

Labour force

August 2026 | Economic brief

Trend

	NT	Aust
Employed persons	147 622	14 829 368
- Monthly change	flat	↑0.2%
- Year-ended change	↑1.5%	↑1.6%
Unemployment rate	4.8%	4.6%
Participation rate	72.8%	67.0%

Employment in the Territory was flat at 147,622 persons in August 2026. Part-time employment declined by 0.8% which was offset by full-time employment which increased by 0.3%. Employment in the Territory increased by 1.5% in the year-ended August 2026 (Chart 1). This is the fourth strongest result of the jurisdictions, which ranged from a decline of 1.7% in Tasmania to an increase of 2.2% in Western Australia. Nationally, employment increased by 1.6% in the year-ended August 2026.

The Territory's unemployment rate was flat at 4.8% in August 2026 but up by 0.6 ppt in year-ended terms (Chart 2). This is the third highest rate of the jurisdictions, which ranged from 4.0% in the Australian Capital Territory to 5.2% in Tasmania. Nationally, the monthly unemployment rate increased by 0.3 ppt to 4.6%.

The participation rate in the Territory declined by 0.1 ppt to 72.8%, however increased by 0.2 ppt in year-ended terms. This is the highest rate of the jurisdictions, and is 5.8 ppt above the national rate (67.0%).

Seasonally adjusted

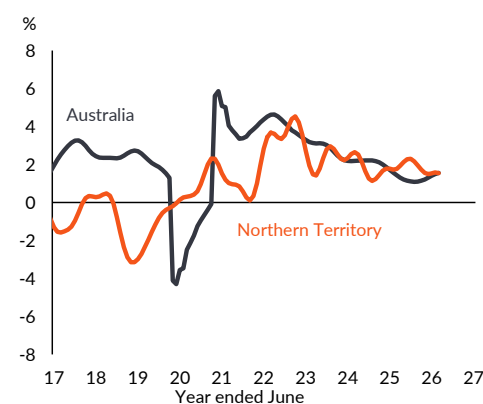
	NT	Aust
Employed persons	146 233	14 836 577
- Year-ended change	↑0.6%	↑1.6%
- Year-average change	↑1.9%	↑1.3%
Unemployment rate	4.9%	4.6%
Participation rate	72.2%	67.1%

Employment in the Territory increased by 0.6% to 146,233 persons in the year-ended August 2026 (Chart 3). This is the second weakest result of the jurisdictions. Nationally, employment increased by 1.6% in the year-ended August 2026.

The Territory's unemployment rate increased by 0.5 ppt to 4.9% in the year-ended August 2026 (Chart 2). This is the third highest rate of the jurisdictions. Nationally, the monthly unemployment rate increased by 0.2 ppt to 4.6% and by 0.4 ppt in year-ended terms.

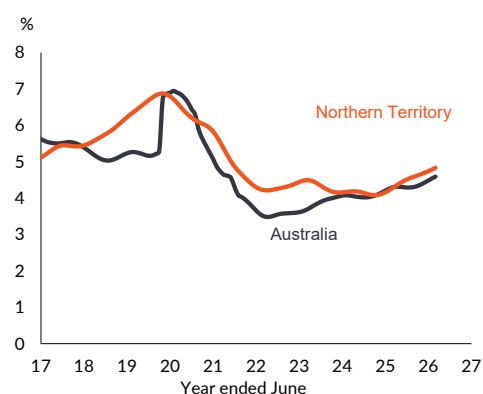
The Territory's participation rate declined by 0.6 ppt to 72.2% in the year-ended August 2026. This is the highest rate of the jurisdictions and is 5.1 ppt above the national rate (67.1%).

Chart 1: Employment change (year-ended change, trend)



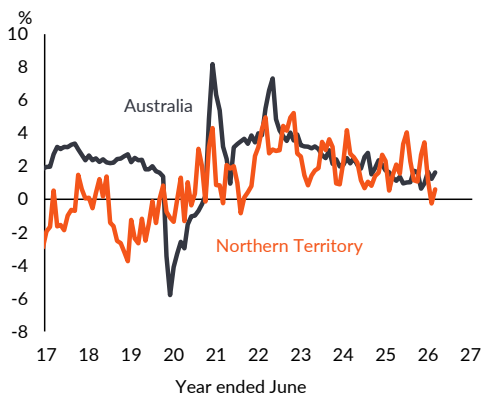
Source: DTF; ABS, Labour Force

Chart 2: Unemployment rate (monthly, trend)



Source: DTF; ABS, Labour Force

Chart 3: Employment change (year-ended change, seasonally adjusted)



