

Economic Impact of COVID-19 in the Riverina during 2020 and 2021

Prepared by Regional Development Australia Riverina

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- Regional Development Australia Riverina is an agricultural region of south-western New South Wales (NSW).
- The region extends from the foothills of the Snowy Mountains north west through the Murrumbidgee River catchment area to the flat dry inland plains of Hay and Carrathool.
- The RDA Riverina region covers an area of 80,586 km² and services a population of 171 855 people.
- The following map shows the LGAs that make up the RDA Riverina region.



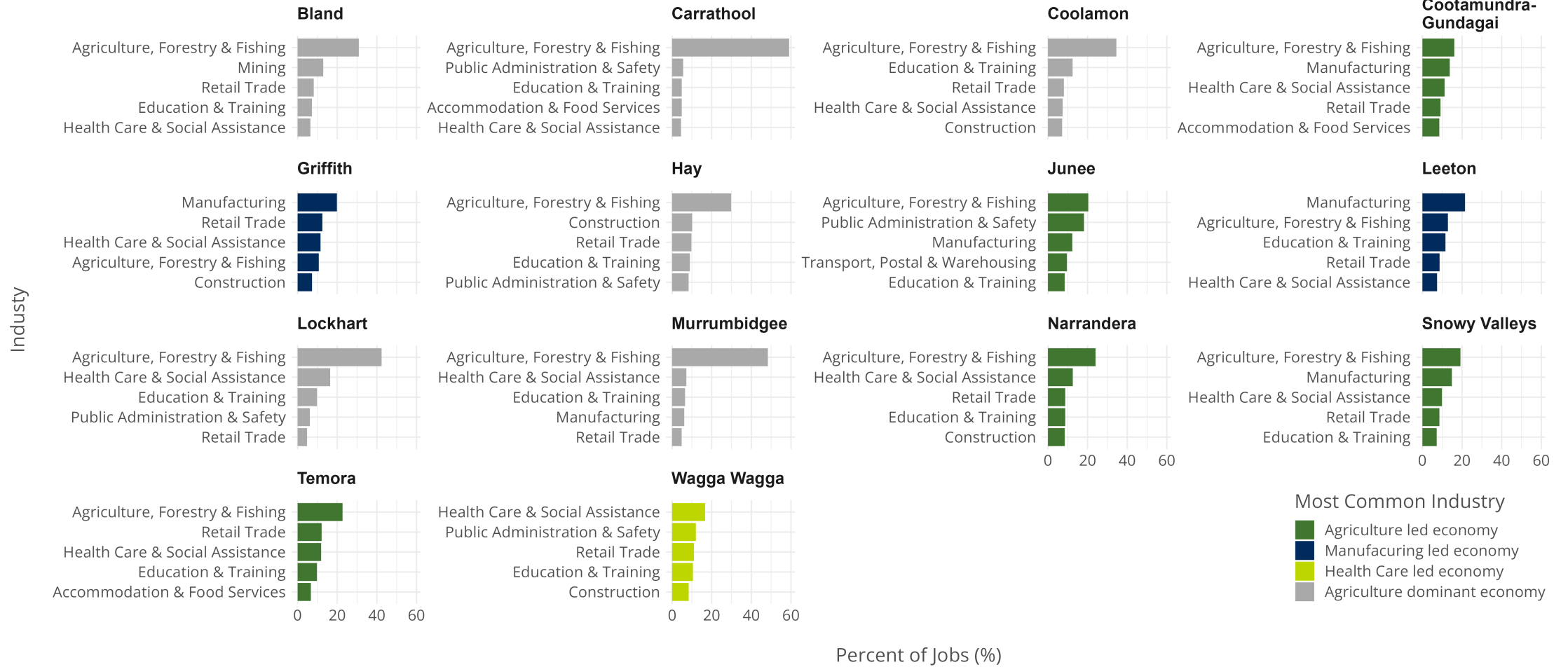
LGAs in the RDA Riverina Region

- Bland Shire Council
- Carrathool Shire Council
- Coolamon Shire Council
- Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council
- Griffith City Council
- Hay Shire Council
- Junee Shire Council
- Leeton Shire Council
- Lockhart Shire Council
- Murrumbidgee Council
- Narrandera Shire Council
- Snowy Valleys Council
- Temora Shire Council
- Wagga Wagga City Council

