



Australian Government

Australian Trade and Investment Commission  
Tourism Research Australia

# Quarterly Tourism Labour Statistics

## TRA summary – December quarter 2024

Data provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) – [Tourism Satellite Accounts: quarterly tourism labour statistics, Australia, experimental estimates | Australian Bureau of Statistics](#)

### Headlines

The number of filled jobs in the tourism sector:

- was 713,500 in the December quarter 2024, a record high number of jobs in the tourism sector
- increased by 23,700 jobs (3.4%) from the September quarter 2024
- was 17,500 (2.5%) higher than the number of jobs a year ago (December quarter 2023)
- was 31,900 (4.7%) higher than the pre-pandemic peak (tourism jobs peaked at 681,600 in the December quarter 2019)
- was 4,700 (0.7%) more than the previous record high number of tourism jobs (708,800 in the September quarter 2023)
- represents 1 in 23 filled jobs in the economy (or 4.4%).

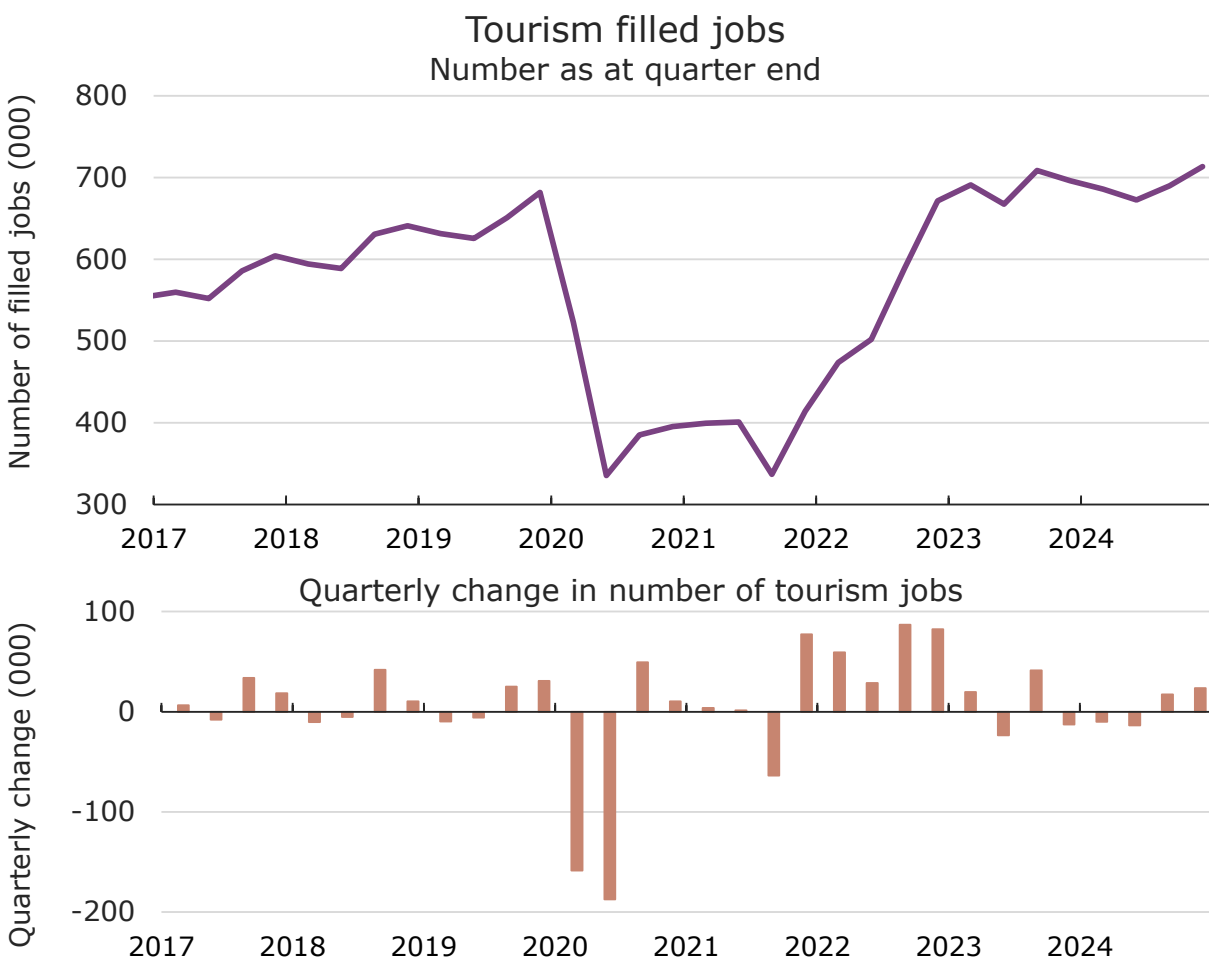
## Overview

As at 31 December 2024, the tourism sector had 713,500 filled jobs, an increase of 23,700 jobs (3.4%) from the previous quarter (Figure 1).

The increase in jobs this quarter takes the number of tourism filled jobs to the highest level in the history of the series (since September 2016). This number is 4,700 (0.7%) higher than the previous peak in September 2023, and 31,900 (4.7%) higher than the pre-pandemic peak in December 2019 (which was 681,600 tourism filled jobs).

Tourism jobs have now increased for 2 consecutive quarters (September and December 2024) for the first time since March 2023.

**Figure 1.** Number of tourism filled jobs (top panel) and quarterly change (bottom panel), March quarter 2017 to December quarter 2024.



Source: Tourism Satellite Account: quarterly tourism labour statistics, December quarter 2024. Accessed March 2025.

## Key insights

Tourism accounted for 4.4% of total filled jobs in the economy in the December quarter 2024, down from 4.8% at the pre-pandemic peak (December quarter 2019). This indicates a slower recovery in tourism jobs compared with the broader economy. Further, compared with the broader economy, tourism filled jobs took two years longer to return to their pre-pandemic level and have seen a milder growth trend over the past 2 years (Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Economy wide jobs and tourism filled jobs, March quarter 2017 to December quarter 2024.



Source: Tourism Satellite Account: quarterly tourism labour statistics, December quarter 2024. Accessed March 2025.

## Tourism jobs by sector

The December quarter is typically a peak demand period for the tourism sector and therefore employment, with the December 2024 quarter jobs data continuing this trend. In the **December quarter 2024**, most tourism-connected industries recorded an increase in filled jobs compared with the previous quarter.

