

# Labour Force, March 2020

Source: ABS 6202.0, released 16 April 2020, 11:30 am AEST.

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

## Key data (trend)

<b>Employment:</b>	Queensland,	↑ 4,900	(0.2%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	↑ 16,800	(0.1%)
<b>Unemployment:</b>	Queensland,	↓ 2,400	(5.7%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	↑ 3,500	(5.2%)
<b>Labour force:</b>	Queensland,	↑ 2,600	(0.1%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	↑ 20,300	(0.1%)
<b>Underemployment:</b>	Queensland,	↑ 1,500	(8.8%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	↑ 8,800	(8.7%)

## Main findings – Trend estimates

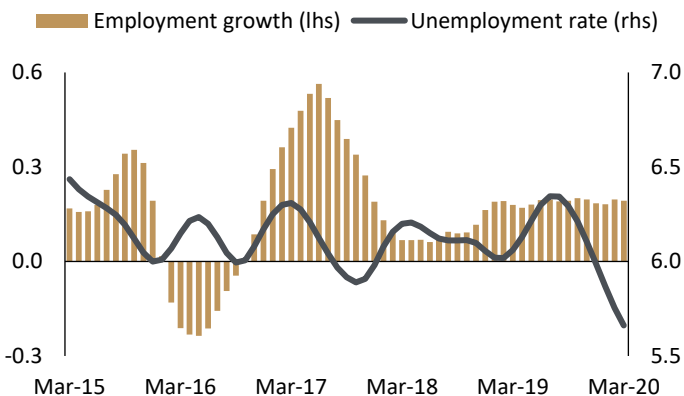
This data reflects conditions during the survey reference weeks (1 to 14 March), prior to the implementation of substantial social distancing and other policies designed to contain the spread of the COVID-19 outbreak, which are likely to negatively impact labour conditions in coming months.

Trend employment in Queensland rose 0.2% (or 4,900 persons) in March 2020, reflecting a rise in part-time (up 5,600 persons) which more than offset a decline in full-time (down 700 persons) employment. Annually, employment rose 2.3% (or 57,800 persons), driven by increases in both full-time (up 13,900 persons) and part-time (up 43,900 persons) employment.

Queensland's trend unemployment rate has moved lower recently, to 5.7% in March 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 6.4%.

The trend underemployment rate was steady at 8.8% in March, slightly above the national rate (8.7%) and unchanged from a year ago.

**Chart 1: Qld employment growth and unemployment rate, (trend, monthly, %)**



Nationally, trend employment rose 16,800 persons (up 0.1%) in March, to be 1.8% higher over the year. Victoria (up 74,400), Queensland (up 57,800) and New South Wales (up 37,100) continued to be the largest contributors to the 224,100 persons rise in employment nationally over the past year (Table 2).

The national unemployment rate was 5.2% in March, unchanged since February, while the national participation rate was also steady, at 66.0%, close to the highest recorded since the 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 fell 5,600 persons in March 2020, driven by a decline in full-time employment (down 8,900 persons). Over the year, sa employment in Queensland rose 2.1% (or 51,500 persons).

Queensland's sa unemployment rate fell to 5.7% in March, down from 6.1% a year earlier. Queensland's sa participation rate fell 0.2%-point in the month to 65.6% in March.

Nationally, sa employment rose 5,900 persons in March, driven by growth in part-time employment (up 6,400). The sa unemployment rate rose 0.1%-point in the month to 5.2%.