Industry in the Riverina

- Industry in the Riverina is diverse. The top employing industries for the entire region are:
 - Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (13.3% of Jobs)
 - Health Care and Social Assistance (12.8% of Jobs)
 - Manufacturing (10.5% of Jobs)
 - Retail Trade (10.1% of Jobs)
 - Education and Training (9.1% of Jobs)
- Across the LGAs that make up the region the top employing industries vary.

Industry in the Riverina

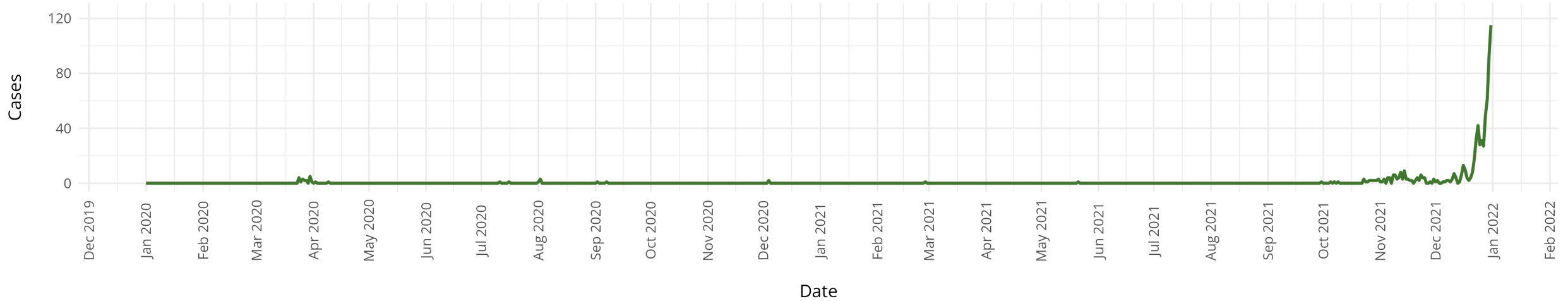


COVID-19 in the Region

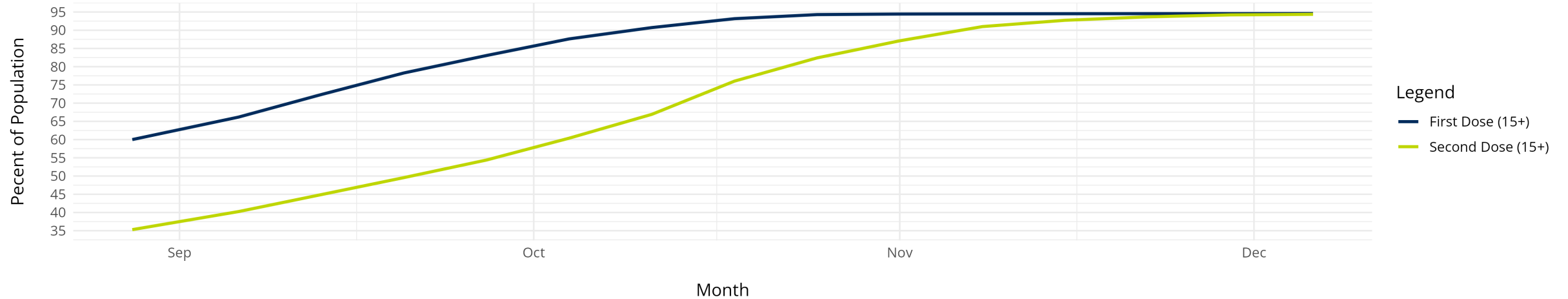
- Through 2020 and 2021 the Riverina was largely spared the worst of the pandemic. This has changed with the December 2021 wave, with the Riverina seeing its first significant levels of community transmission of COVID-19. The economic impact of this will not become apparent until further into 2022.
- During 2020 and 2021, lockdowns, social distancing and vaccination played their part in protecting the region from the COVID-19.
- However lockdowns and social restrictions have had an effect on the local economy. Some of the impacts are shown in the following slides.

