

# Labour force

March 2024 | Economic brief

The ABS has implemented improvements to the labour force estimation method. Refer to 'Revisions to the Territory labour force data' on page 3 for more information.

## Employment

	NT	Aust
Employed persons (trend)	139 607	14 259 824
Monthly change (trend)	↑0.5%	↑0.2%
Annual change (trend)	↑2.2%	↑2.6%
Year-on-year change (original)	↑1.5%	↑3.1%

In March 2024, trend resident employment in the Territory increased by 0.5% to 139,607 persons. Part-time employment increased by 1.6% and full-time employment increased by 0.2%. Nationally, employment increased by 0.2%, with full-time and part-time employment both increasing by 0.2%.

Annually, trend resident employment increased by 2.2% in the Territory. Nationally, employment increased by 2.6% over the same period (Chart 1). In the year to March 2024<sup>1</sup>, Territory employment increased by 1.5%, reflecting an increase in full-time employment of 2.8%, partly offset by a decrease in part-time employment of 3.2%. Nationally, year-on-year employment increased by 3.1%.

## Unemployment

	NT	Aust
Unemployment rate (trend)	4.3%	3.9%
Monthly change (ppt)	flat	flat
Annual change (ppt)	flat	↑0.3

The Territory's trend unemployment rate was flat at 4.3% in the month of March 2024 (Chart 2). Nationally, the monthly unemployment rate was flat at 3.9%.

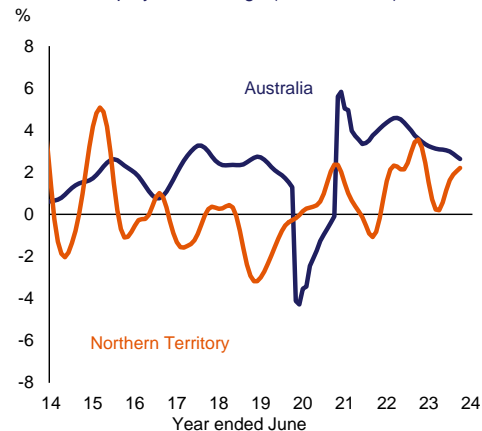
## Participation

	NT	Aust
Participation rate (trend)	73.9%	66.6%
Monthly change (ppt)	↑0.2	↓0.1
Annual change (ppt)	↑0.9	↑0.1

The trend participation rate in the Territory increased by 0.2 percentage points to 73.9% in March 2024. The Territory's participation rate is the highest of the jurisdictions, and well above the national rate of 66.6% (Chart 3).

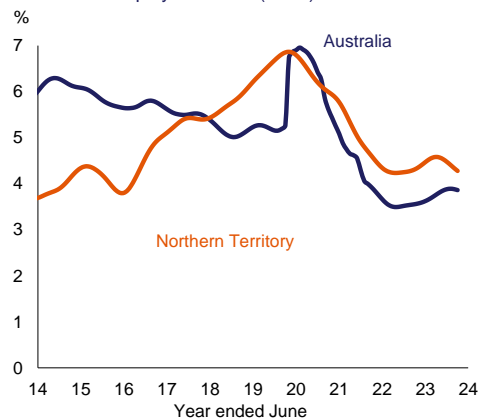
<sup>1</sup> See Table 1 for footnotes for definitions of annual and year-on-year change

Chart 1: Employment change (annual, trend)



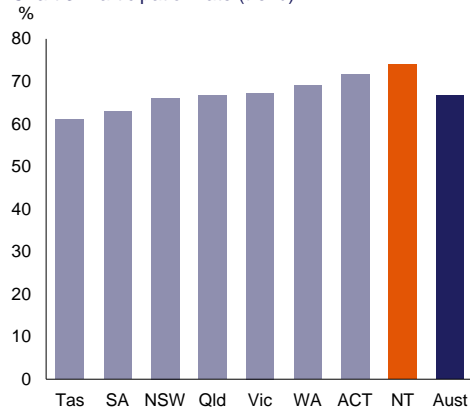
Source: Department of Treasury and Finance, ABS Cat No. 6202.0

