

Labour force

January 2026 | Economic brief

Seasonally adjusted

	NT	Aust
Employed persons	145 865	14 703 823
- Monthly change	↓0.8%	↑0.1%
- Year-ended change	↑1.6%	↑1.0%
- Year-average change	↑1.2%	↑1.5%
Unemployment rate	4.5%	4.1%
Participation rate	73.2%	66.7%

Employment in the Territory declined by 0.8% to 145,865 persons in January 2026. Part-time employment declined by 4.5%, partly offset by full-time employment which increased by 0.3%. The Territory reported the weakest result of the jurisdictions, which otherwise ranged from a decline of 0.5% in Tasmania to an increase of 0.6% in Queensland. Nationally, employment increased by 0.1%. Employment in the Territory increased by 1.6% over the year to January 2026 (Chart 1). This was the third strongest result of the jurisdictions.

The Territory's unemployment rate increased by 0.5 percentage points (ppt) to 4.5% in January 2026 (Chart 2). The Territory reported the second highest rate of the jurisdictions, which ranged from 3.4% in Western Australia to 4.9% in Tasmania. Nationally, the monthly unemployment was flat at 4.1%. The Territory's unemployment rate increased by 0.1 ppt over the year to January 2026.

The participation rate in the Territory declined by 0.3 ppt to 73.2%. This is the highest rate of the jurisdictions and is 6.5 ppt above the national rate (66.7%). The Territory's participation rate was flat over the year to January 2026.

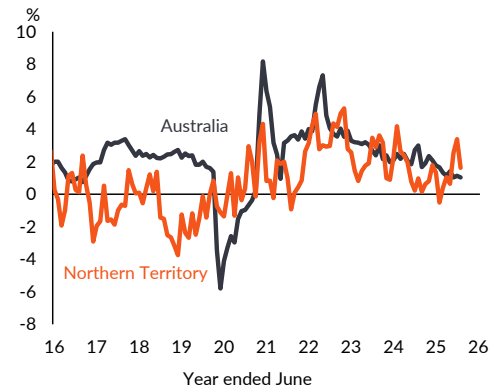
Trend

	NT	Aust
Employed persons	145 715	14 705 817
- Monthly change	↑0.3%	↑0.2%
- Year-ended change	↑1.6%	↑1.2%
Unemployment rate	4.5%	4.1%
Participation rate	73.1%	66.7%

Employment in the Territory increased by 0.3% to 145,715 persons in January 2026. Full-time employment increased by 0.3% and part-time employment increased by 0.2%. Employment increased by 1.6% in the Territory over the year to January 2026 (Chart 3).

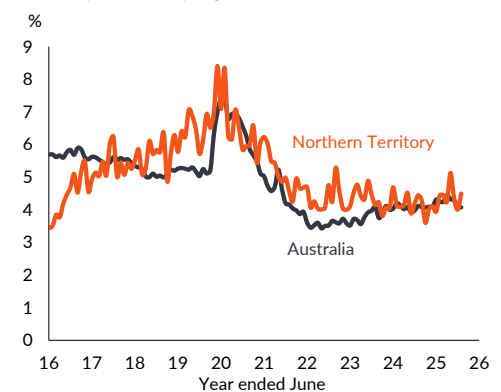
The Territory's unemployment rate was flat at 4.5% in January 2026 and increased by 0.4 ppt over the year. The participation rate in the Territory increased by 0.2 ppt to 73.1% in January 2026 and by 0.3 ppt over the year.