Cases and Vaccination for 2020 and 2021

COVID-19 Cases in the Riverina



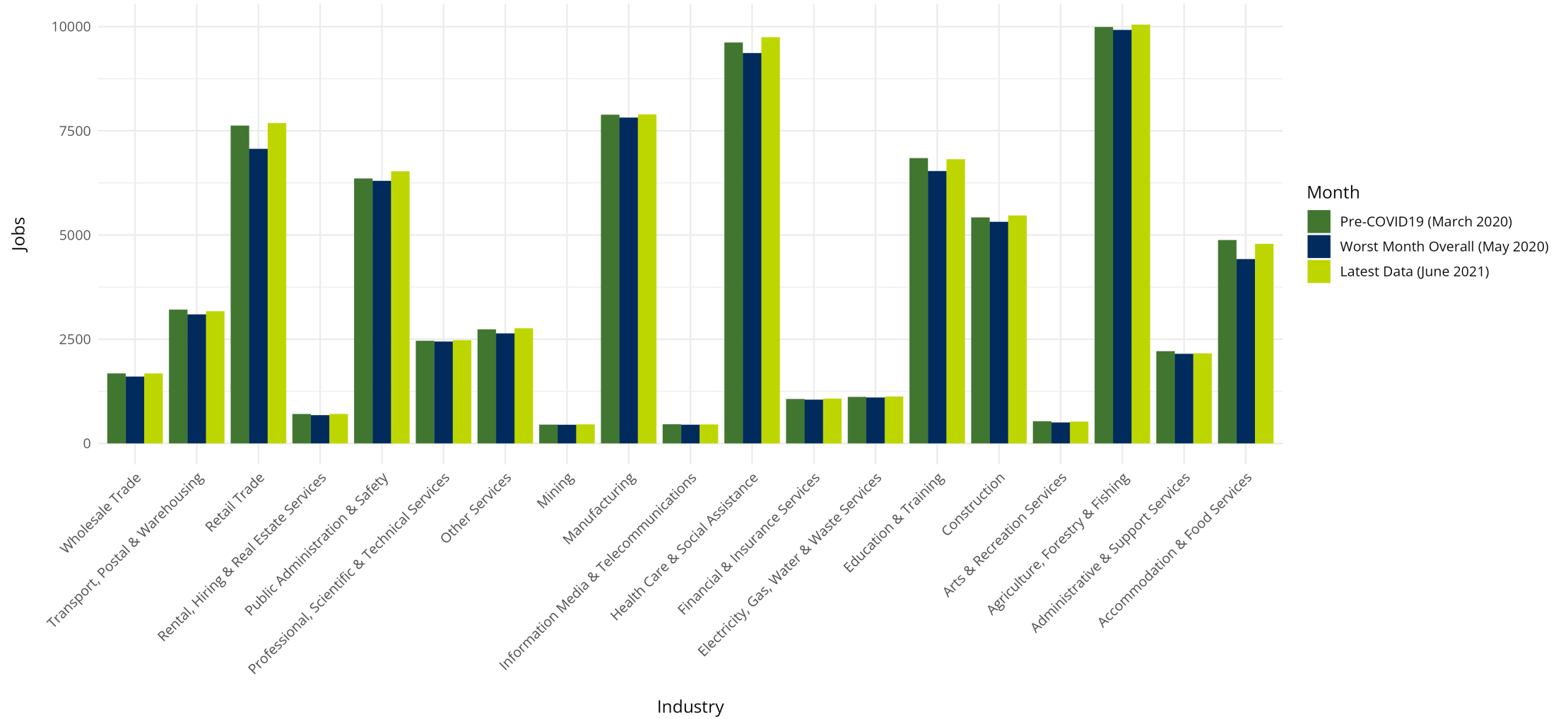
COVID-19 Vaccination Rate in the Riverina



