



Australian Government



Jobs and Skills Australia

REOS Recruitment Insights Report – August 2024

Jobs and Skills Australia surveys at least 1,000 employers in the Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey (REOS) each month to find out about their experiences recruiting staff, and whether they are expecting to increase staffing levels.

Key Findings

Recruitment activity decreased slightly in August 2024 with a slight rise in recruitment activity in the Capital Cities (sometimes referred to as metropolitan) that coincided with a decrease in activity in the Rest of State areas (sometimes referred to as regional areas). In contrast, the recruitment difficulty rate rose over the month. Notably, there has been a strong decrease in difficulty recruiting for casual jobs compared with permanent positions.

In *smoothed* terms, the recruitment rate has continued its marked decline since the start of the year and is well below peak levels recorded in mid-2022. The *smoothed* recruitment difficulty rate eased over the last year, despite the rise over the month. The *smoothed* future expectations to increase staff has continued to decline and is around levels reported in mid-2021. These results, together with data from Jobs and Skills Australia's *Internet Vacancy Index*, which shows a gradual decline in the number of job advertisements, below its mid-2022 peak, seem to point to an easing in labour market activity in the period ahead.¹

Recruitment activity

Recruitment activity decreased by 1 percentage point over the month to 43% of employers in August 2024. This is 3 percentage points less than in August 2023, and 16 percentage points lower than the record high of 59% in mid-2022.

In Capital Cities, 42% of employers recruited over the month, 1 percentage point higher than a month ago but still down by 2 percentage points from August 2023.

The recruitment rate in Rest of State areas (which typically covers regional Australia) moved in the opposite direction with a drop of 5 percentage points to 45% of employers. This is now 3 percentage points lower than a year ago.

Recruitment difficulty

Recruitment difficulty rose by 3 percentage points to 50% of recruiting employers in August 2024 compared to the previous month. This is 11 percentage points lower than last year and 25 percentage points lower than the peak of 75% recorded in July 2022.

¹ Further detail can be found in Jobs and Skills Australia's [Labour Market Update – June 2024](#) publication.

- Just over a third (35%) of employers recruiting for casual positions had recruitment difficulty in August 2024, down by 2 percentage points from July 2024 and 15 percentage points lower than a year ago. Casual positions are more likely to be roles that do not require significant formal training requirements and are generally easier to fill.
- The recruitment difficulty rate for employers recruiting for permanent positions stood at 60% in August 2024, up by 7 percentage points over the month. However, it is 6 percentage points lower than a year ago.

The rate of recruitment difficulty in Capital Cities increased by 2 percentage points over the month to 50%, while it increased by 5 percentage points to 51% in Rest of State areas. The long-term trend of the recruitment difficulty rate for both regions has been generally declining since the peak in mid-2022.

Future hiring intentions

The proportion of employers expecting to increase staff numbers in the next three months rose by 4 percentage points to 22% in August 2024. This is 2 percentage points lower than August last year.

Expectations to increase staffing levels have been variable across metropolitan and regional areas in recent months. Both regions recorded an increase in future staffing expectations (Capital Cities: +5 percentage points, Rest of State areas: +4 percentage points) to both stand at 22% of employers. Looking through the month-to-month variability, the smoothed series has been trending downward over the last six months in both metropolitan and regional areas.

Only 4% of employers expected to decrease their staffing levels in the next 3 months, up by 1 percentage point over the year.

Staffing changes over the last month

In August 2024, 11% of employers increased their staffing levels, unchanged over the month and 1 percentage point lower than a year ago.

Over the same period, 7% of employers decreased their staffing levels, 1 percentage point lower than last month.

Reason for recruiting

Most employers recruited due to 'staff turnover only' (60%) in August 2024, while 25% recruited to fill 'new positions only'. Some 16% of employers were recruiting to fill positions due to both staff turnover as well as for new positions.