**Table 1: Labour force outcomes, March 2020**

	QUEENSLAND					AUSTRALIA					
	Mar-20	Monthly change	Yearly change	Mar-20	Monthly change	Yearly change	Mar-20	Monthly change	Yearly change		
	000s	000s	%	000s	%	000s	000s	%	000s	%	
<b>Trend</b>											
Employed	2,567.1	4.9	0.2	57.8	2.3	13,020.5	16.8	0.1	224.1	1.8	
Full-time	1,749.2	-0.7	0.0	13.9	0.8	8,888.9	8.8	0.1	116.0	1.3	
Part-time	817.8	5.6	0.7	43.9	5.7	4,131.6	8.0	0.2	108.1	2.7	
Unemployed	154.1	-2.4	-1.5	-7.8	-4.8	713.3	3.5	0.5	27.3	4.0	
Underemployed	239.7	1.5	0.6	5.4	2.3	1,189.6	8.8	0.7	76.8	6.9	
Labour force	2,721.1	2.6	0.1	50.0	1.9	13,733.8	20.3	0.1	251.3	1.9	
<b>Seas. Adjusted</b>											
Employed	2,562.2	-5.6	-0.2	51.5	2.1	13,017.6	5.9	0.0	227.7	1.8	
Full-time	1,742.2	-8.9	-0.5	-10.0	-0.6	8,882.2	-0.4	0.0	91.7	1.0	
Part-time	819.9	3.2	0.4	61.6	8.1	4,135.4	6.4	0.2	136.0	3.4	
Unemployed	155.0	3.3	2.2	-9.0	-5.5	718.6	20.3	2.9	33.2	4.8	
Underemployed	242.5	4.0	1.7	6.3	2.7	1,205.3	16.5	1.4	98.3	8.9	
Labour force	2,717.2	-2.3	-0.1	42.6	1.6	13,736.2	26.2	0.2	260.9	1.9	
<b>Trend</b>	Mar-20	Feb-20	Mar-19	Mar-20	Feb-20	Mar-19	Mar-20	Feb-20	Mar-19		
Unemployment rate	5.7	5.8	6.1	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.7	5.8	6.1		
Underemployment rate	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.6	8.3	8.8	8.8	8.8		
Participation rate	65.7	65.7	65.6	66.0	66.0	65.8	65.6	65.8	65.7		
<b>Seas. Adjusted</b>	Mar-20	Feb-20	Mar-19	Mar-20	Feb-20	Mar-19	Mar-20	Feb-20	Mar-19		
Unemployment rate	5.7	5.6	6.1	5.2	5.1	5.1	5.7	5.6	6.1		
Underemployment rate	8.9	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.2	8.8	8.7	8.2		
Participation rate	65.6	65.8	65.7	66.0	66.0	65.7	65.6	65.8	65.7		

**Table 2: Interstate comparison, March 2020**

	Qld	NSW	Vic	SA	WA	Tas	Aus
<b>Employed (trend)</b>							
% change on a month ago	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.1
Change on a month ago (no.)	4,900	2,300	4,000	1,000	1,700	600	16,800
% change on a year ago	2.3	0.9	2.2	-0.1	2.0	4.4	1.8
Change on a year ago (no.)	57,800	37,100	74,400	-500	26,300	10,900	224,100
<b>Unemployment rate (trend)</b>							
March-20	5.7	4.7	5.2	6.0	5.4	5.3	5.2
February-20	5.8	4.7	5.1	6.0	5.4	5.4	5.2
March-19	6.1	4.4	4.7	6.0	6.2	6.6	5.1
<b>Participation rate (trend)</b>							
March-20	65.7	65.4	66.5	62.6	68.1	61.4	66.0
February-20	65.7	65.4	66.5	62.5	68.1	61.4	66.0
March-19	65.6	65.4	66.1	63.1	68.1	60.3	65.8
<b>Employed (sa)</b>							
% change on a month ago	-0.2	0.0	0.4	0.4	-0.4	-1.0	0.0
Change on a month ago (no.)	-5,600	1,500	13,300	3,500	-6,200	-2,700	5,900
% change on a year ago	2.1	1.2	2.2	0.2	2.0	4.3	1.8
Change on a year ago (no.)	51,500	49,700	73,800	1,600	26,900	10,600	227,700
<b>Unemployment rate (sa)</b>							
March-20	5.7	4.8	5.2	6.2	5.4	5.0	5.2
February-20	5.6	4.6	5.3	5.8	5.2	5.0	5.1
March-19	6.1	4.3	4.6	5.9	5.9	6.7	5.1
<b>Participation rate (sa)</b>							
March-20	65.6	65.5	66.4	62.8	68.1	61.1	66.0
February-20	65.8	65.4	66.4	62.4	68.3	61.8	66.0
March-19	65.7	65.2	66.0	63.1	67.9	60.3	65.7