

NT labour market brief – December 2020



Key message

In December 2020, the Territory labour market showed signs of improvement, with increased employment and a fall in the unemployment rate. The rise in employment was driven by strong part-time employment growth, which more than offset a fall in full-time employment. Increased job vacancies suggests ongoing employment growth in the short term. Monthly data remains volatile and should be interpreted with caution.

Employment

| | | Monthly change | Number of persons ('000) |
|--------------------|-----------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Total employed | NT | Up 0.7% | 129 173 |
| | Australia | Up 0.4% | 12 910 777 |
| Full-time employed | NT | Down 0.9% | 97 234 |
| | Australia | Up 0.4% | 8 761 448 |
| Part-time employed | NT | Up 5.8% | 31 939 |
| | Australia | Up 0.3% | 4 149 329 |

Source: ABS Cat No 6202.0

In December 2020:

- there were 129 173 people employed in the Territory, an increase of 858 persons (0.7%) from the previous month's revised figure.
- Territory full-time employment decreased by 886 to 97 234 persons, and part-time employment increased by 1744 to 31 939 persons.
- national employment increased by 50 036 (0.4%) to 12 910 777 persons.
- national full-time employment increased by 35 742 to 8 761 448 persons, and part-time employment increased by 14 295 to 4 149 329 persons.
- the Territory underemployment rate increased by 0.4 percentage points to 6.4%, compared to 8.5% nationally.
The Territory underemployment rate has not returned to pre-COVID-19 levels, reflecting more people continue to work less than their desired number of hours.
- The Territory's underutilisation rate decreased by 0.2 of a percentage point to 11.8%, compared to 15.1% nationally.
- Territory monthly hours decreased 4.2% from December 2019.

Unemployment rate

| | | Monthly change | Rate |
|-------------------|-----------|----------------|------|
| Unemployment rate | NT | Down 0.5 ppt | 5.4% |
| | Australia | Down 0.2 ppt | 6.6% |

Source: ABS Cat No 6202.0

- In December 2020, the Territory's unemployment rate decreased to 5.4% from the previous month's revised figure of 5.9%.

- The Territory had the second lowest unemployment rate in Australia after the Australian Capital Territory (3.7%), followed by Western Australia (6.2%). The unemployment rate in other jurisdictions were: New South Wales (6.4%), South Australia (6.4%), Victoria (6.5%), Tasmania (7.0%), and then Queensland (7.5%).
- Nationally, the unemployment rate decreased to 6.6% from the previous month's revised figure of 6.8%.

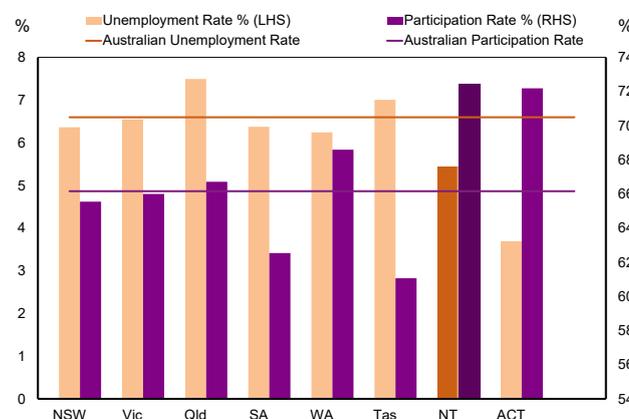
Participation rate

| | | Monthly change | Rate |
|--------------------|-----------|----------------|-------|
| Participation rate | NT | Up 0.1 ppt | 72.4% |
| | Australia | Up 0.1 ppt | 66.2% |

Source: ABS Cat No 6202.0

- In December 2020, the Territory's labour force participation rate increased by 0.1 of a percentage point to 72.4% from the previous month's revised figure.
- The Territory had the highest participation rate, followed by the Australian Capital Territory (72.2%), then followed by Western Australia (68.6%).
- Nationally, the labour force participation rate increased by 0.1 of a percentage point to 66.2% from the previous month's revised figure.