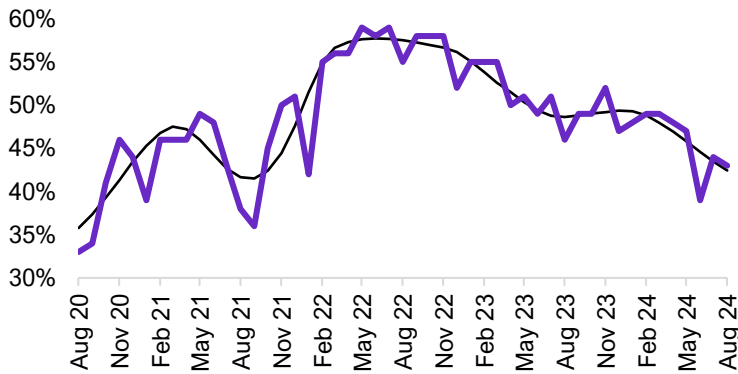
Employers unable to fill vacancies in a month

The proportion of recruiting employers who did not fill their vacancies within a month rose by 3 percentage points to 45% in August 2024. This is 15 percentage points lower than a year ago, and well below the peak of 72% recorded in August 2022. Despite the increase over the month, the series is only 3 percentage points higher than July 2024's record low of 42%.

REOS national indicators²

Recruitment rate

Proportion of employers currently recruiting or who recruited in the previous month.



43%

Monthly change:

▼ 1% point

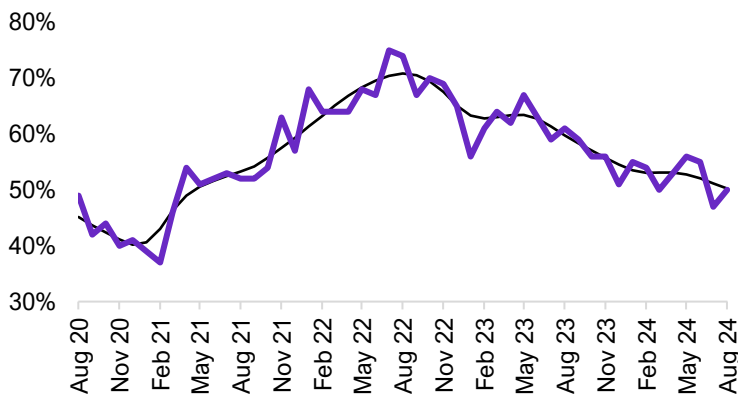
Annual change:

▼ 3% points

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Recruitment difficulty rate

Proportion of recruiting employers who stated they had difficulty hiring staff.



50%

Monthly change:

▲ 3% points

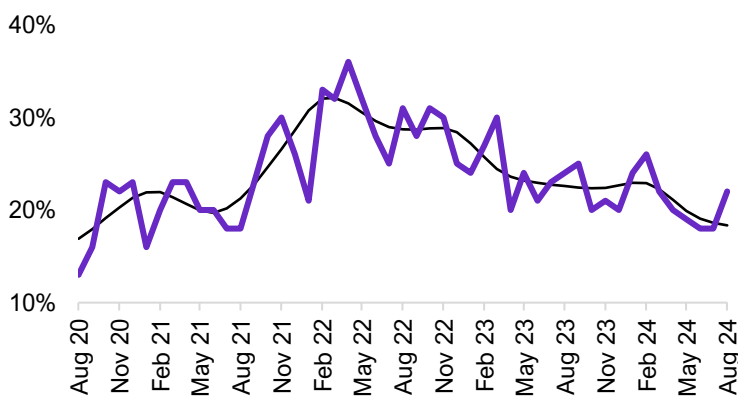
Annual change:

▼ 11% points

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Staffing outlook – Expecting to increase staff

Proportion of employers who expected to increase staffing numbers over the next three months.



22%

Monthly change:

▲ 4% points

Annual change:

▼ 2% points

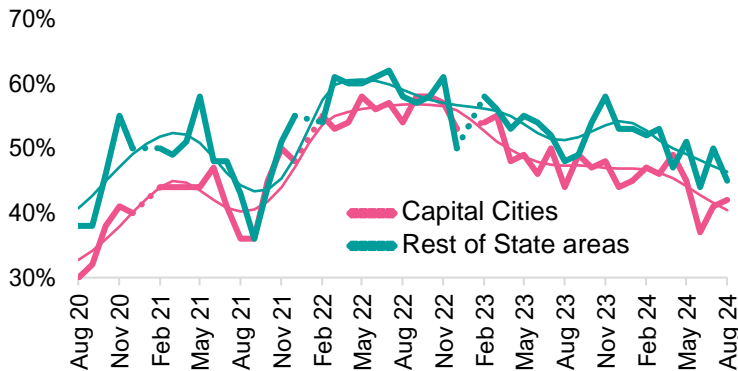
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² A Henderson smoothed line has been included in the charts to reduce month to month volatility and illustrate long term patterns. See the explanatory note for more information.