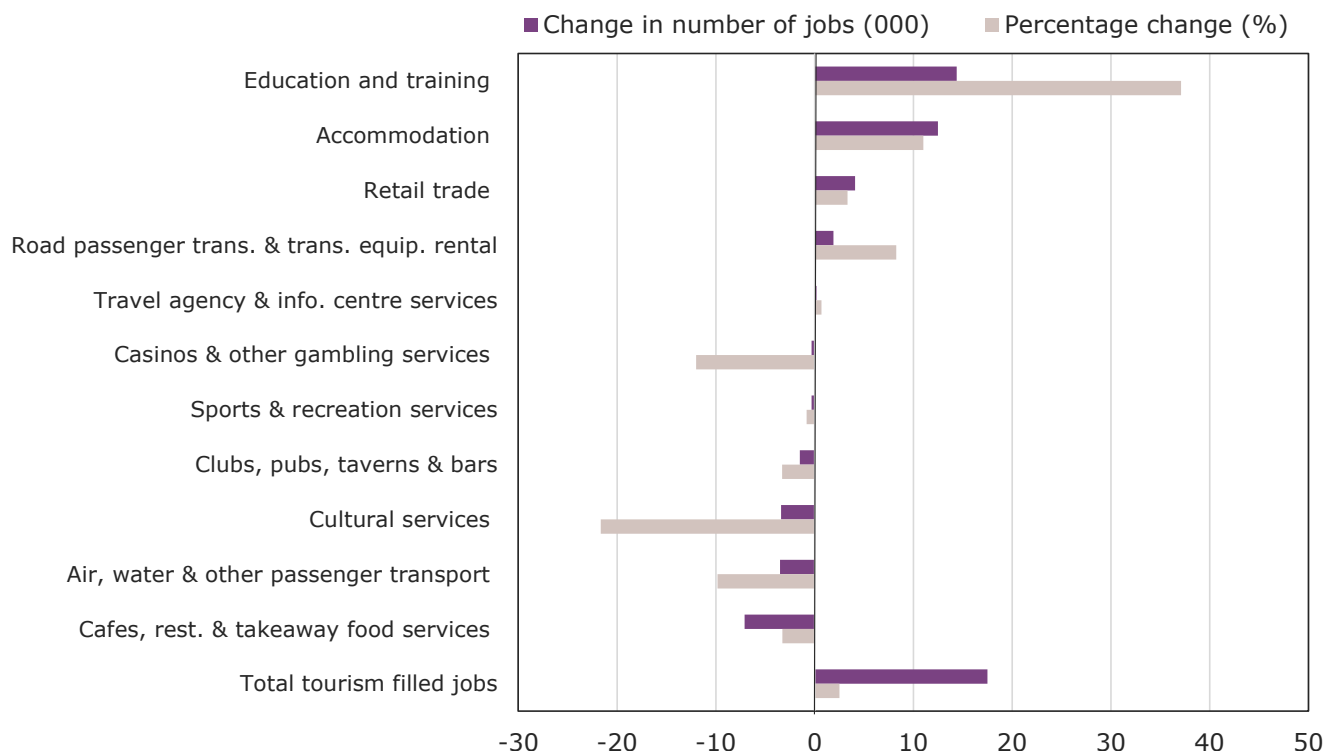
The tourism-connected industries with the largest increases in jobs in the December quarter 2024 were: Cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services (up 9,100 jobs, 4.5%), accommodation (up 7,800 jobs, 6.6%) and retail trade (up 3,400 jobs, 2.8%).

However, the number of filled jobs declined in the travel agency and information centre services (down 1,100 jobs, -3.6%), cultural services (down 400 jobs, -3.1%) and casinos and other gambling services (down 300 jobs, -12%) industries.

**Over the past year**, the increase in tourism filled jobs was led strongly by increases in the education and training (up 14,400 jobs, 37%) and accommodation (up 12,500 jobs, 11%) industries.

On the other hand, there were modest declines across several industries between December 2023 and December 2024, including cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services (down 7,100 jobs, -3.3%), air, water and other passenger transport (down 3,500 jobs, -10%) and cultural services (down 3,400 jobs, 22%) (Figure 3).

**Figure 3.** Change in tourism filled jobs, by tourism-related industry, over the period from December quarter 2023 to December quarter 2024 (i.e. change over the year).



