

Labour Force, December 2021

Source: ABS Labour Force, released 20 January 2022, 10:30 am AEST.

NOTES: These data reflect conditions during the survey reference weeks (28 November to 11 December 2021).

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

Key data (monthly)

| | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------|----------|---------|
| Employment: | Queensland, | 6,500 | (0.2%) |
| (persons, growth) | Australia, | 64,800 | (0.5%) |
| Unemployment: | Queensland, | -3,100 | (4.7%) |
| (persons, rate) | Australia, | -62,200 | (4.2%) |
| Labour force: | Queensland, | 3,500 | (0.1%) |
| (persons, growth) | Australia, | 2,500 | (0.0%) |
| Underemployment: | Queensland, | -8,000 | (7.6%) |
| (persons, rate) | Australia, | -117,000 | (6.6%) |
| Hours worked: | Queensland, | -3,100 | (-0.9%) |
| (thousands, growth) | Australia, | 18,200 | (1.0%) |

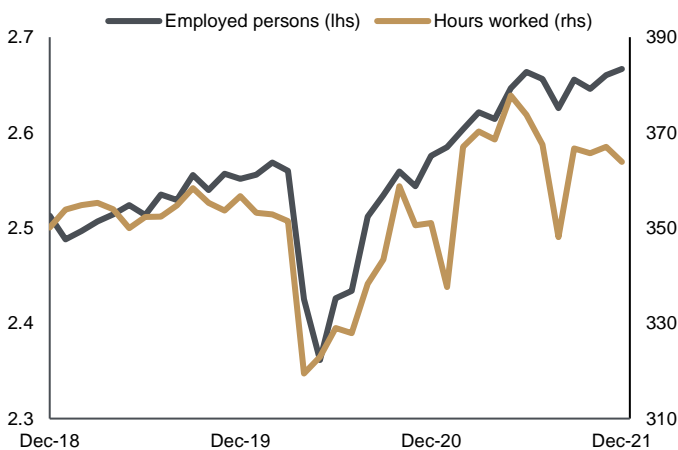
Main findings

Employment in Queensland rose 6,500 persons (0.2%) in December 2021, with a rise in full-time employment (up 10,100) more than offsetting a fall in part-time employment (down 3,500).

In December 2021, employment in Queensland was 106,900 persons above its pre-pandemic level in March 2020, with a 90,800 person increase in full-time employment and a 16,100 person rise in part-time employment.

There were 363.9 million hours worked in Queensland in December 2021, down 0.9% in the month, but up 3.5% from the level in March 2020 (Chart 1). Hours worked continues to be the best measure of the impact of COVID-19 on the labour market.

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

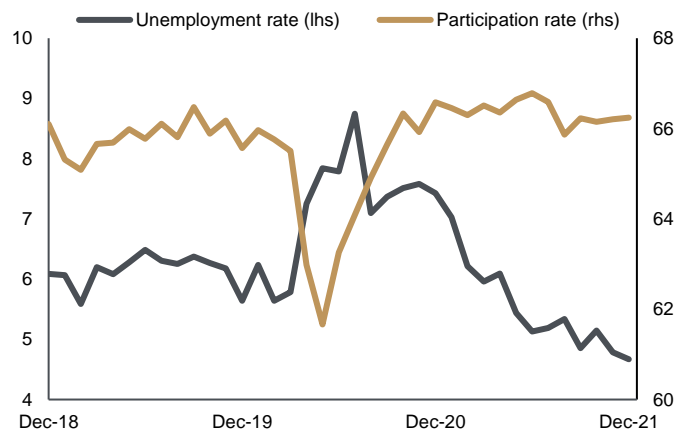


The unemployment rate in Queensland was 4.7% in December, down from 4.8% in November, and below the pre-COVID level of 5.8% in March 2020 (Chart 2). This was Queensland's lowest unemployment rate since February 2009.

The number of unemployed persons in Queensland fell 3,100 in December 2021 to 130,600, down from a peak of 233,300 persons in July 2020 and 26,500 persons below the pre-COVID-19 level in March 2020.

Queensland's participation rate was 66.2% in December 2021, unchanged from November. An additional 3,500 persons entered the labour force in the month, with a total of 80,400 persons having entered since March 2020. The participation rate in December remained higher than March 2020 (65.5%).

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



Nationally, employment rose 64,800 persons (0.5%) in December, to be 246,000 persons (1.9%) above its pre-COVID level of March 2020. Reflecting the continued recovery in labour market conditions following the easing of Delta restrictions in those states, New South Wales (up 32,300) and Victoria (up 24,700) were the largest contributors to national employment growth in the month.

