

Labour force

February 2026 | Economic brief

Seasonally adjusted

	NT	Aust
Employed persons	145 265	14 748 745
- Monthly change	↓0.5%	↑0.3%
- Year-ended change	↑0.8%	↑1.8%
- Year-average change	↑1.3%	↑1.5%
Unemployment rate	5.0%	4.3%
Participation rate	73.0%	66.9%

Employment in the Territory declined by 0.5% to 145,265 persons in February 2026. Part-time employment declined by 0.6% and full-time employment declined by 0.5%. The Territory reported the second weakest result of the jurisdictions, which ranged from a decline of 0.8% in South Australia to an increase of 1.0% in New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. Nationally, employment increased by 0.3%. Employment in the Territory increased by 0.8% over the year to February 2026 (Chart 1). This was the weakest result of the jurisdictions.

The Territory's unemployment rate increased by 0.5 percentage points (ppt) to 5.0% in February 2026 (Chart 2). The Territory reported the highest rate of the jurisdictions, which otherwise ranged from 3.5% in the Australian Capital Territory to 4.7% in Victoria. Nationally, the monthly unemployment increased by 0.2 ppt to 4.3%. The Territory's unemployment rate increased by 0.8 ppt over the year to February 2026.

The participation rate in the Territory declined by 0.2 ppt to 73.0%. This is the highest rate of the jurisdictions and is 6.2 ppt above the national rate (66.9%). The Territory's participation rate was flat over the year to February 2026.

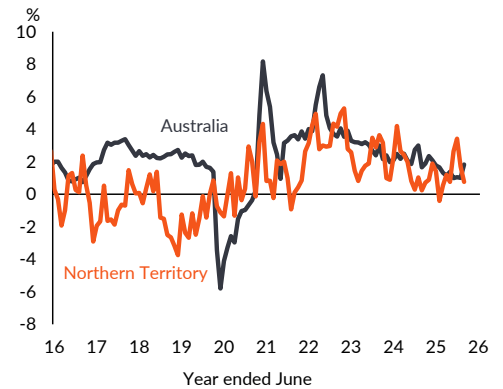
Trend

	NT	Aust
Employed persons	146 018	14 721 417
- Monthly change	↑0.3%	↑0.2%
- Annual change	↑1.4%	↑1.2%
Unemployment rate	4.7%	4.2%
Participation rate	73.2%	66.8%

Employment in the Territory increased by 0.3% to 146,018 persons in February 2026. Full-time employment increased by 0.4% while part-time employment was flat. Employment increased by 1.4% in the Territory over the year to February 2026 (Chart 3).

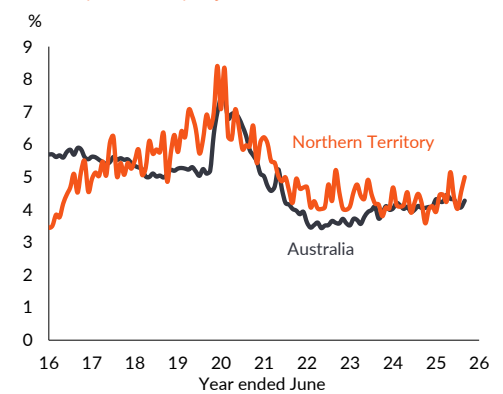
The Territory's unemployment rate increased by 0.1 ppt to 4.7% in February 2026 and by 0.6 ppt over the year. The participation rate in the Territory increased by 0.1 ppt to 73.2% and by 0.3 ppt over the year.

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



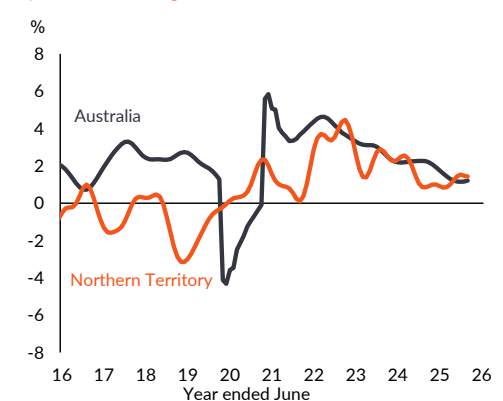
Source: DTF; ABS, Labour Force

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	
	Feb 25	Jan 26	Feb 26	%	%	No.
Northern Territory						
Seasonally adjusted						
Employment	144 157	146 020	145 265	-0.5%	0.8%	1 109
- full-time	113 976	114 548	113 991	-0.5%	0.0%	16
- part-time	30 181	31 472	31 274	-0.6%	3.6%	1 093
Unemployment rate	4.2%	4.5%	5.0%	0.5 ppt	0.8 ppt	
- Unemployed	6 310	6 955	7 647	9.9%	21.2%	1 336
Participation rate	73.1%	73.2%	73.0%	-0.2 ppt	0.0 ppt	
Labour force	150 467	152 975	152 912	0.0%	1.6%	2 445
Trend						
Employment	143 940	145 622	146 018	0.3%	1.4%	2 078
- full-time	113 623	114 038	114 449	0.4%	0.7%	826
- part-time	30 317	31 584	31 569	0.0%	4.1%	1 252
Unemployment rate	4.1%	4.6%	4.7%	0.1 ppt	0.6 ppt	
- Unemployed	6 123	7 035	7 152	1.7%	16.8%	1 029
Participation rate	72.9%	73.1%	73.2%	0.1 ppt	0.3 ppt	
Labour force	150 062	152 657	153 169	0.3%	2.1%	3 107
Australia						
Seasonally adjusted						
Employment	14 484 088	14 699 812	14 748 745	0.3%	1.8%	264 657
- full-time	9 993 258	10 147 431	10 116 952	-0.3%	1.2%	123 694
- part-time	4 490 830	4 552 380	4 631 793	1.7%	3.1%	140 963
Unemployment rate	4.1%	4.1%	4.3%	0.2 ppt	0.2 ppt	
- Unemployed	611 533	624 188	659 146	5.6%	7.8%	47 614
Participation rate	66.7%	66.7%	66.9%	0.2 ppt	0.2 ppt	
Labour force	15 095 620	15 323 999	15 407 891	0.5%	2.1%	312 271
Trend						
Employment	14 544 309	14 697 441	14 721 417	0.2%	1.2%	177 108
- full-time	10 027 347	10 115 380	10 125 136	0.1%	1.0%	97 788
- part-time	4 516 962	4 582 061	4 596 281	0.3%	1.8%	79 319
Unemployment rate	4.0%	4.3%	4.2%	0.0 ppt	0.2 ppt	
- Unemployed	613 184	654 576	652 989	-0.2%	6.5%	39 805
Participation rate	67.0%	66.8%	66.8%	0.0 ppt	-0.2 ppt	
Labour force	15 157 493	15 352 017	15 374 406	0.1%	1.4%	216 912

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	February 2026		Ranking (highest to lowest)	
	Seasonally adjusted	Trend	Seasonally adjusted	Trend
NSW	4.1	4.0	6	6
Vic	4.7	4.6	2	2
Qld	4.4	4.3	4	4
WA	4.2	4.1	5	5
SA	4.0	3.9	7	8
Tas	4.6	4.5	3	3
ACT	3.5	3.9	8	7
NT	5.0	4.7	1	1
Australia	4.3	4.2		

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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