Chart 2: Unemployment rate (trend)



Source: Department of Treasury and Finance, ABS Cat No. 6202.0

Chart 3: Participation rate (trend)



Source: Department of Treasury and Finance, ABS Cat No. 6202.0

Table 1: Labour force statistics\*

	Period			Change		
	Mar 23	Feb 24	Mar 24	Monthly <sup>1</sup>	Annual <sup>2</sup>	Year-on-year <sup>3</sup>
<b>Northern Territory</b>						
<b>Original</b>						
Employment	136 366	139 415	139 389	0.0%	2.2%	1.5%
– full-time	106 165	110 454	109 301	-1.0%	3.0%	2.8%
– part-time	30 201	28 961	30 088	3.9%	-0.4%	-3.2%
Unemployment rate	4.8%	4.6%	4.1%	- 0.5 ppt	- 0.7 ppt	
Participation rate	73.2%	74.1%	73.6%	- 0.5 ppt	0.4 ppt	
Labour force	143 272	146 137	145 354	-0.5%	1.5%	1.4%
<b>Seasonally adjusted</b>						
Employment	136 681	139 458	139 676	0.2%	2.2%	
– full-time	106 583	109 589	109 728	0.1%	3.0%	
– part-time	30 098	29 868	29 948	0.3%	-0.5%	
Unemployment rate	4.4%	4.4%	3.8%	- 0.6 ppt	- 0.6 ppt	
Participation rate	73.1%	73.9%	73.5%	- 0.4 ppt	0.4 ppt	
Labour force	143 023	145 803	145 151	-0.4%	1.5%	
<b>Trend</b>						
Employment	136 596	138 904	139 607	0.5%	2.2%	
– full-time	106 814	109 881	110 111	0.2%	3.1%	
– part-time	29 782	29 022	29 496	1.6%	-1.0%	
Unemployment rate	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	0.0 ppt	0.0 ppt	
Participation rate	73.0%	73.7%	73.9%	0.2 ppt	0.9 ppt	
Labour force	142 746	145 208	145 845	0.4%	2.2%	
<b>Australia</b>						
<b>Original</b>						
Employment	13 943 848	14 344 650	14 285 568	-0.4%	2.5%	3.1%
– full-time	9 752 946	9 941 922	9 843 796	-1.0%	0.9%	2.7%
– part-time	4 190 901	4 402 727	4 441 771	0.9%	6.0%	3.9%
Unemployment rate	3.8%	4.0%	4.1%	0.1 ppt	0.3 ppt	
Participation rate	66.9%	67.3%	66.9%	- 0.4 ppt	0.0 ppt	
Labour force	14 494 561	14 949 306	14 900 250	-0.3%	2.8%	3.2%
<b>Seasonally adjusted</b>						
Employment	13 922 969	14 266 488	14 259 903	0.0%	2.4%	
– full-time	9 763 939	9 825 891	9 853 805	0.3%	0.9%	
– part-time	4 159 030	4 440 597	4 406 098	-0.8%	5.9%	
Unemployment rate	3.6%	3.7%	3.8%	0.1 ppt	0.2 ppt	
Participation rate	66.7%	66.7%	66.6%	- 0.1 ppt	- 0.1 ppt	
Labour force	14 435 485	14 815 778	14 829 760	0.1%	2.7%	
<b>Trend</b>						
Employment	13 894 055	14 231 314	14 259 824	0.2%	2.6%	
– full-time	9 729 707	9 818 233	9 838 633	0.2%	1.1%	
– part-time	4 164 348	4 413 081	4 421 191	0.2%	6.2%	
Unemployment rate	3.6%	3.9%	3.9%	0.0 ppt	0.3 ppt	
Participation rate	66.5%	66.7%	66.6%	- 0.1 ppt	0.1 ppt	
Labour force	14 406 478	14 806 454	14 832 838	0.2%	3.0%	

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.