Capital City/Rest of State areas³

Recruitment rate

Proportion of employers currently recruiting or who recruited in the previous month.

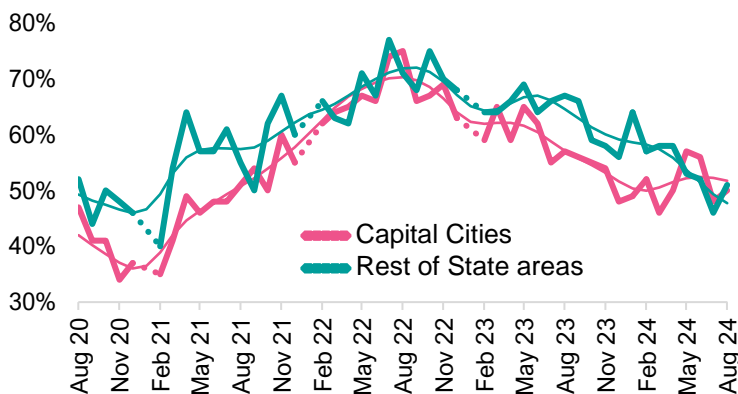


Capital Cities: 42%
 Monthly change: ▲ 1% point
 Annual change: ▼ 2% points

Rest of State: 45%
 Monthly change: ▼ 5% points
 Annual change: ▼ 3% points

Recruitment difficulty rate

Proportion of recruiting employers who stated they had difficulty hiring staff.

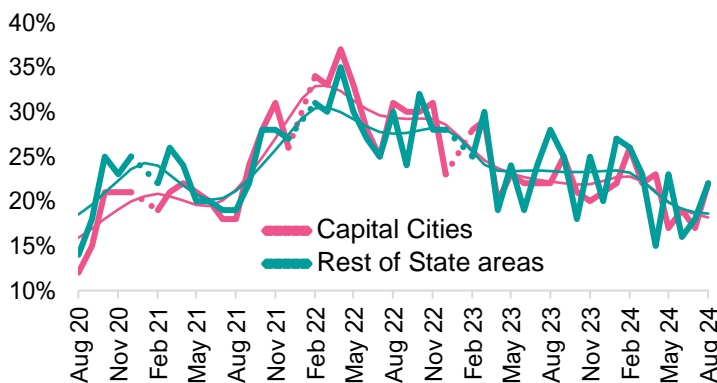


Capital Cities: 50%
 Monthly change: ▲ 2% points
 Annual change: ▼ 7% points

Rest of State: 51%
 Monthly change: ▲ 5% points
 Annual change: ▼ 16% points

Staffing outlook – Expecting to increase staff

Proportion of employers who expected to increase staffing numbers over the next three months.



Capital Cities: 22%
 Monthly change: ▲ 5% points
 Annual change: ► 0% points

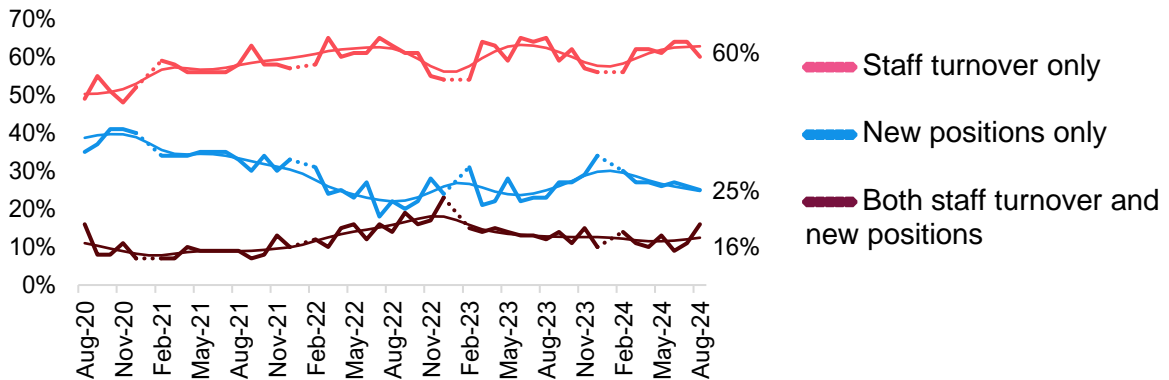
Rest of State: 22%
 Monthly change: ▲ 4% points
 Annual change: ▼ 6% points

