

Labour Force, February 2020

Source: ABS 6202.0, released 19 March 2020, 10:30 am AEST.

Note: As noted by the ABS, trend estimates provide the best measure of state level labour market conditions.

Key data (trend)

Employment:	Queensland,	↑ 6,700	(0.3%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	↑ 21,100	(0.2%)
Unemployment:	Queensland,	↓ 2,400	(5.7%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	↓ 1,300	(5.1%)
Labour force:	Queensland,	↑ 4,300	(0.2%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	↑ 19,900	(0.1%)
Underemployment:	Queensland,	↑ 1,800	(8.7%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	↑ 7,300	(8.6%)

Main findings – Trend estimates

Trend employment in Queensland rose 0.3% (or 6,700 persons) in February 2020, reflecting a rise in both full-time (up 1,800 persons) and part-time (up 4,900 persons) employment. Growth over the year was 2.5% (or 61,400 persons), again driven by increases in both full-time (up 22,300 persons) and part-time (up 39,100 persons) employment.

Consistent with solid employment growth in recent months, Queensland's trend participation rate has increased, up 0.3%-point since February 2019 to be 65.9% in February 2020.

Queensland's trend unemployment rate has moved lower recently, to 5.7% in February 2020, down from a recent peak of 6.3% in July 2019 (Chart 1), reflecting solid employment growth over the period. Over the last five years, the unemployment rate has remained in a narrow range between 5.7% and 6.5%. The trend underemployment rate was steady at 8.7% in February, slightly above the national rate (8.6%), but down from 8.8% a year ago.

Chart 1: Employment growth and unemployment rate, Queensland
(trend, monthly, %)



Nationally, trend employment rose 21,100 persons (up 0.2%) in February, to be 1.9% higher over the year. Victoria (up 77,000), Queensland (up 61,400) and New South Wales (up 49,300) continued to be the largest contributors to the 241,300 persons rise in employment nationally over the past year (Table 2).

The national trend unemployment rate was unchanged at 5.1% in February 2020, and the national trend participation rate was steady

at 66.0%, close to the highest rate recorded since the ABS monthly Labour Force survey began in 1978 (66.1% in August 2019).

Seasonally adjusted estimates

In more volatile seasonally adjusted (sa) terms, employment in Queensland rose 14,300 persons in February 2020, driven by growth in part-time employment (up 20,400 persons). Over the year, sa employment in Queensland rose 2.8% (or 70,200 persons).

Queensland's sa unemployment rate fell to 5.6% in February, but was up slightly from 5.5% a year earlier. Queensland's sa participation rate fell 0.2%-point in the month to 65.8% in February.

Nationally, sa employment rose 26,700 persons in February, driven by growth in part-time employment (up 20,000). The sa unemployment rate fell 0.2%-point in the month to 5.1% in February.

Table 1: Labour force outcomes, February 2020

	QUEENSLAND					AUSTRALIA						
	Feb-20	Monthly change	Yearly change	Feb-20	Monthly change	Yearly change	Feb-20	Monthly change	Yearly change	Feb-20	Monthly change	Yearly change
	000s	000s	%	000s	%	000s	000s	%	000s	%	000s	%
Trend												
Employed	2,565.9	6.7	0.3	61.4	2.5	13,010.2	21.1	0.2	241.3	1.9		
Full-time	1,756.0	1.8	0.1	22.3	1.3	8,885.6	13.3	0.2	132.5	1.5		
Part-time	809.9	4.9	0.6	39.1	5.1	4,124.5	7.8	0.2	108.8	2.7		
Unemployed	156.5	-2.4	-1.5	-3.9	-2.4	698.9	-1.3	-0.2	20.0	3.0		
Underemployed	238.1	1.8	0.8	3.3	1.4	1,178.1	7.3	0.6	65.6	5.9		
Labour force	2,722.4	4.3	0.2	57.5	2.2	13,709.1	19.9	0.1	261.4	1.9		
Seas. Adjusted												
Employed	2,568.6	14.3	0.6	70.2	2.8	13,015.1	26.7	0.2	256.3	2.0		
Full-time	1,752.2	-6.1	-0.3	22.9	1.3	8,884.6	6.7	0.1	144.3	1.7		
Part-time	816.4	20.4	2.6	47.3	6.1	4,130.6	20.0	0.5	111.9	2.8		
Unemployed	152.0	-17.1	-10.1	5.4	3.7	699.1	-26.4	-3.6	33.5	5.0		
Underemployed	237.4	-2.6	-1.1	28.9	13.8	1,183.1	5.1	0.4	102.5	9.5		
Labour force	2,720.6	-2.8	-0.1	75.6	2.9	13,714.2	0.3	0.0	289.7	2.2		
Trend												
Unemployment rate	5.7	5.8	6.0			5.1	5.1	5.0				
Underemployment rate	8.7	8.7	8.8			8.6	8.6	8.3				
Participation rate	65.9	65.8	65.6			66.0	66.0	65.7				
Seas. Adjusted												
Unemployment rate	5.6	6.2	5.5			5.1	5.3	5.0				
Underemployment rate	8.7	8.8	7.9			8.6	8.6	8.0				
Participation rate	65.8	66.0	65.1			66.0	66.1	65.6				

Table 2: Interstate comparison, February 2020

	QLD	NSW	VIC	SA	WA	TAS	Australia
Employed (trend)							
% change on a month ago	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.5	0.2
Change on a month ago (no.)	6,700	3,600	2,700	-100	2,400	1,300	21,100
% change on a year ago	2.5	1.2	2.3	-0.2	2.1	4.5	1.9
Change on a year ago (no.)	61,400	49,300	77,000	-1,600	27,900	11,200	241,300
Unemployment rate (trend)							
February-20	5.7	4.5	5.2	5.8	5.4	5.5	5.1
January-20	5.8	4.6	5.1	5.9	5.4	5.6	5.1
February-19	6.0	4.3	4.6	6.0	6.2	6.5	5.0
Participation rate (trend)							
February-20	65.9	65.3	66.5	62.3	68.2	61.7	66.0
January-20	65.8	65.4	66.5	62.4	68.2	61.5	66.0
February-19	65.6	65.3	66.0	63.1	68.1	60.3	65.7
Employed (sa)							
% change on a month ago	0.6	0.0	-0.3	0.3	0.8	1.6	0.2
Change on a month ago (no.)	14,300	1,500	-8,800	2,800	10,900	4,000	26,700
% change on a year ago	2.8	1.1	2.0	0.7	2.8	4.8	2.0
Change on a year ago (no.)	70,200	45,500	68,600	5,800	37,000	11,800	256,300
Unemployment rate (sa)							
February-20	5.6	4.6	5.3	5.8	5.2	5.0	5.1
January-20	6.2	4.5	5.4	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.3
February-19	5.5	4.3	4.7	5.8	6.0	6.6	5.0
Participation rate (sa)							
February-20	65.8	65.4	66.4	62.3	68.4	61.7	66.0
January-20	66.0	65.4	66.8	62.1	68.3	61.3	66.1
February-19	65.1	65.3	66.1	62.4	67.8	60.6	65.6