3 Compares the 12 months up to and including the latest month with the previous 12 month period.

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

Source: Department of Treasury and Finance; ABS Cat. No. 6202.0

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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# Revisions to the Territory labour force data

Table 1: Revisions to labour force data, 12-month average, January 2024

	Previous data	Current (new method)	Change
Employed persons (number)	140 078	136 233	↓3 845
Unemployment rate (%)	3.9	4.5	↑0.6
Participation rate (%)	74.1	72.7	↓1.4

The ABS has implemented improvements to the labour force estimation method to reduce sample variability and other measurement error for various small groups in the labour force survey. The impact of the new methodology is outlined in Table 2. On average, in the year to January 2024:

- monthly employment was revised down by 3,845 persons
- the unemployment rate was revised up by 0.6 ppt on average
- the participation rate was revised down by 1.4 ppt on average.

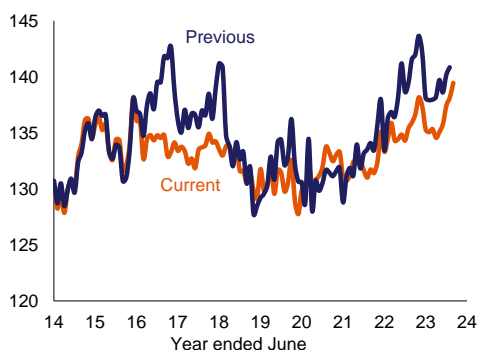
The revised groups include people who do not live in private dwellings (e.g people in prison, living in aged care homes) and some people living in remote and very remote parts of Australia. Revisions have been applied to the estimates dating back to August 2016.

While the revisions are relatively small at the national level and for many jurisdictions, they are considerably larger for the Northern Territory. This is because the difficult-to-enumerate populations account for a higher proportion of the sample in the Northern Territory. An improvement in the estimation of those populations will therefore result in larger relative improvements in the aggregate labour force statistics.

The improved estimation method provides both a more accurate level estimate for the Territory’s labour force statistics, and generally reduces the average month-to-month variability in the key indicators (Charts 4, 5 and 6). These changes also flow through to the seasonally adjusted and trend series of the labour force statistics. For most indicators, these revisions reflect a ‘level shift’ from the previously published estimates to the improved estimates, with the underlying pattern of increases or decreases changes over time being relatively consistent.

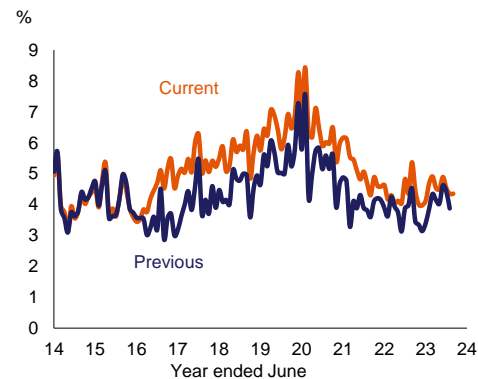
As with any time series revisions, the ABS recommends using the latest available data. For example, comparisons of changes in the unemployment rate for the Territory should use the latest available estimates, and not compare the current and previous economic briefs.

Chart 4: Employed persons (monthly, seasonally adjusted) Number (000)



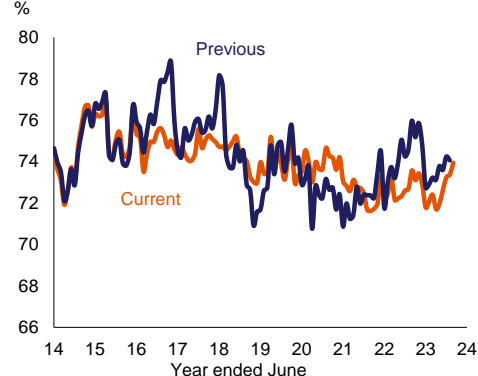
Source: Department of Treasury and Finance, ABS Cat No. 6202.0

Chart 5: Unemployment rate (monthly, seasonally adjusted) %



Source: Department of Treasury and Finance, ABS Cat No. 6202.0

Chart 6: Participation rate (monthly, seasonally adjusted) %



Source: Department of Treasury and Finance, ABS Cat No. 6202.0