The national unemployment rate was 4.2% in December 2021, down from 4.6% in November 2021 and down from 5.3% in March 2020. There were 1,818.8 million hours worked in Australia in December 2021, up 1.0% from November 2021 and up 3.1% from March 2020 (Table 1).

Table 1: Labour force outcomes¹, December 2021

| | Queensland | | | | | Australia | | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------|----------------|---------------|--------|----------------|---------------|--------|----------------|---------------|--------|----------------|---------------|
| | Dec-21 | Monthly change | Yearly change | Dec-21 | Monthly change | Yearly change | Dec-21 | Monthly change | Yearly change | Dec-21 | Monthly change | Yearly change |
| | '000 | '000 | % | '000 | % | '000 | '000 | % | '000 | % | '000 | % |
| Employed | 2,666.6 | 6.5 | 0.2 | 90.9 | 3.5 | 13,242.0 | 64.8 | 0.5 | 375.9 | 2.9 | | |
| Full-time | 1,831.7 | 10.1 | 0.6 | 100.5 | 5.8 | 9,094.4 | 41.5 | 0.5 | 356.6 | 4.1 | | |
| Part-time | 834.9 | -3.5 | -0.4 | -9.6 | -1.1 | 4,147.7 | 23.3 | 0.6 | 19.4 | 0.5 | | |
| Unemployed | 130.6 | -3.1 | -2.3 | -76.0 | -36.8 | 574.4 | -62.2 | -9.8 | -331.5 | -36.6 | | |
| Underemployed | 213.5 | -8.0 | -3.6 | -28.6 | -11.8 | 916.0 | -117.0 | -11.3 | -259.6 | -22.1 | | |
| Labour force | 2,797.2 | 3.5 | 0.1 | 14.9 | 0.5 | 13,816.5 | 2.5 | 0.0 | 44.4 | 0.3 | | |
| Hours worked | 363.9 | -3.1 | -0.9 | 12.8 | 3.7 | 1,818.8 | 18.2 | 1.0 | 65.2 | 3.7 | | |
| | Dec-21 | Nov-21 | Dec-20 | Dec-21 | Nov-21 | Dec-20 | Dec-21 | Nov-21 | Dec-20 | Dec-21 | Nov-21 | Dec-20 |
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Unemployment rate | 4.7 | 4.8 | 7.4 | 4.2 | 4.6 | 6.6 | | | | | | |
| Underemployment rate | 7.6 | 7.9 | 8.7 | 6.6 | 7.5 | 8.5 | | | | | | |
| Participation rate | 66.2 | 66.2 | 66.6 | 66.1 | 66.1 | 66.0 | | | | | | |

Table 2: Interstate comparison¹, December 2021

| | Qld | NSW | Vic | SA | WA | Tas | Aus |
|--------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|-----------|
| Employed | | | | | | | |
| % change on a month ago | 0.2 | 0.8 | 0.7 | -0.2 | -0.1 | -0.4 | 0.5 |
| Change on a month ago (no.) | 6,500 | 32,300 | 24,700 | -1,900 | -800 | -1,000 | 64,800 |
| % change since May 2020 | 12.9 | 7.7 | 7.0 | 8.8 | 12.6 | 8.6 | 9.1 |
| Change since May 2020 (no.) | 305,200 | 298,300 | 226,700 | 71,600 | 160,900 | 20,600 | 1,102,400 |
| % change since March 2020 | 4.2 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 2.8 | 4.8 | 1.0 | 1.9 |
| Change since March 2020 (no.) | 106,900 | 32,600 | 31,400 | 24,300 | 65,500 | 2,500 | 246,600 |
| Unemployment rate (%) | | | | | | | |
| December 2021 | 4.7 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 3.9 | 3.4 | 3.9 | 4.2 |
| November 2021 | 4.8 | 4.6 | 4.7 | 4.6 | 3.8 | 5.1 | 4.6 |
| May 2020 | 7.8 | 6.4 | 6.8 | 7.9 | 7.9 | 6.4 | 7.0 |
| March 2020 | 5.8 | 4.9 | 5.2 | 6.3 | 5.6 | 5.0 | 5.3 |
| Hours worked (millions) | | | | | | | |
| December 2021 | 363.9 | 578.3 | 473.2 | 118.7 | 201.2 | 33.9 | 1,818.8 |
| monthly % change | -0.9 | 2.0 | 1.4 | -0.2 | 1.9 | -0.7 | 1.0 |
| % change since May 2020 | 12.7 | 13.3 | 12.8 | 15.6 | 15.8 | 16.3 | 13.1 |
| % change since March 2020 | 3.5 | 2.0 | 3.1 | 5.2 | 5.8 | 2.2 | 3.1 |

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