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Wage Price Index reverts to pre-pandemic pattern

Media Release

Released 17/11/2021

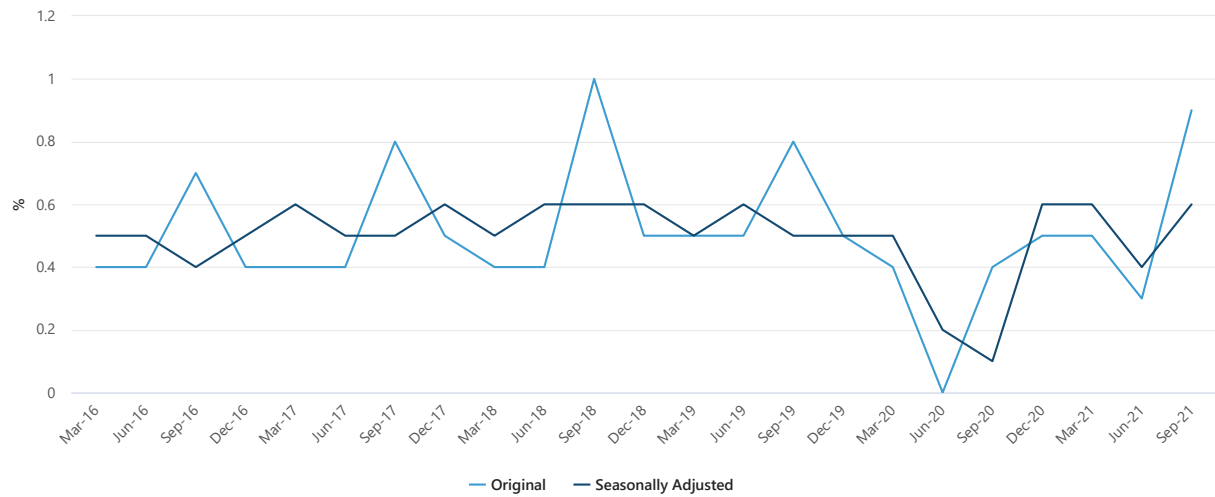
i Source: [Wage Price Index, Australia, September 2021](#)

The seasonally adjusted Wage Price Index (WPI) rose 0.6 per cent in September quarter 2021, with an annual growth rate of 2.2 per cent, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Michelle Marquardt, Head of Prices Statistics at the ABS, said: "This release of WPI shows the return of a more regular September quarter pattern of wage growth, following the labour market disruptions through 2020 and 2021.

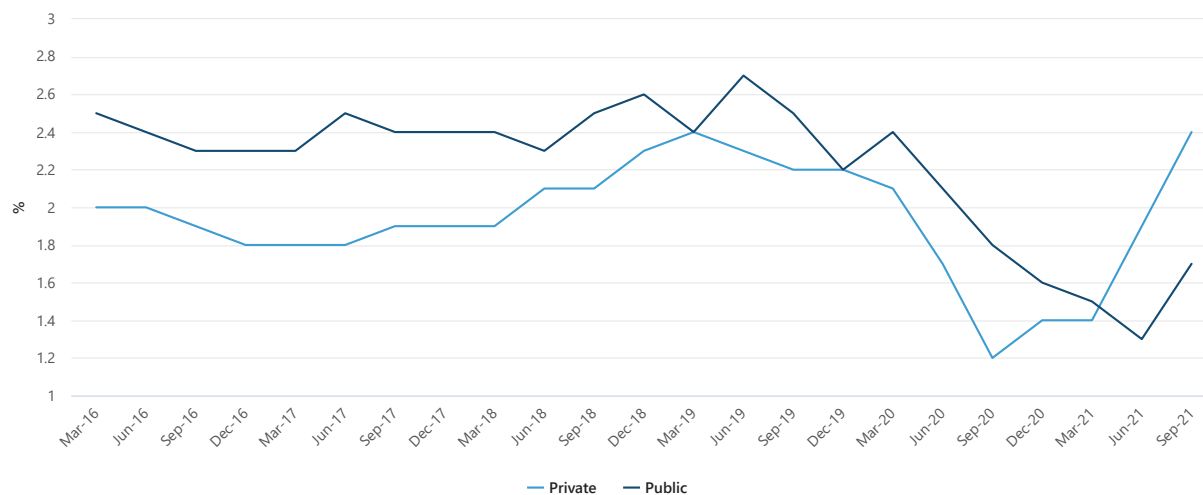
"Wage and salary reviews around the end of the financial year, scheduled enterprise agreements and annual award rises all contributed to growth. Pockets of wage pressure continued to build for skilled construction-related, technical and business services roles, leading to larger ad hoc rises as businesses looked to retain experienced staff and attract new staff."

Quarterly changes, total hourly rates of pay excluding bonuses



Private sector wages rose 2.4 per cent annually, continuing the pattern of increases in annual growth since the series low in September quarter 2020. Growth in the public sector continued to track below the private sector, with this being the first increase in the annual rate since March quarter 2020.

Annual wage growth by sector, seasonally adjusted



In original terms, quarterly wage growth in September quarter 2021 ranged from 0.4 per cent for the Mining industry to 1.3 per cent for the Professional, scientific and technical services industry.

Across the country, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory recorded the highest quarterly growth (1.0 per cent), while South Australia recorded the lowest (0.7 per cent). Tasmania also recorded the highest rate (2.7 per cent) of annual wage growth and South Australia the lowest (1.8 per cent).

Included in today's release is a spotlight on the [Frequency of wage increases \(/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/wage-price-index-australia/sep-2021#spotlight-frequency-of-wage-increases-c-\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/wage-price-index-australia/sep-2021#spotlight-frequency-of-wage-increases-c-) that provides some insight into the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on wage growth patterns.

This quarter's data relates to a period in which COVID-19 restrictions were in place across New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, capturing wage information for the mid-month (August) of the WPI September quarter 2021.

The ABS would like to thank businesses for continued support in responding to our surveys during these challenging times.

Further information is available in Wage Price Index, Australia available for free download from the [ABS website \(http://www.abs.gov.au\)](http://www.abs.gov.au) .