

# Labour Force, November 2020

Source: ABS Labour Force, released 17 December 2020, 10:30 am AEST.

**NOTE: The ABS has suspended trend data due to COVID-19. As a result, all numbers in this brief are seasonally adjusted.**

## Key data (monthly)

<b>Employment:</b>	Queensland,	-20,400	(-0.8%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	90,000	(0.7%)
<b>Unemployment:</b>	Queensland,	-1,800	(7.7%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	-17,300	(6.8%)
<b>Labour force:</b>	Queensland,	-22,200	(-0.8%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	72,700	(0.5%)
<b>Underemployment:</b>	Queensland,	-5,200	(9.4%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	-129,900	(9.4%)
<b>Hours worked:</b>	Queensland,	600	(0.2%)
(thousands, growth)	Australia,	42,800	(2.5%)

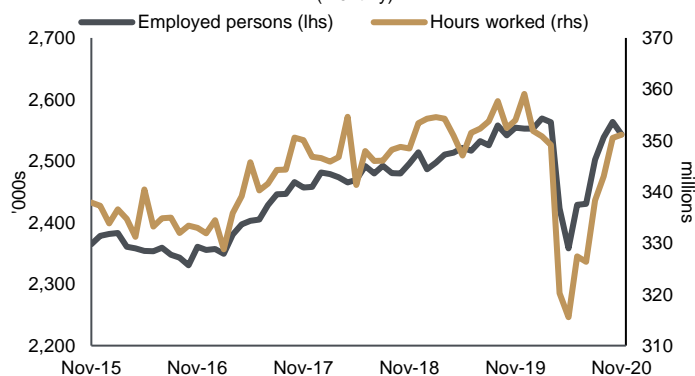
## Main findings

Employment in Queensland fell by 20,400 persons (0.8%) in November 2020, reflecting a fall in both part-time employment (down 15,900) and full-time employment (down 4,500) during the month. Employment in Queensland is 185,100 persons (7.8%) above its COVID-impacted low in May 2020 but 19,900 persons below the pre-pandemic level of March 2020.

With persons not working but receiving *JobKeeper* payments from their employers classified as 'employed' by the ABS, hours worked is probably the clearest indicator of the impact of COVID-19 social distancing measures on labour market activity in recent months.

Hours worked in Queensland rose 0.2% in November 2020, up 11.3% from May to be 0.6% above the pre-pandemic level of March 2020 (Chart 1).

**Chart 1: Employment and hours worked, Queensland**  
(monthly)

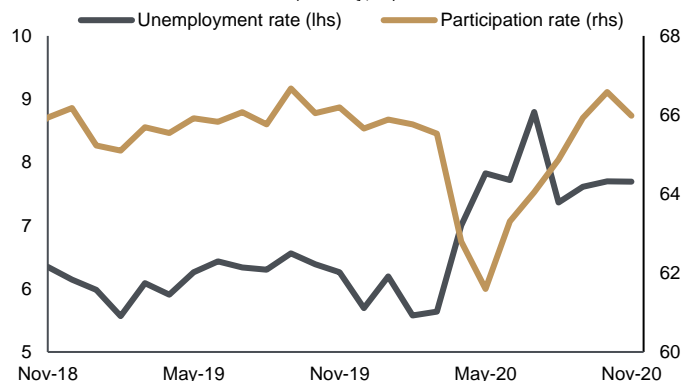


The unemployment rate in Queensland was unchanged at 7.7% in November to be higher than the pre-pandemic level of 5.6% in March (Chart 2).

The number of unemployed persons in Queensland fell 1,800, down from a peak of 234,400 persons in July 2020 but 58,800 persons higher than the pre-pandemic level in March 2020.

The participation rate in Queensland was 66.0% in November, down from 66.6% but higher than the pre-pandemic level of 65.5% in March. This equates to 22,200 persons leaving the labour force in November, but 38,900 persons entering the labour force since March 2020.

**Chart 2: Unemployment and participation rates, Queensland**  
(monthly, %)



Nationally, employment rose by 90,000 persons (0.7%) in November to be 137,700 persons (1.1%) lower than its pre-pandemic level in March. The monthly rise was primarily driven by an increase in Victoria (up 74,000), which accounted for more than 80% of national employment growth in November. This is the second consecutive monthly increase in Victorian employment since the second wave of COVID-19 in that state.

The number of hours worked nationally rose in November (2.5%) to 1.75 billion hours, due to strong increases in Victoria (up 5.2%), New South Wales (up 2.3%) and Western Australia (up 3.3%). The number of hours worked increased in all states but fell in both territories in November.

The national unemployment rate fell from 7.0% in October to 6.8% in November (Table 1) but remained higher than its pre-pandemic level of 5.2% in March 2020.

**Table 1: Labour force outcomes<sup>1</sup>, November 2020**

	Queensland				Australia					
	Nov-20 '000	Monthly change '000	%	Yearly change '000	%	Nov-20 '000	Monthly change '000	%	Yearly change '000	%
Employed	2,543.3	-20.4	-0.8	-11.0	-0.4	12,860.7	90.0	0.7	-83.1	-0.6
Full-time	1,707.1	-4.5	-0.3	-47.6	-2.7	8,725.7	84.2	1.0	-110.9	-1.3
Part-time	836.1	-15.9	-1.9	36.6	4.6	4,135.0	5.8	0.1	27.8	0.7
Unemployed	211.9	-1.8	-0.9	41.4	24.2	942.1	-17.3	-1.8	240.7	34.3
Underemployed	258.0	-5.2	-2.0	35.2	15.8	1,293.9	-129.9	-9.1	159.7	14.1
Labour force	2,755.2	-22.2	-0.8	30.4	1.1	13,802.8	72.7	0.5	157.6	1.2
Hours worked	351.2	0.6	0.2	-2.8	-0.8	1,751.5	42.8	2.5	-21.6	-1.2
	millions	millions	%	millions	%	millions	millions	%	millions	%
	Nov-20	Oct-20	Nov-19	Nov-20	Oct-20	Nov-19	Nov-20	Oct-20	Nov-19	Nov-19
Unemployment rate	7.7	7.7	6.3	6.8	7.0	5.1				
Underemployment rate	9.4	9.5	8.2	9.4	10.4	8.3				
Participation rate	66.0	66.6	66.2	66.1	65.8	65.9				

**Table 2: Interstate comparison<sup>1</sup>, November 2020**

	Qld	NSW	Vic	SA	WA	Tas	Aus
<b>Employed</b>							
% change on a month ago	-0.8	0.6	2.2	-0.1	0.8	0.8	0.7
Change on a month ago (no.)	-20,400	23,800	74,000	-900	11,400	2,000	90,000
% change on a year ago	-0.4	-0.5	-2.0	0.2	1.0	-0.5	-0.6
Change on a year ago (no.)	-11,000	-21,300	-67,500	1,600	13,700	-1,200	-83,100
<b>Unemployment rate</b>							
November-20	7.7	6.5	7.1	6.2	6.4	7.9	6.8
October-20	7.7	6.5	7.4	7.0	6.6	8.2	7.0
November-19	6.3	4.6	4.5	6.1	5.7	6.0	5.1
<b>Hours worked (millions)</b>							
November-20	351.2	558.4	453.5	112.5	192.3	33.1	1,751.5
monthly % change	0.2	2.3	5.2	1.3	3.3	1.7	2.5
% change since March 2020	-0.8	-1.8	-2.7	-0.3	1.8	0.9	-1.2

1. Note – numbers may not add due to rounding.