

Labour Force, February 2026

Source: ABS *Labour Force*, released 19 March 2026, 10:30 am AEST.

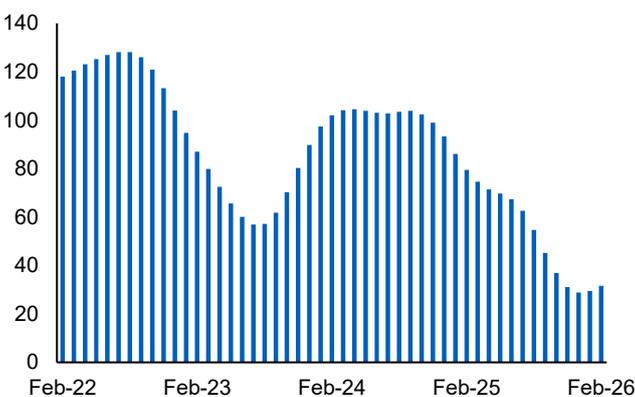
	Queensland		Australia	
Trend - February 2026				
Employment (persons, growth)	6,100	0.2%	24,000	0.2%
Unemployment (persons, rate)	1,000	4.3%	-1,600	4.2%
Labour force (persons, growth)	7,100	0.2%	22,400	0.1%
Underemployment (persons, rate)	-500	6.1%	-1,000	5.9%
Hours worked (thousands, growth)	1,200	0.3%	5,100	0.3%
Seasonally adjusted - February 2026				
Employment (persons, growth)	-6,500	-0.2%	48,900	0.3%
Unemployment (persons, rate)	2,700	4.4%	35,000	4.3%

Queensland

In trend terms, employment in Queensland rose by 6,100 persons (0.2%) in February 2026 to be 31,600 persons (1.1%) higher over the year (**Chart 1**). Both full-time (up 2,300) and part-time (up 3,700) employment rose in February.

In more volatile seasonally adjusted terms, employment fell 6,500 persons (down 0.2%) in the month but was 1.8% higher over the year.

Chart 1: Annual change in employment, Queensland
(trend, monthly, '000s)

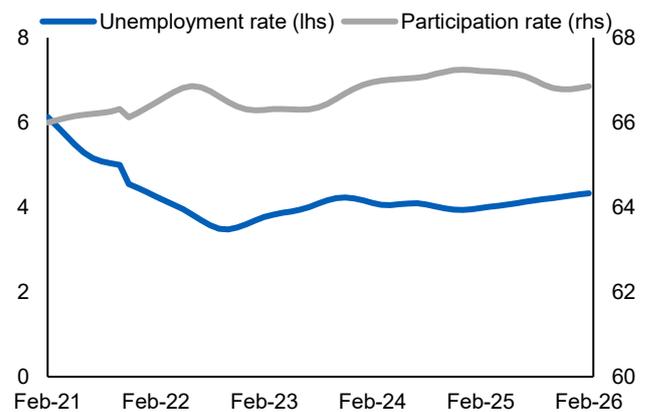


The trend unemployment rate was unchanged at 4.3% in February up from 4.0% in the previous year. Queensland's unemployment rate has been relatively stable since late 2023, fluctuating between 3.9% and 4.3% (**Chart 2**).

Queensland's participation rate was 66.9% in February, down from 67.2% a year ago but remaining close to its highest rate in well over a decade and near the record 68.0% in early 2009 during the coal mining investment boom.

The employment-to-population ratio was 64.0% in February 2026, down from 64.5% a year ago. Hours worked rose 0.3% in February to be 0.7% higher than a year ago.

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



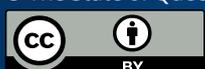
Queensland's underemployment rate¹ was unchanged at 6.1% in the month but down from 6.2% a year ago. The underutilisation rate¹ was 10.4% in February, up from 10.1% a year earlier.

National

Nationally, trend employment rose 24,000 persons in February (up 0.2%, **Table 1**) to be 177,100 (1.2%) higher over the year. In seasonally adjusted terms, employment nationally rose by 48,900 persons in the month, well above market expectations for a 20,000 person increase.