Source: DTF; ABS, Labour Force

Table 1: Labour force statistics*

	Period			Monthly change ¹	Year-ended change ²	
	Aug 25	Jul 26	Aug 26	%	%	No.
Northern Territory						
Trend						
Employment	145 374	147 593	147 622	0.0%	1.5%	2 249
– full-time	113 765	114 902	115 204	0.3%	1.3%	1 439
– part-time	31 609	32 691	32 418	-0.8%	2.6%	810
Unemployment rate	4.3%	4.8%	4.8%	0.0 ppt	0.6 ppt	
– Unemployed	6 487	7 412	7 492	1.1%	15.5%	1 005
Participation rate	72.7%	72.9%	72.8%	-0.1 ppt	0.2 ppt	
Labour force	151 861	155 005	155 115	0.1%	2.1%	3 254
Australia						
Trend						
Employment	14 601 029	14 805 384	14 829 368	0.2%	1.6%	228 339
– full-time	10 065 606	10 187 310	10 202 463	0.1%	1.4%	136 857
– part-time	4 535 422	4 618 073	4 626 905	0.2%	2.0%	91 482
Unemployment rate	4.3%	4.5%	4.6%	0.0 ppt	0.3 ppt	
– Unemployed	654 897	703 925	713 194	1.3%	8.9%	58 297
Participation rate	66.9%	66.9%	67.0%	0.1 ppt	0.1 ppt	
Labour force	15 255 926	15 509 308	15 542 561	0.2%	1.9%	286 636
Seasonally adjusted						
Employment	14 598 470	14 797 084	14 836 577	0.3%	1.6%	238 107
– full-time	10 058 899	10 200 212	10 193 930	-0.1%	1.3%	135 031
– part-time	4 539 571	4 596 872	4 642 647	1.0%	2.3%	103 076
Unemployment rate	4.2%	4.5%	4.6%	0.2 ppt	0.4 ppt	
– Unemployed	642 930	694 727	722 941	4.1%	12.4%	80 011
Participation rate	66.8%	66.9%	67.1%	0.2 ppt	0.3 ppt	
Labour force	15 241 401	15 491 810	15 559 518	0.4%	2.1%	318 118

ppt.: percentage point

1 Compares the latest month with the previous month.

2 Compares the latest month with the same month in the previous year.

* Due to rounding, changes in the table may not reflect the actual change.

Source: Department of Treasury and Finance; ABS, *Labour force*

Table 2: Unemployment rates by jurisdiction (%)

	August 2026		Ranking (highest to lowest)	
	Seasonally adjusted	Trend	Seasonally adjusted	Trend
States				
NSW	4.3	4.3	7	7
Vic	5.2	5.1	1	2
Qld	4.5	4.4	5	6
WA	4.5	4.4	6	4
SA	4.6	4.4	4	5
Tas	5.0	5.2	2	1
ACT	4.1	4.0	8	8
NT	4.9	4.8	3	3
Australia	4.6	4.6		

Source: Department of Treasury and Finance; ABS, *Labour force*

Term	Definition
Employment	Work for one hour or more for pay, profit, commission or payment in kind, in a job or business or on a farm (comprising employees, employers and own account workers)
Employed full-time	Employed people who usually work 35 hours or more a week (in all jobs) and those who usually work less but worked 35 hours or more during the reference week.
Employed part-time	Employed people who usually worked less than 35 hours a week (in all jobs) or were not at work in the reference week.
Unemployed	People aged 15 years and over who were not employed during the reference week and had actively looked for full time or part time work.
Unemployment rate	For any group, the number of unemployed people expressed as a percentage of the labour force in the same group.
Participation rate	For any group, the labour force expressed as a percentage of the civilian population aged 15 years and over in the same group.
Labour force	For any group, people who were employed or unemployed, as defined.
Year-ended change	Compares the latest quarter with the same quarter last year
Year-average change	Compares the 12 months up to and including the latest quarter with the previous 12 month period
Seasonally adjusted	A seasonally adjusted series involves estimating and removing the cyclical and seasonal effects from the original data. Seasonally adjusting a time series is useful if you wish to understand the underlying patterns of change or movement in a population, without the impact of the seasonal or cyclical effects.
Trend	A trend series is a seasonally adjusted series that has been further adjusted to remove irregular effects and 'smooth' out the series to show the overall 'trend' of the data over time.

Caution is advised when using monthly data for the Territory, as it is often derived from small samples and can be highly volatile. Although due care has been exercised in preparing this material, no responsibility is accepted for any errors or omission.

[Labour force, Australia | Australian Bureau of Statistics \(abs.gov.au\)](https://abs.gov.au)

More information

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