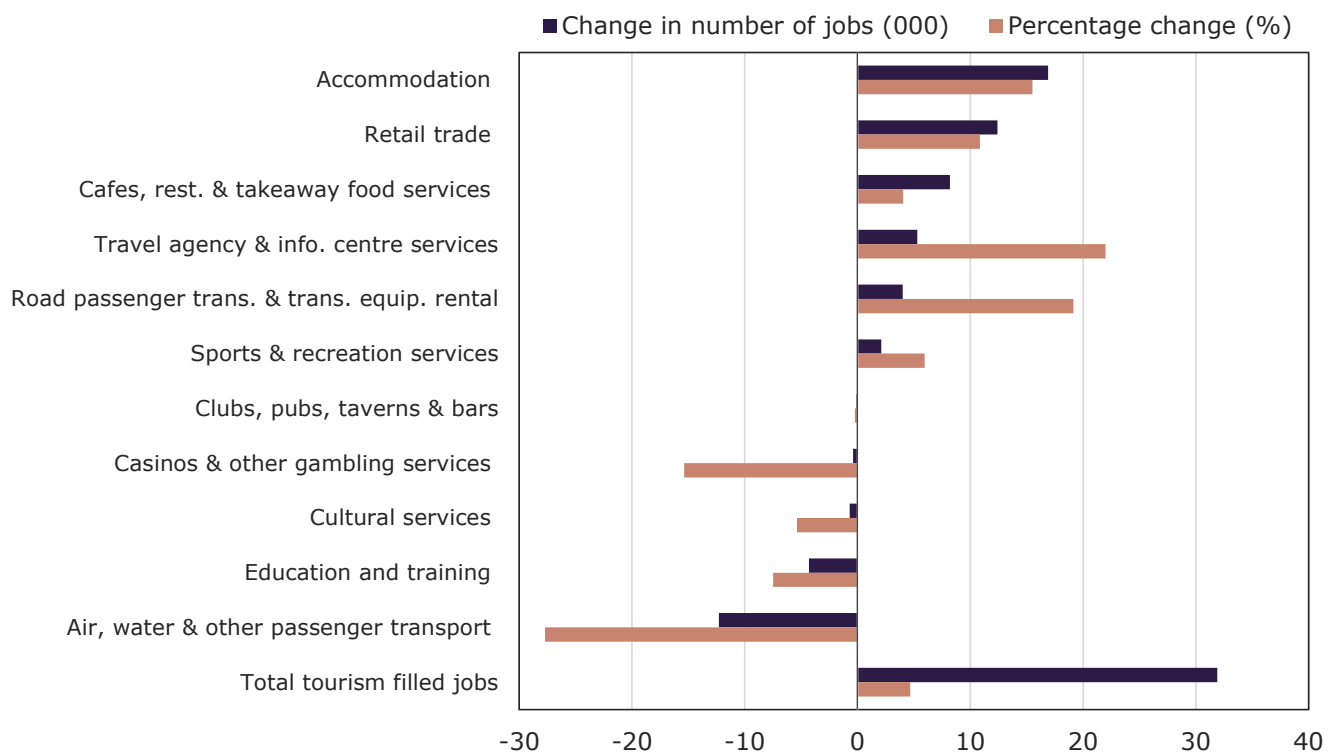
Source: Tourism Satellite Account: quarterly tourism labour statistics, December quarter 2024. Accessed March 2025.

The total number of tourism filled jobs was significantly higher at the end of 2024 than it was at the end of 2019 (before the pandemic). However, there are a few tourism-related industries where the number of tourism jobs remain below their **pre-pandemic level** (Figure 4). These include:

- Air, water and other passenger transport (12,300 fewer jobs, -28%)
- Education and training (4,300 fewer jobs, -7%)
- Cultural services (700 fewer jobs, -5%)
- Casinos and other gambling services (400 fewer jobs, -15%).

The delayed recovery in these sectors indicates ongoing challenges in these areas given economic conditions and potentially some lingering pandemic effects. These sectors were some of the hardest hit by the changed composition of travellers in the post-pandemic period.

**Figure 4.** Change in tourism filled jobs, by tourism-related industry, over the period from December quarter 2019 to December quarter 2024 (i.e. change from pre-pandemic peak).



Source: Tourism Satellite Account: quarterly tourism labour statistics, December quarter 2024. Accessed March 2025.