The trend unemployment rate was 4.2% in February, down from 4.3% in January but up from 4.0% a year earlier. This rate has generally been edging higher from the low of 3.5% in late 2022.

In seasonally adjusted terms, the unemployment rate rose to 4.3% in February, up from 4.1% last month and above market expectations for 4.1%.



Hour worked rose 0.3% in February, to be up 1.7% over the year which was stronger than annual employment growth of 1.2%.

Interstate comparison

In February, Queensland recorded the fourth largest annual employment growth (up 31,600 persons) behind Victoria (up 62,500), New South Wales (up 45,500), and South Australia (up 32,200, **Table 1**).

In percentage terms, Queensland employment grew 1.1% over the year to February, slightly below the national average (up 1.2%, **Chart 3**). This growth outpaced New South Wales (up 1.0%) but was behind Western Australia (up 1.3%). Among the other states, South Australia experienced the strongest growth (up 3.3%), followed by Victoria (up 1.7%).

Compared to January, the trend unemployment rate remained unchanged in all states, with South Australia recording the lowest, at 3.9%.

Chart 3: Annual employment growth, Feb-26
(trend, %)

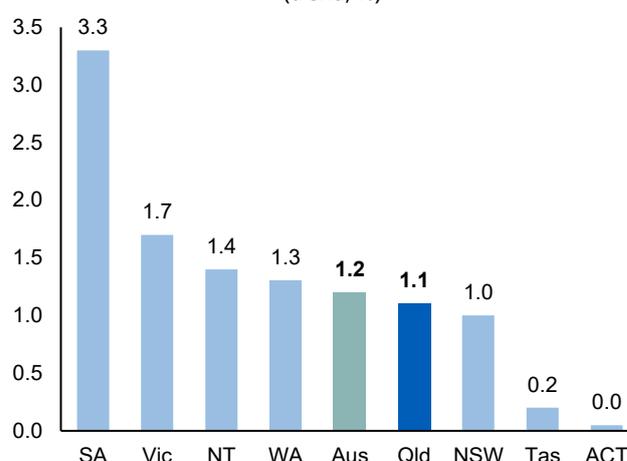


Table 1: Key labour force indicators, February 2026
(trend)

	Qld	NSW	Vic	SA	WA	Tas	Aus
Employed (000s)	3,010	4,530	3,820	1,000	1,670	280	14,720
Monthly change (%)	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.3	-0.1	0.2
Monthly change (no.)	6,100	15,600	4,400	1,200	5,200	-400	24,000
Annual change (%)	1.1	1.0	1.7	3.3	1.3	0.2	1.2
Annual change (no.)	31,600	45,500	62,500	32,200	21,400	500	177,100
Unemployment rate (%)							
February 2026	4.3	4.0	4.6	3.9	4.1	4.5	4.2
January 2026	4.3	4.0	4.6	3.9	4.1	4.5	4.3
February 2025	4.0	4.0	4.4	4.0	3.6	4.0	4.0
Hours worked (millions)	412.9	616.5	512.7	133.5	236.5	36.2	2009.2
Monthly change (%)	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.2	0.3	-0.1	0.3
Annual change (%)	0.7	1.2	2.2	3.3	0.9	-1.4	1.7
Participation rate (%)							
February 2026	66.9	66.0	67.7	64.7	68.6	60.5	66.8
January 2026	66.8	65.8	67.7	64.7	68.6	60.6	66.8
February 2025	67.2	66.2	67.7	63.6	69.1	60.4	67.0
Underemployment rate (%)							
February 2026	6.1	5.4	6.2	6.0	5.2	7.5	5.9
January 2026	6.1	5.4	6.3	6.1	5.3	7.4	5.9
February 2025	6.2	5.8	6.2	6.4	5.5	7.5	5.9

1. The underemployment rate measures underemployed persons as a proportion of the total labour force, and the underutilisation rate combines both unemployment and underemployment to indicate spare capacity in the labour market.