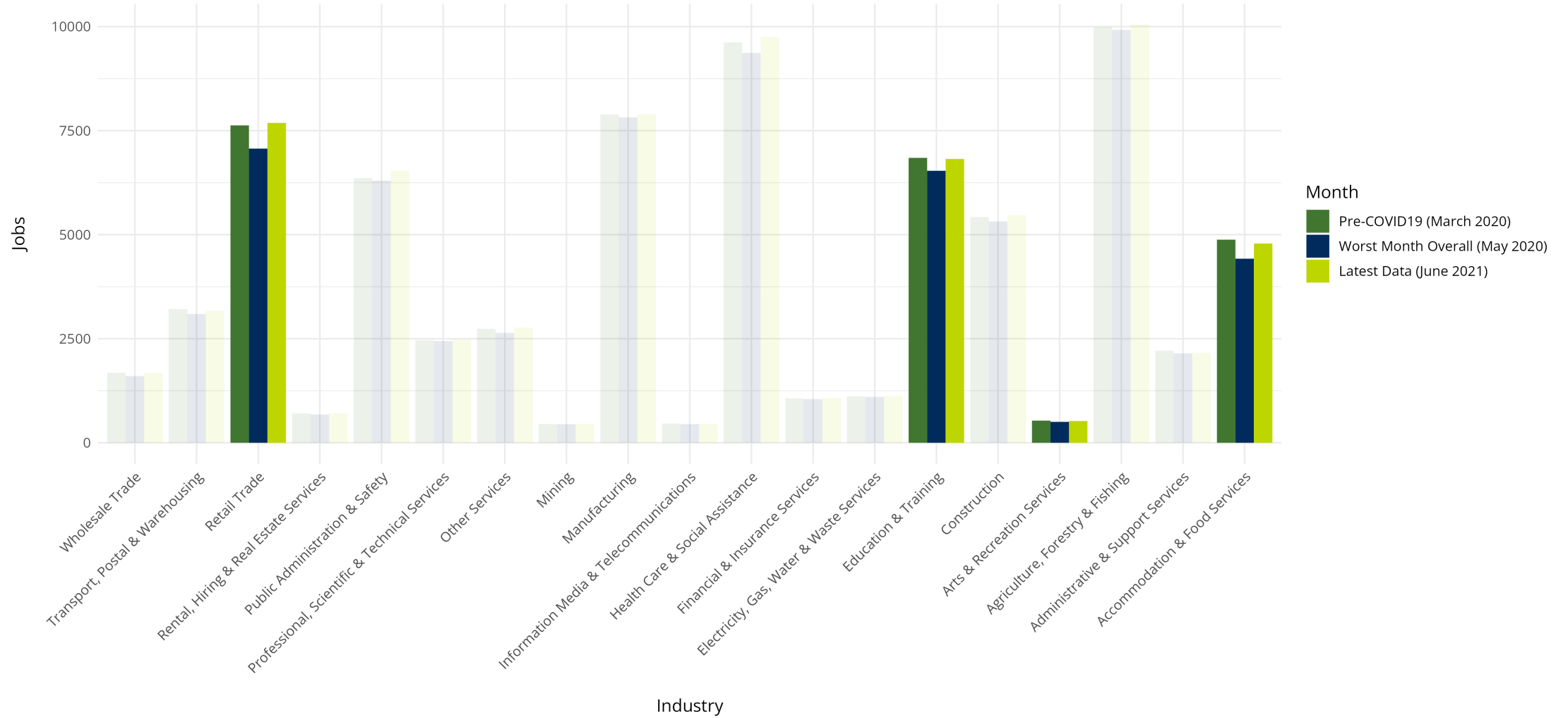
Impact on Employment by Industry

- The hardest hit industries in the Riverina were:
 - Accommodation and Food Services with a loss of 9.8% of jobs in Apr 2020
 - Retail Trade with a loss of 7.3% of jobs in May 2020
 - Arts and Recreation Services with a loss of 5.6% of jobs in May 2020
 - Education and Training with a loss of 4.5% of Jobs in May 2020
- As of June 2021 the following industries have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels of employment:
 - Accommodation and Food Services
 - Administration and Support Services
 - Arts and recreation Services
 - Education and Training
 - Information Media and Telecommunications
 - Transport Postal and Warehousing
- Total employment fell by 3.1% in May 2020 and had returned to pre-pandemic levels by February of 2021. Total employment has since increased beyond pre-pandemic levels.