Chart 1: Unemployment and participation rates



Source: ABS Cat No 6202.0

Labour force

| | | Monthly change | Number of persons ('000) |
|----------------------------------|-----------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Labour force | NT | Up 0.1% | 136 608 |
| | Australia | Up 0.1% | 13 822 767 |
| Civilian population ¹ | NT | Up 0.1% | 188 578 |
| | Australia | Flat | 20 891 546 |

Source: ABS Cat No 6202.0

- In December 2020, the Territory's labour force was 136 608 persons, an increase of 0.1% from last month's revised figure.
- Nationally, the labour force increased by 0.1% to 13 822 767 persons.

Apprentices and trainees (estimates)²

| | Year to date change | Year to date to Dec 2019 | Year to date to Dec 2020 |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Commencements | Down 12.7% | 2365 | 2065 |
| Completions | Down 32.4% | 1155 | 781 |

Source: Northern Territory Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade

- In the year to December 2020, there were 2065 apprentice and trainee commencements in the Territory, a decrease of 12.7% (300) compared to the same period in the previous year.
- In the year to December 2020, there were 781 apprentice and trainee completions in the Territory, a decrease of 32.4% (374) compared to the same period in the previous year.
- As at 31 December 2020, there were 3542 apprentices and trainees in training.

Internet job vacancies (December 2020)³

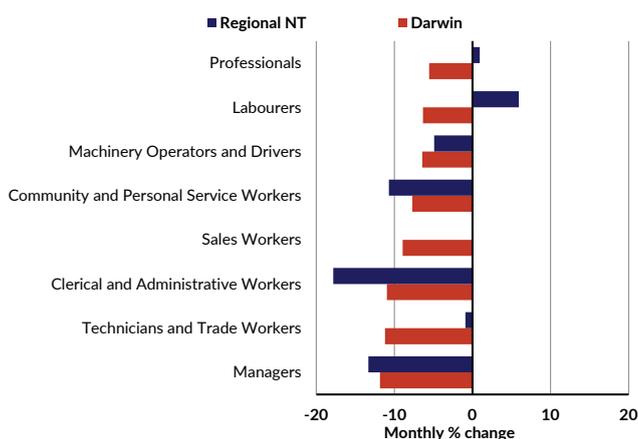
| Occupation | Monthly change | No. of vacancies |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| Machinery operators and drivers | Up 7.0% | 140 |
| Labourers | Up 5.9% | 144 |
| Technicians and trade workers | Up 4.3% | 349 |
| Sales workers | Up 4.0% | 121 |
| Professionals | Up 4.0% | 570 |
| Community and personal service workers | Up 2.5% | 238 |
| Managers | Up 0.2% | 190 |
| Clerical and administrative workers | Down 5.5% | 256 |
| Total | Up 4.0% | 2025 |

Source: Australian Government Department of Employment

- In December 2020, total internet job vacancies increased by 4.0% (trend) to 2025 in the Territory.
- In December 2020, internet job vacancies reported increases in the Territory, except for Clerical and administrative workers, which decreased by 5.5% to 256.
- Machinery operators and drivers reported the largest increase (7.0%), followed by Labourers (5.9%), and then Technicians and trade workers (4.3%).

- In regional NT, most occupation groups recorded decreases, with Clerical and administrative workers reporting the largest decrease at 17.8%.
- Labourers and Professionals recorded the only increase at 5.9% and 0.9% respectively. Sales workers remained flat.
- In the Darwin region, all occupation groups recorded decreases, with Managers recording the largest decrease at 11.8%, followed by Technicians and trade workers (11.2%), and then Clerical and administrative workers (11.0%).

Chart 2: Northern Territory Job Vacancies⁴



Source: Australian Government Department of Employment

Notes

- Original data.
- Caution should be exercised in the use of this data as training data has a natural lag (up to six months after the commencement date) and are subject to future revisions.
- It should be noted that this table provides trend data.
- It should be noted that Darwin and regional NT data are original data with a three month rolling average.

Employment figures refer to Territory residents that are employed and do not capture persons working in the Territory that normally reside outside the Territory.

All data referred to in the brief are in seasonally adjusted terms, except for the apprentice and trainee data, which are in original terms and the regional breakdown of job vacancies.

Current labour market briefs are available online at:

<https://industry.nt.gov.au/economic-data-and-statistics/business/labour-market-briefs>

For information on the data sources used and a glossary of labour market terms please see Labour Market Terms and Information at the above link.

Please note that changes to geographical standards and population re-benchmarking have resulted in revisions to labour market estimates. For further information, please go to:

Enquiries

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