Chart 1: Employment change (year-ended change, seasonally adjusted)



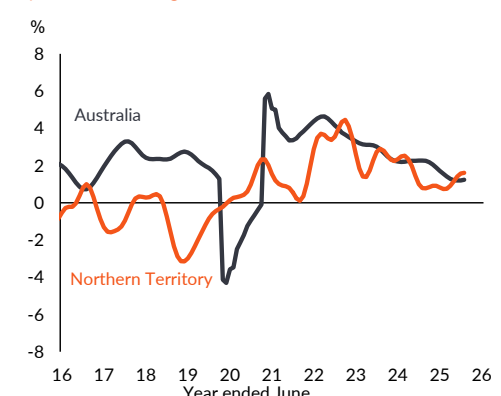
Source: DTF; ABS, Labour Force

Chart 2: Unemployment rate (monthly, seasonally adjusted)



Source: DTF; ABS, Labour Force

Chart 3: Employment change (year-ended change, trend)



Source: DTF; ABS, Labour Force

Table 1: Labour force statistics*

	Period			Monthly change ¹	Year-ended change ²	
	Jan 25	Dec 25	Jan 26	%	%	No.
Northern Territory						
Seasonally adjusted						
Employment	143 527	147 001	145 865	-0.8%	1.6%	2 338
– full-time	111 235	114 057	114 415	0.3%	2.9%	3 180
– part-time	32 292	32 944	31 450	-4.5%	-2.6%	- 842
Unemployment rate	4.4%	4.0%	4.5%	0.5 ppt	0.1 ppt	
– Unemployed	6 674	6 130	6 865	12.0%	2.9%	191
Participation rate	73.1%	73.5%	73.2%	- 0.3 ppt	0.0 ppt	
Labour force	150 201	153 131	152 730	-0.3%	1.7%	2 529
Trend						
Employment	143 399	145 251	145 715	0.3%	1.6%	2 316
– full-time	112 993	113 390	113 784	0.3%	0.7%	791
– part-time	30 406	31 861	31 931	0.2%	5.0%	1 525
Unemployment rate	4.1%	4.4%	4.5%	0.0 ppt	0.4 ppt	
– Unemployed	6 134	6 713	6 794	1.2%	10.8%	661
Participation rate	72.8%	72.9%	73.1%	0.2 ppt	0.3 ppt	
Labour force	149 533	151 963	152 509	0.4%	2.0%	2 976
Australia						
Seasonally adjusted						
Employment	14 553 654	14 685 993	14 703 823	0.1%	1.0%	150 169
– full-time	10 030 395	10 104 971	10 155 469	0.5%	1.2%	125 074
– part-time	4 523 259	4 581 022	4 548 354	-0.7%	0.6%	25 095
Unemployment rate	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	0.0 ppt	0.0 ppt	
– Unemployed	625 147	626 578	624 686	-0.3%	-0.1%	- 462
Participation rate	67.2%	66.7%	66.7%	0.0 ppt	- 0.6 ppt	
Labour force	15 178 802	15 312 570	15 328 509	0.1%	1.0%	149 708
Trend						
Employment	14 525 886	14 681 070	14 705 817	0.2%	1.2%	179 931
– full-time	10 020 410	10 121 588	10 141 410	0.2%	1.2%	121 000
– part-time	4 505 475	4 559 482	4 564 407	0.1%	1.3%	58 931
Unemployment rate	4.0%	4.2%	4.1%	- 0.1 ppt	0.1 ppt	
– Unemployed	610 407	644 463	636 314	-1.3%	4.2%	25 907
Participation rate	67.0%	66.8%	66.7%	0.0 ppt	- 0.3 ppt	
Labour force	15 136 293	15 325 533	15 342 131	0.1%	1.4%	205 838

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 (%)

States	January 2026		Ranking (highest to lowest)	
	Seasonally adjusted	Trend	Seasonally adjusted	Trend
NSW	4.1	4.0	5	6
Vic	4.2	4.5	4	2
Qld	4.3	4.2	3	5
WA	3.4	3.9	8	7
SA	3.7	3.8	7	8
Tas	4.9	4.5	1	1
ACT	4.1	4.3	6	4
NT	4.5	4.5	2	3
Australia	4.1	4.1		

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

Economic Group | Department of Treasury and Finance

P: 08 8999 6718 | E: economics.dtf@nt.gov.au | W: nteconomy.nt.gov.au