

Labour Force, March 2026

Source: ABS *Labour Force*, released 16 April 2026, 11:30 am AEST.

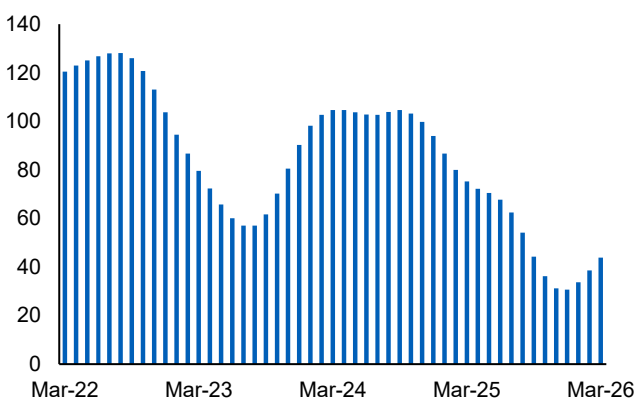
	Queensland		Australia	
Trend - March 2026				
Employment (persons, growth)	9,100	0.3%	30,800	0.2%
Unemployment (persons, rate)	-1,000	4.0%	-100	4.3%
Labour force (persons, growth)	8,100	0.3%	30,600	0.2%
Underemployment (persons, rate)	-800	6.0%	2,400	5.9%
Hours worked (thousands, growth)	1,400	0.3%	4,200	0.2%
Seasonally adjusted - March 2026				
Employment (persons, growth)	19,600	0.7%	17,900	0.1%
Unemployment (persons, rate)	-21,300	3.7%	-3,700	4.3%

Queensland

In trend terms, employment in Queensland rose by 9,100 persons (0.3%) in March 2026 to be 43,800 persons (1.5%) higher over the year (**Chart 1**). Both full-time (up 6,100) and part-time (up 3,000) employment rose in March.

In more volatile seasonally adjusted terms, employment rose 19,600 persons (up 0.7%) in the month and was 2.3% higher over the year.

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

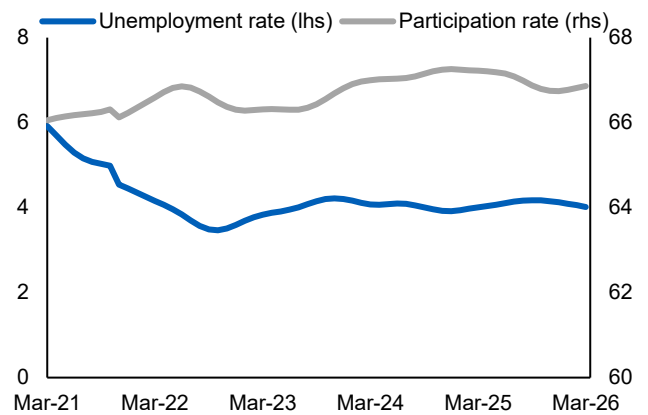


The trend unemployment rate was 4.0% in March 2026, down 0.1 percentage point from February, but unchanged from March 2025. The unemployment rate has been relatively stable since late 2023, fluctuating between 3.9% and 4.2% (**Chart 2**).

Queensland's participation rate was 66.9% in March, 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 64.2% in March, down from 64.5% a year ago. Hours worked rose 0.3% in March to be 1.2% higher than a year ago.

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



Queensland's underemployment rate¹ was 6.0% in March 2026, down from 6.1% in both the previous month and a year ago. The underutilisation rate¹ was 10.0% in March, down from 10.1% in March 2025.

National

Nationally, trend employment rose 30,800 persons in March (up 0.2%, **Table 1**) to be 201,300 (1.4%) higher over the year.

In seasonally adjusted terms, employment nationally rose by 17,900 persons in the month, a little below market expectations for a 20,000 person increase.

The trend unemployment rate remained at 4.3% in March but was up from 4.1% a year earlier and has been edging higher from the low of 3.5% in late 2022.

In seasonally adjusted terms, the unemployment rate was 4.3% in March, unchanged from the previous month and in line with market expectations.



Hour worked rose 0.2% in March, to be up 2.0% over the year which was stronger than annual employment growth of 1.4%.

Interstate comparison

In March, Queensland recorded the second largest annual employment growth (up 43,800 persons), behind New South Wales (up 78,300, **Table 1**).

In percentage terms, Queensland employment grew 1.5% over the year to March, slightly above the national average (up 1.4%, **Chart 3**). This growth outpaced Victoria (up 1.2%) but was behind New South Wales (up 1.7%). Among the other states, South Australia experienced the strongest growth (up 3.0%), followed by Western Australia (up 1.8%) with Tasmania (down 0.3%) recording the only fall.

Compared to a year ago, the unemployment rate rose in most states, except in South Australia (down 0.1%-pt) and Queensland (unchanged), seeing the national rate rise from 4.1% to 4.3%.

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

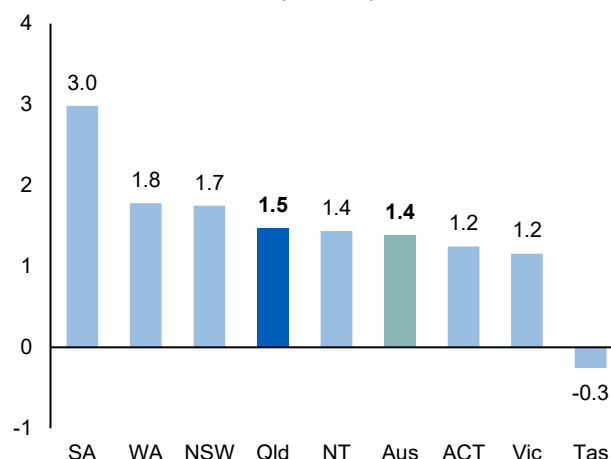


Table 1: Key labour force indicators, March 2026
(trend)

	Qld	NSW	Vic	SA	WA	Tas	Aus
Employed (000s)	3,030	4,560	3,800	1,000	1,680	280	14,760
Monthly change (%)	0.3	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.4	-0.1	0.2
Monthly change (no.)	9,100	18,100	-1,300	400	6,000	-100	30,800
Annual change (%)	1.5	1.7	1.2	3.0	1.8	-0.3	1.4
Annual change (no.)	43,800	78,300	43,500	28,900	29,400	-700	201,300
Unemployment rate (%)							
March 2026	4.0	4.2	4.7	3.9	4.1	4.6	4.3
February 2026	4.1	4.1	4.7	3.9	4.1	4.6	4.3
March 2025	4.0	4.0	4.4	4.0	3.7	3.9	4.1
Hours worked (millions)	414.7	621.9	510.1	133.4	239.8	36.2	2,014.6
Monthly change (%)	0.3	0.4	-0.2	0.0	0.5	0.1	0.2
Annual change (%)	1.2	2.3	1.6	2.9	2.0	-1.8	2.0
Participation rate (%)							
March 2026	66.9	66.4	67.3	64.5	68.8	60.4	66.8
February 2026	66.8	66.2	67.4	64.6	68.8	60.5	66.8
March 2025	67.2	66.1	67.6	63.6	69.1	60.5	67.0
Underemployment rate (%)							
March 2026	6.0	5.7	6.3	6.3	5.4	7.5	5.9
February 2026	6.1	5.6	6.3	6.3	5.4	7.4	5.9
March 2025	6.1	5.6	6.2	6.2	5.5	7.4	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.