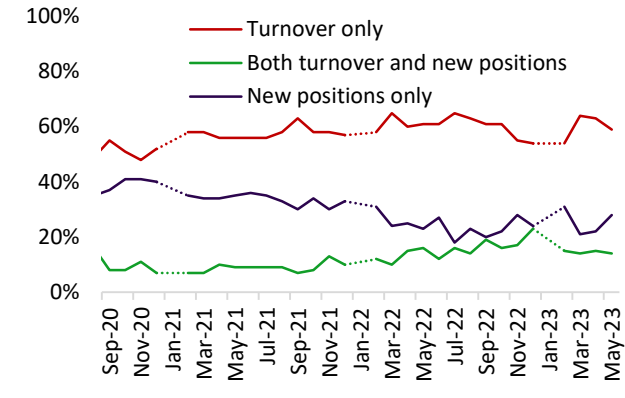
Recruitment activity

Proportion of employers



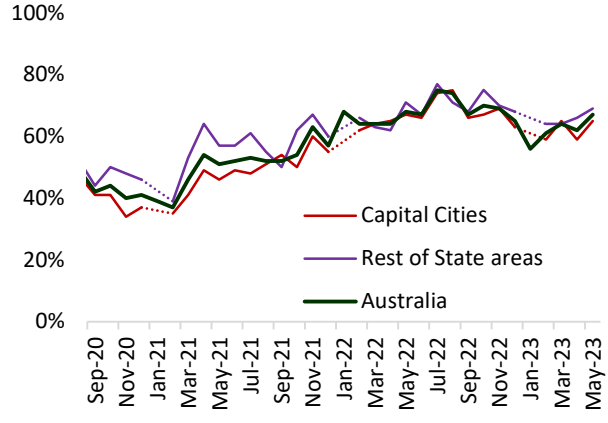
Reasons for recruitment

Proportion of recruiting employers



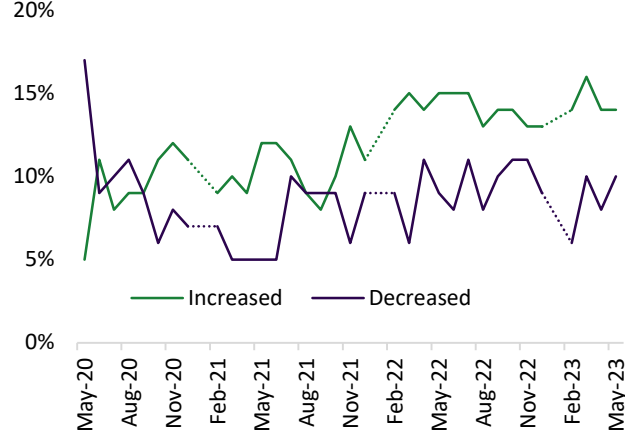
Recruitment difficulty

Proportion of recruiting employers



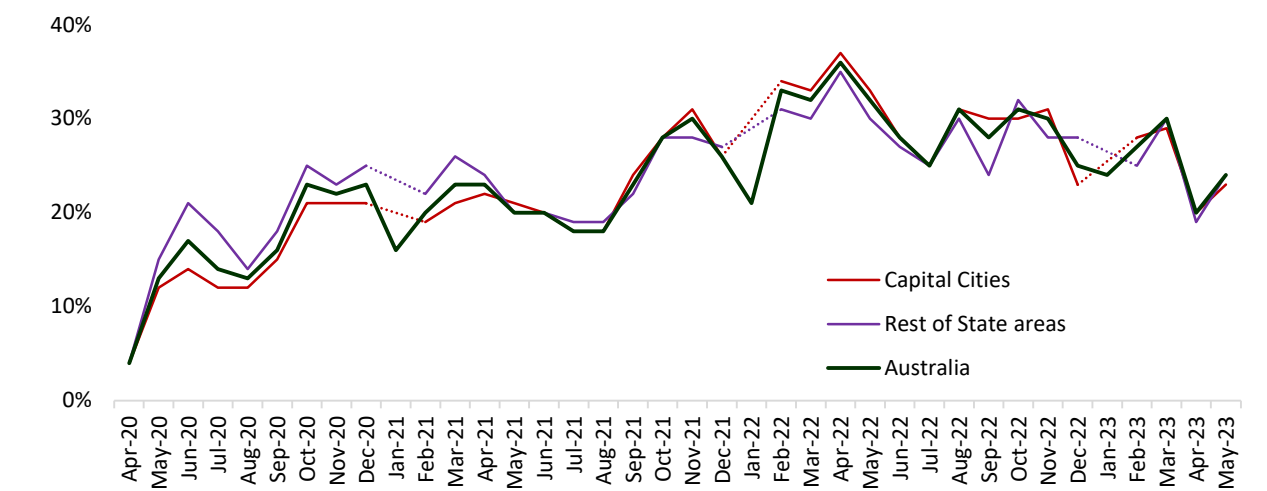
Increased / decreased staff over the past month

Proportion of employers



Employers who expect to increase staff numbers over the next 3 months

Proportion of employers



Note: Some disaggregated data are not available for January 2021, 2022, and 2023. Data points have been joined by a dotted line between December and February to reflect this.

Changes to this edition and upcoming editions

In previous editions, a research Spotlight was published as part of the Recruitment Insights Report. While the Recruitment Insights Report will continue to be published on the third Tuesday of every month, the Spotlights will now be published separately on the first Tuesday of every month. The next Spotlight will look at trends in recruitment difficulty and will be published on 4 July 2023 on the [Jobs and Skills Australia website](https://jobsandskills.gov.au) (jobsandskills.gov.au).

The Recruitment Insights Reports will continue to include more detailed REOS quarterly results by industry, state, area and occupation in the March, June, September, and December editions.

Technical notes

The *Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey* (REOS) is a telephone administered survey with the business owner or other person in the business responsible for recruitment.

All figures presented in this report have been weighted by location and workplace size, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics [Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits](#) (June 2018 to June 2022) publication. The weighted figures are intended to create nationally representative results by correcting for the oversampling of smaller regions compared with larger regions.

Data collected in the survey have been coded and reported according to the following ABS classifications:

- Capital City and Rest of State areas are defined by the [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\): Volume 1 - Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas](#), July 2016.

Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey - Background

Jobs and Skills Australia conducts the *Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey* (REOS), a telephone administered survey with the business owner or other person in the business responsible for recruitment. At least 1,000 employers are surveyed each month, with data published on the [Jobs and Skills Australia website](https://jobsandskills.gov.au) (jobsandskills.gov.au). While the data are indicative of recruitment activity, they may be subject to seasonal factors and other volatility and should therefore be used with a degree of caution. In addition, the survey is targeted towards employers with 5 or more employees, and excludes many government organisations.

REOS results may not reflect the full impact of COVID-19 and the associated restrictions on employers and their recruitment experiences, as the survey was unable to gather data from employers who closed down (even temporarily). During the height of the pandemic, response rates varied significantly by industry, and by area, as different lockdown restrictions were applied.

Note that data collection pauses over the Christmas and holiday period as follows:

- 21 December 2020 to 8 January 2021
- 18 December 2021 to 7 January 2022
- 17 December 2022 to 9 January 2023.

Data in this release should be referenced as: *Jobs and Skills Australia, Recruitment Insights Report, May 2023*.

For additional information, email REOS@jobsandskills.gov.au