³ Data are not available for January. Data points have been joined by a dotted line between December and February to reflect this. 'Rest of State' refers to areas outside the capital cities.

Other recruitment indicators

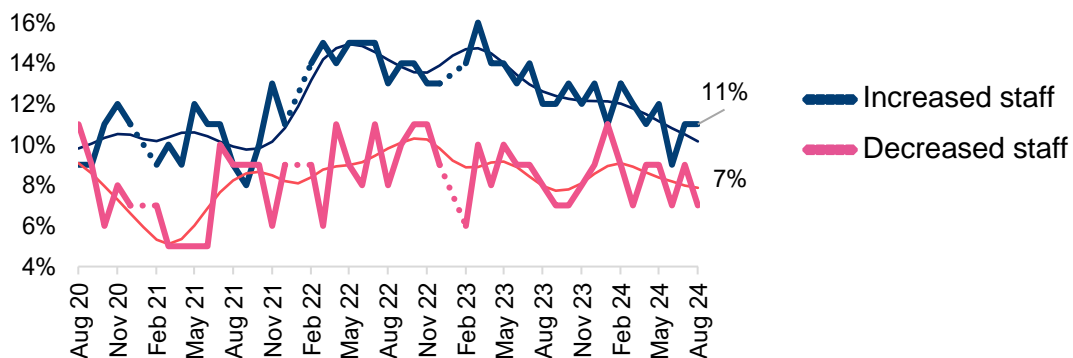
Reason for recruiting

Proportion of employers currently recruiting or who recruited in the previous month.



Staffing changes over the last month

Proportion of employers who said they increased or decreased staffing compared to the previous month.



Employers unable to fill jobs within a month

Proportion of recruiting employers who were unable to fill their vacancies within a month.*



* Excludes employers who have been recruiting for less than a month.

Recruitment Experiences and Outlook Survey (REOS)

Background

Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) 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 [JSA website](#). 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.

Smoothed series in charts

Charts include Henderson-smoothed lines in addition to original data for most of our recruitment indicators. As the timeseries is not yet long enough for seasonal adjustment, a Henderson smoothed moving average with a 13-term filter (equating to 13 months) has been directly applied to the original series. This provides an indication of the general movement in each recruitment indicator relative to previous months. Due to using 13 months in the moving average, results for the most recent six months will be revised when another month is added to the series.

Referencing this report

Data in this release should be referenced as: *Jobs and Skills Australia, Recruitment Insights Report, August 2024*.

Contact us

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

Also available from the REOS

Data file with monthly and quarterly recruitment indicators

A REOS data file is available on the [JSA website](#). Breakdowns by Capital City/Rest of State area, Business size, and ANZSCO Skill Level are included in the monthly results. Quarterly recruitment indicators provide detail by state, [ARIA](#) (ABS' Accessibility and Remoteness Index of Australia) as well as selected industry and occupation groups.

Next Recruitment Insights Report release:

- September 2024 Recruitment Insights Report – Tuesday 22 October 2024

Stay up to date

JSA also releases semi-regular reports including spotlight articles, detailing aspects of the REOS that cannot be included in our monthly Recruitment Insights Report. [Sign up](#) and get the Recruitment Insights Report notifications sent straight to your inbox.

Upcoming spotlight:

- Recruitment experiences across Australia's remoteness areas – 26 September 2024

Recent spotlights or research reports:

- [Mature age workers and the labour market – REOS special report](#)