

Labour Force, February 2022

Source: ABS Labour Force, released 17 March 2022, 10:30 am AEST.

NOTES: These data reflect conditions during the survey reference weeks (30 January to 12 February 2022).

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

Key data (monthly)

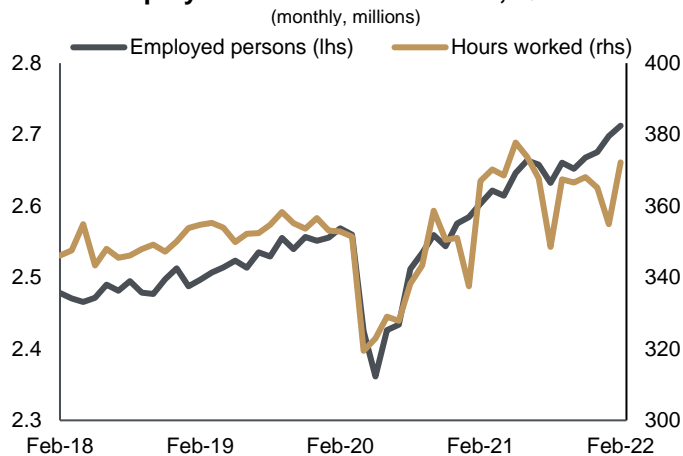
Employment:	Queensland,	14,500	(0.5%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	77,400	(0.6%)
Unemployment:	Queensland,	-1,700	(4.3%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	-18,500	(4.0%)
Labour force:	Queensland,	12,800	(0.5%)
(persons, growth)	Australia,	58,900	(0.4%)
Underemployment:	Queensland,	4,100	(7.3%)
(persons, rate)	Australia,	-12,400	(6.6%)
Hours worked:	Queensland,	17,200	(4.9%)
(thousands, growth)	Australia,	148,700	(8.9%)

Main findings

Employment in Queensland rose by 14,500 persons (0.5%) in February 2022 to be 152,700 persons (6.0%) above its pre-COVID level of March 2020. Employment growth in the month was driven by a rise in full-time employment (up 23,200), which more than offset a decline in part-time employment (down 8,700). The employment-to-population ratio rose from 63.6% in January to 63.9% in February 2022, well above its pre-COVID rate of 61.7%. The employment-to-population ratio was Queensland's highest since November 2011.

Hours worked recovered 4.9% in February 2022, to be 1.9% above its level in December 2021 (prior to the impacts of the Omicron variant, **Chart 1**). The number of people working fewer hours due to *own illness or injury or sick leave* fell by 30,300 (original) in February, from the record high in January 2022. Despite the decline in February, the ABS noted in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria 'there continued to be a higher than usual number of people working reduced or no hours due to illness or sick leave.'

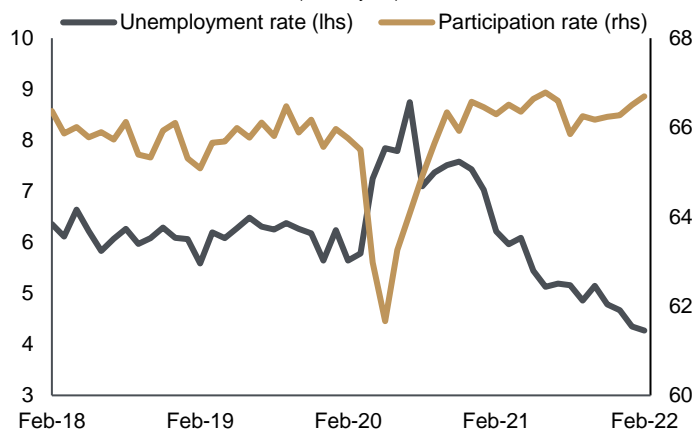
Chart 1: Employment and hours worked, Queensland



The unemployment rate in Queensland was 4.3% in February 2022, down from 4.4% in January, and below the pre-COVID level of 5.8% in March 2020 (**Chart 2**). This was Queensland's lowest unemployment rate since December 2008, when it was 3.9%.

Queensland's participation rate was 66.7% in February 2022, up from 66.5% in January and above its pre-COVID rate of 65.5% in March 2020. An additional 12,800 persons entered the labour force in the month, with a total of 116,600 persons having entered the labour force since March 2020.

Chart 2: Unemployment and participation rates, Queensland



Nationally, employment rose 77,400 persons (0.6%) in February, to be 376,500 persons (2.8%) above its pre-COVID level of March 2020. Employment growth in the month was driven by growth in New South Wales (up 57,900), recovering from the impacts in the Omicron variant in January.

The national unemployment rate was 4.0% in February 2022, down from 4.2% in January 2022, and down from 5.3% in March 2020. Hours worked rose 8.9% in February 2022 but remained 0.5% below hours worked in December 2021, prior to the impacts of Omicron (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Labour force outcomes¹, February 2022

	Queensland				Australia					
	Feb-22 '000	Monthly change '000	%	Yearly change '000	%	Feb-22 '000	Monthly change '000	%	Yearly change '000	%
Employed	2,712.4	14.5	0.5	109.1	4.2	13,372.0	77.4	0.6	395.4	3.0
Full-time	1,873.8	23.2	1.3	80.1	4.5	9,228.0	121.9	1.3	360.8	4.1
Part-time	838.6	-8.7	-1.0	29.0	3.6	4,144.0	-44.5	-1.1	34.6	0.8
Unemployed	121.0	-1.7	-1.4	-51.5	-29.9	563.3	-18.5	-3.2	-244.8	-30.3
Underemployed	205.5	4.1	2.1	-28.3	-12.1	915.2	-12.4	-1.3	-244.9	-21.1
Labour force	2,833.4	12.8	0.5	57.6	2.1	13,935.3	58.9	0.4	150.6	1.1
	millions	millions	%	millions	%	millions	millions	%	millions	%
Hours worked	372.2	17.2	4.9	5.2	1.4	1,813.4	148.7	8.9	49.5	2.8
	Feb-22	Jan-22	Feb-21	Feb-22	Jan-22	Feb-21	Feb-22	Jan-22	Feb-21	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Unemployment rate	4.3	4.4	6.2	4.0	4.2	5.9				
Underemployment rate	7.3	7.1	8.4	6.6	6.7	8.4				
Participation rate	66.7	66.5	66.3	66.4	66.2	66.1				

Table 2: Interstate comparison¹, February 2022

	Qld	NSW	Vic	SA	WA	Tas	Aus
Employed							
% change on a month ago	0.5	1.4	0.5	0.5	0.0	2.4	0.6
Change on a month ago (no.)	14,500	57,900	16,500	4,000	0	6,200	77,400
% change on a year ago	4.2	2.4	2.2	3.8	6.3	2.0	3.0
Change on a year ago (no.)	109,100	98,300	73,900	32,300	85,900	5,300	395,400
Unemployment rate							
February-22	4.3	3.7	4.2	5.0	4.1	3.9	4.0
January-22	4.4	4.2	4.1	4.8	3.7	3.8	4.2
February-21	6.2	5.6	5.7	6.7	6.1	5.7	5.9
Hours worked (millions)							
February-22	372.2	574.3	464.1	115.4	201.4	34.9	1,813.4
monthly % change	4.9	14.3	12.7	4.6	-1.8	8.5	8.9
annual % change	1.4	1.5	2.3	1.3	13.0	2.5	2.8

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