Labour Force, August 2026

Source: ABS *Labour Force*, released 24 September 2026, 11:30 am AEST.

	Queensland		Australia	
Trend - August 2026				
Employment (persons, growth)	5,000	0.2%	24,000	0.2%
Unemployment (persons, rate)	2,500	4.4%	9,300	4.6%
Labour force (persons, growth)	7,500	0.2%	33,300	0.2%
Underemployment (persons, rate)	2,200	6.5%	300	6.3%
Hours worked (thousands, growth)	600	0.1%	-100	0.0%
Seasonally adjusted - August 2026				
Employment (persons, growth)	800	0.0%	39,500	0.3%
Unemployment (persons, rate)	8,600	4.5%	28,200	4.6%

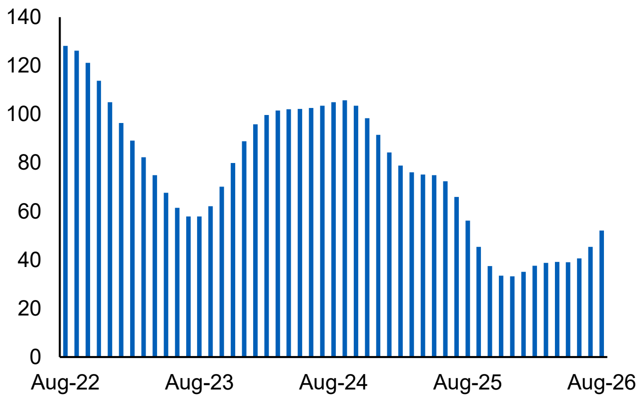
Queensland

In trend terms, employment in Queensland rose by 5,000 persons (0.2%) in August 2026 to be 52,100 persons (1.7%) higher over the year (**Chart 1**). Monthly growth reflected a rise in full-time (up 5,800) employment partly offset by lower part-time employment (down 800).

In more volatile seasonally adjusted terms, employment rose just 800 persons (0.0%) in the month and was 1.9% higher over the year.

Chart 1: Annual change in employment, Queensland

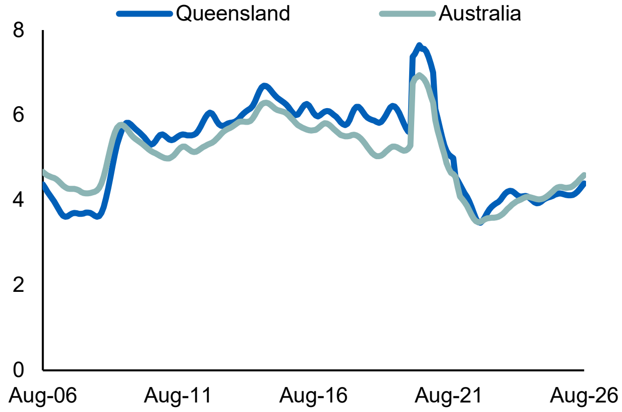
(trend, monthly, '000s)



The trend unemployment rate rose to 4.4% in August, up from 4.3% in July and 4.1% a year ago. Queensland's unemployment rate has been relatively stable since mid-2023, oscillating between 3.9% and 4.4% (**Chart 2**).

Chart 2: Unemployment rate

(trend, monthly, %)



Queensland's participation rate was 67.1% in August, up from 67.0% a year ago and 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 August 2026, down from 64.3% a year ago. Hours worked rose 0.1% in August to be up 1.3% annually.

Queensland's underemployment rate[1] was 6.5% in August, up 6.0% from a year ago. The underutilisation rate[1] was 10.9% in August, up from 10.7% in July and 10.2% a year earlier.

National

Nationally, trend employment rose 24,000 persons in August (up 0.2%, **Table 1**) to be 228,300 (1.6%) higher over the year. In seasonally adjusted terms, employment rose 39,500 persons in the month, well above market expectations of a 20,000 person rise.