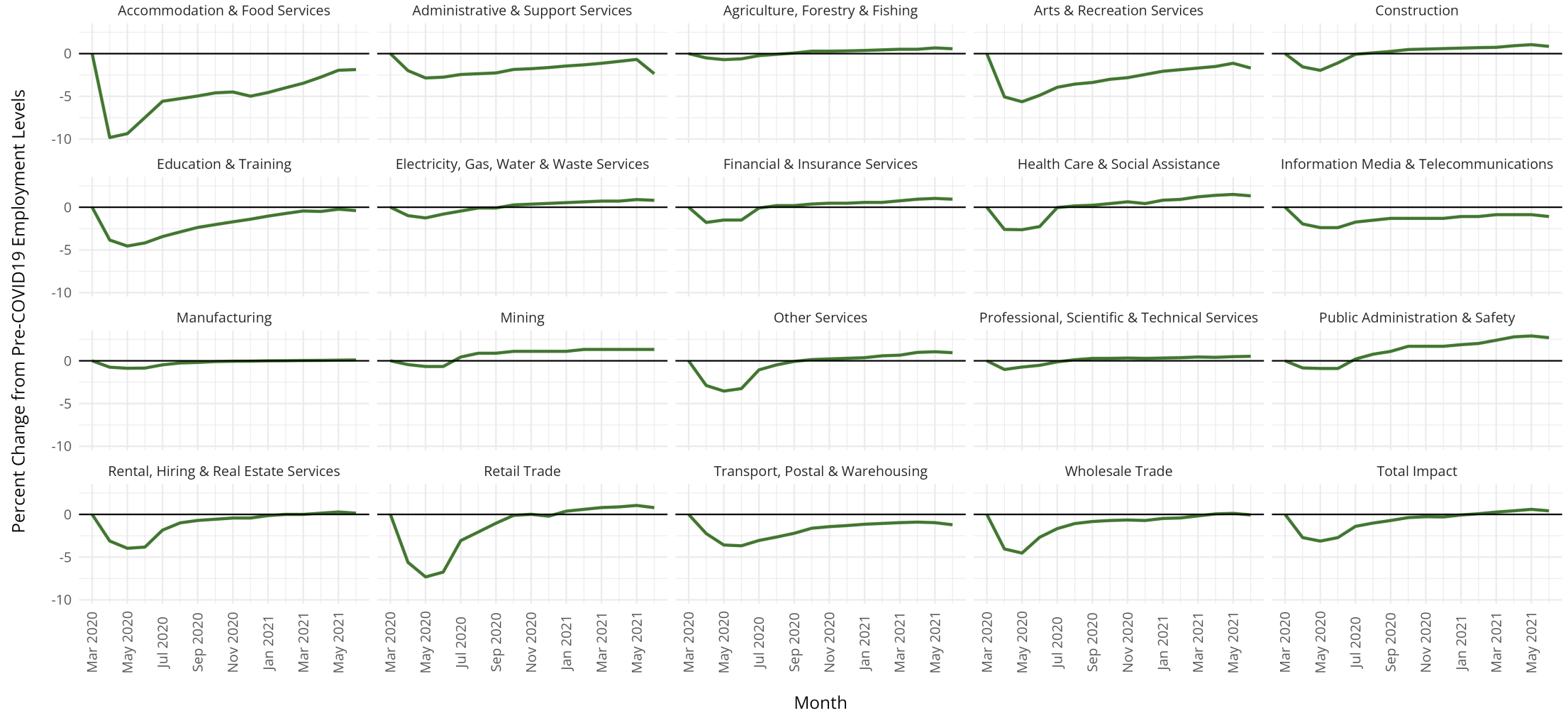
Impact on Employment by Industry



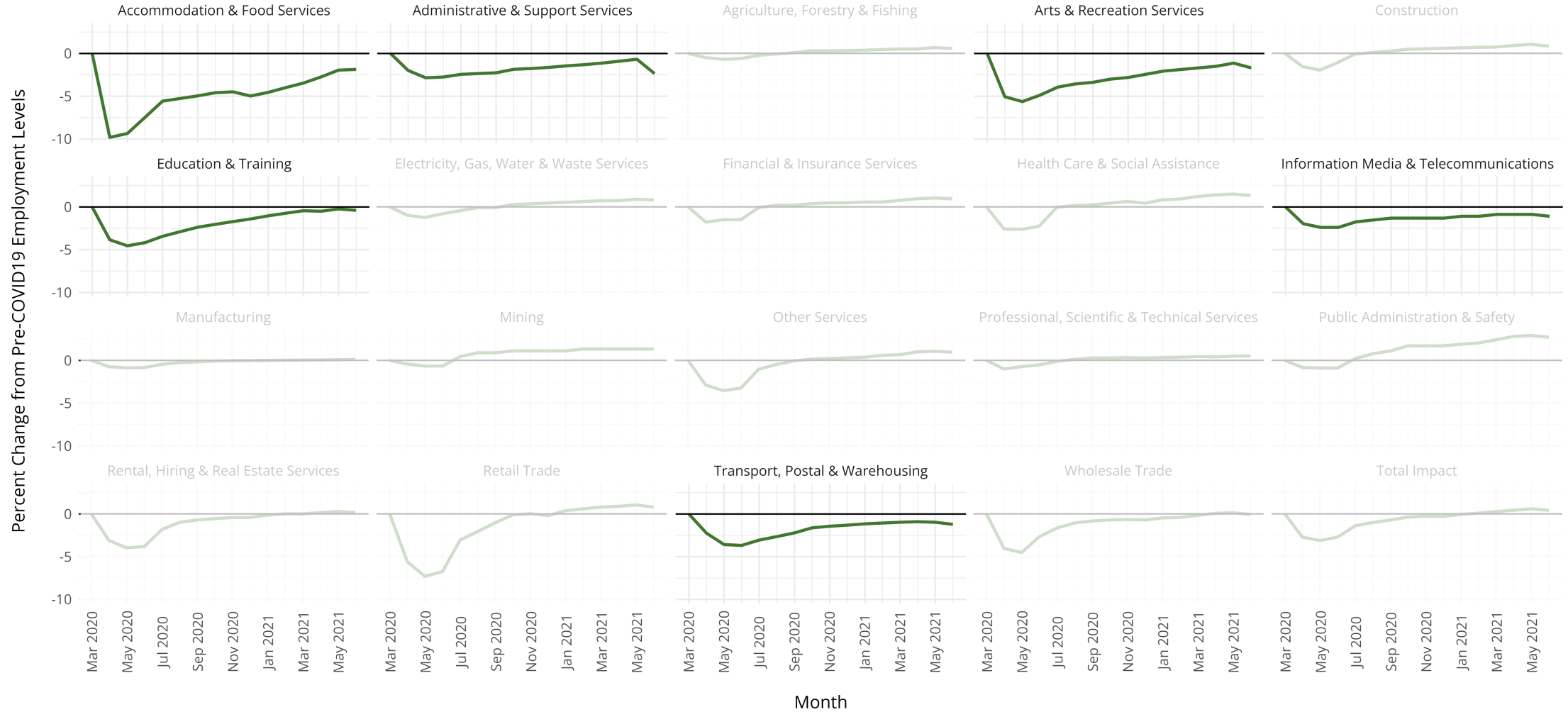
Hardest Hit Industries



Impact on Employment by Month



Employment Remains Below Pre-Pandemic Levels



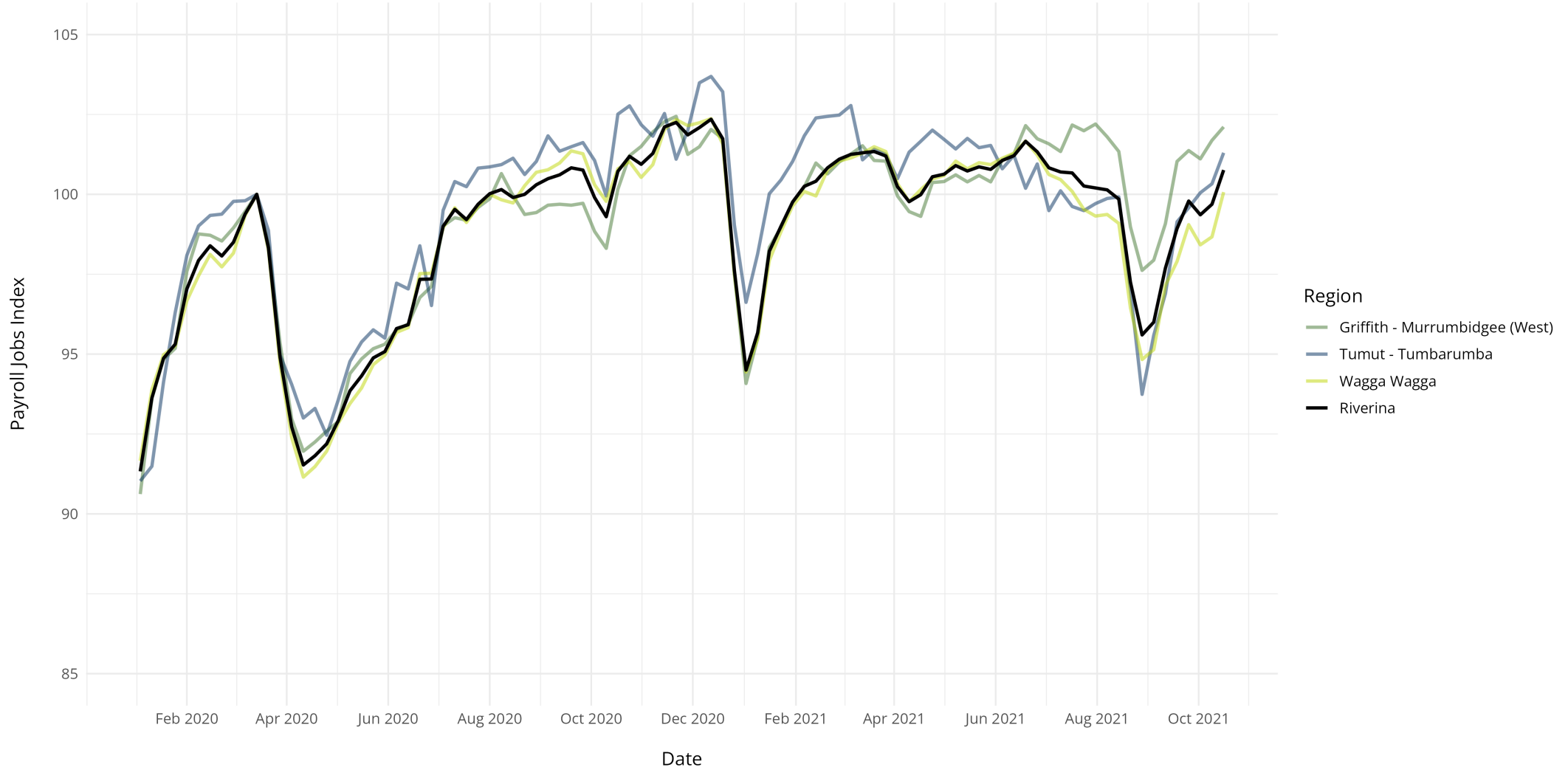
Total Impact on Economic Indicators



Weekly Payroll Index

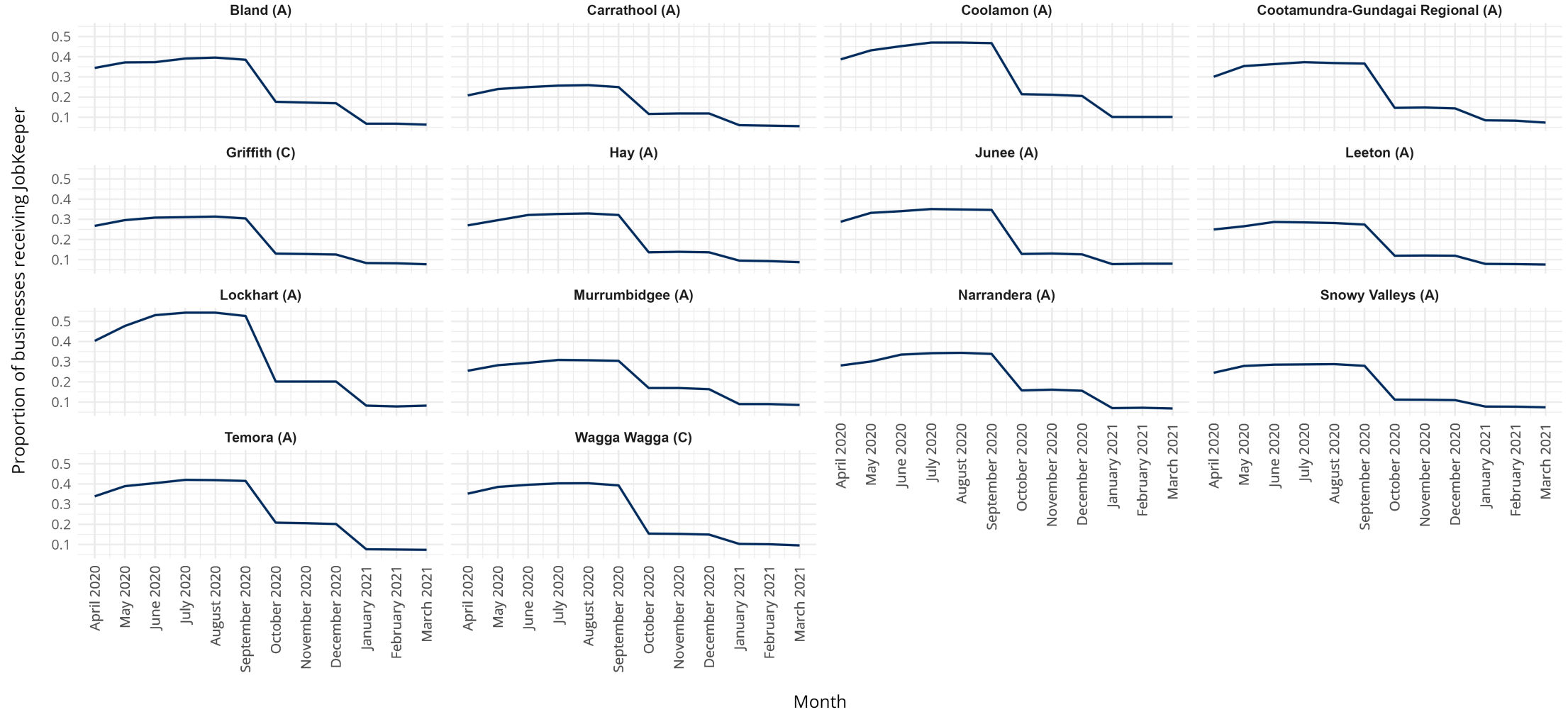
- To help assess the impact of COVID-19 on the Australian economy, the Australian Bureau of Statistics has been releasing weekly payroll data derived from Single Touch Payroll data provided by the Australian Taxation Office.
- In order to compare changes over time, the week Australia recorded its 100th confirmed coronavirus case (i.e. week ending 14th March 2020) is used as the reference period for constructing the indexes and given an index value of 100.0.
- The index shows how the data is changing relative to this point in time.

Impact on Payroll Index



- The JobKeeper payment was introduced in April 2020 in order to support businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns and restrictions.
- The program ended in March 2021.
- The following slide show the proportion of businesses in each LGA that received JobKeeper payments throughout the duration of the program.

JobKeeper



Data Sources

- REMPLAN Economy
- REMPLAN Economy COVID-19 Tools

- Australian Bureau of Statistics
 - Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Australia
 - Digital boundary files

- Australian Government Department of Health
 - COVID-19 vaccination – Geographic vaccination rates – LGA

- Data.NSW
 - NSW COVID-19 data