The trend unemployment rate was 4.6% in August up from 4.3% a year earlier and has been edging higher from the recent low of 3.5% in June 2023 (**Chart 2**). In seasonally adjusted terms, the unemployment rate rose to 4.6% in August, up from 4.5% in July and up from 4.2% in the previous year.

Hour worked was unchanged in August, but was up 1.0% over the year, behind annual employment growth (1.6%).

Interstate comparison

In August, Queensland recorded the second largest annual employment growth (up 52,100 persons) behind New South Wales (up 91,900, **Table 1**).

In percentage terms, Queensland employment grew 1.7% over the year to August, slightly above the national average (up 1.6%, **Chart 3**). This growth outpaced Victoria (up 1.0%) and South Australia (up 0.7%) but was behind Western Australia (up 2.2%) and New South Wales (up 2.1%). Tasmania was the only state to record a fall in employment over the year (down 1.7%).

Compared to a year ago, the unemployment rate has risen in most states, bringing the national average up 0.3-%-pt to 4.6%. South Australia was the only state to record a decrease, down 0.1-%-pt to 4.4%.

Chart 3: Annual employment growth, Aug-26

(trend, %)

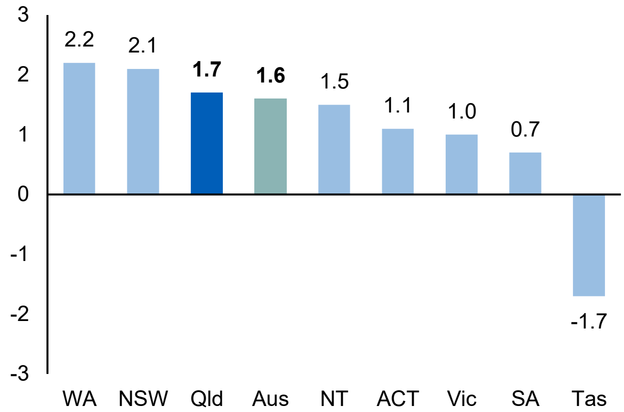


Table 1: Key labour force indicators, August 2026

(trend)

	Qld	NSW	Vic	SA	WA	Tas	Aus
Employed (000s)	3,050	4,560	3,830	990	1,690	280	14,830
Monthly change (%)	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2
Monthly change (no.)	5,000	7,400	10,000	1,000	500	300	24,000
Annual change (%)	1.7	2.1	1.0	0.7	2.2	-1.7	1.6
Annual change (no.)	52,100	91,900	39,500	6,400	36,100	-4,900	228,300
Unemployment rate (%)							
August 2026	4.4	4.3	5.1	4.4	4.4	5.2	4.6
July 2026	4.3	4.3	5.1	4.4	4.4	5.1	4.5
August 2025	4.1	4.2	4.6	4.5	4.2	4.0	4.3
Hours worked (millions)	415.3	618.9	505.9	132.7	240.1	36.8	2004.2
Monthly change (%)	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.2	-0.2	0.0	0.0
Annual change (%)	1.3	2.1	0.1	2.3	2.6	-2.1	1.0
Participation rate (%)							
August 2026	67.1	66.3	67.7	64.2	68.5	60.6	67.0
July 2026	67.1	66.2	67.6	64.2	68.6	60.5	66.9
August 2025	67.0	65.7	67.8	64.6	68.6	61.4	66.9
Underemployment rate (%)							
August 2026	6.5	5.5	6.9	6.6	5.8	7.1	6.3
July 2026	6.4	5.6	6.9	6.6	5.7	7.1	6.3
August 2025	6.0	5.3	6.4	6.3	5.5	7.3	5.8

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.

Note: The ABS is improving how the Labour Force Survey is conducted, with changes implemented progressively between the April and August 2026 releases. During this transition, headline estimates of employment, unemployment and the unemployment rate will continue to be produced monthly, although releases are delayed by a week to allow additional quality assurance. Further information is available at **Modernising the Labour Force Survey**.
Most data in this brief are reported in trend terms to look through month-to-month volatility in the seasonally adjusted data. The ABS advises trend data provide a more reliable indication of sustained labour market change.