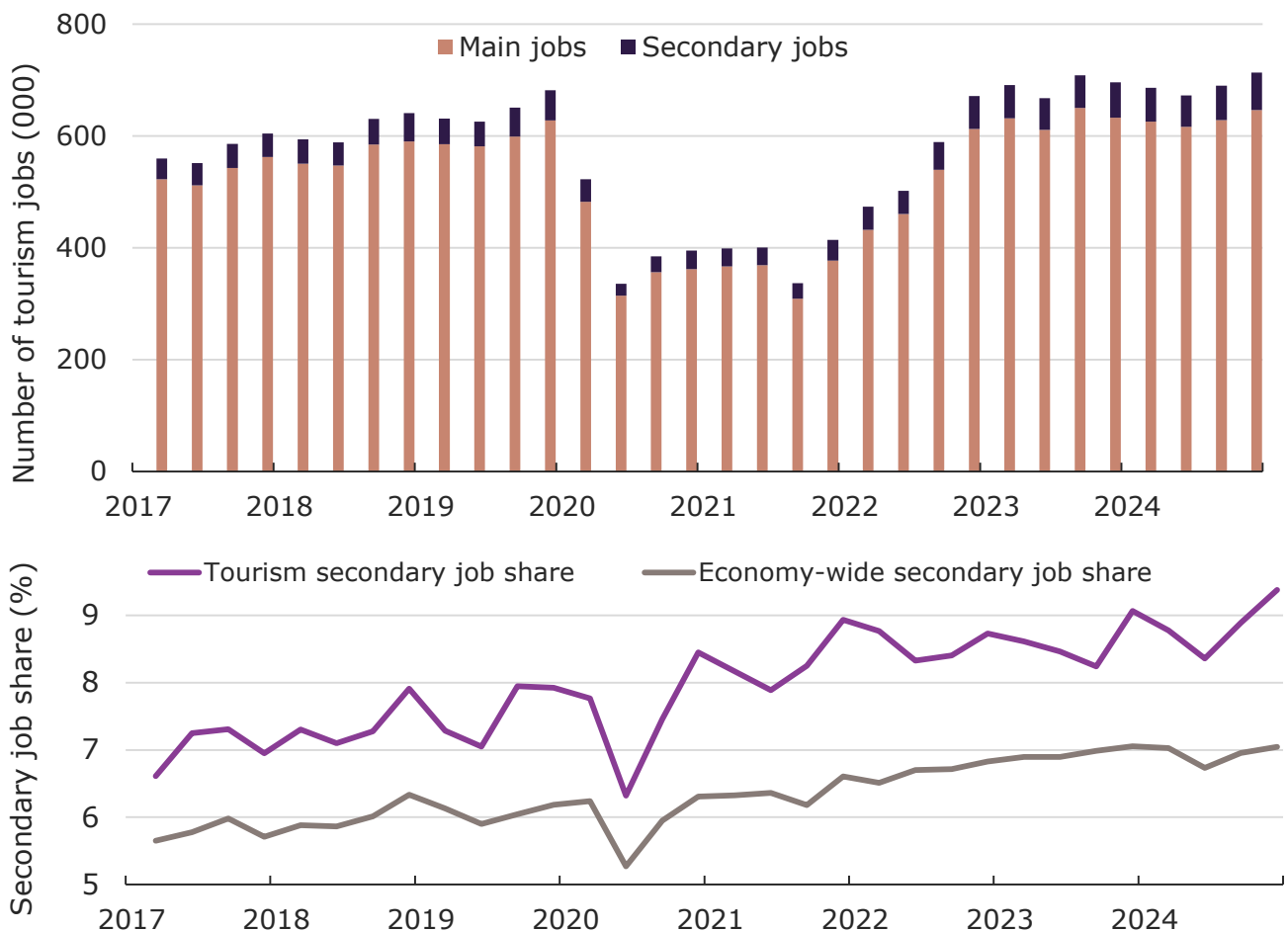
## Tourism job characteristics

The number of full-time and part-time jobs increased in the December quarter, as well as over the year to December 2024. Compared to the pre-pandemic peak, full-time and part-time jobs have increased by a similar amount (up by around 16,000 and 4.7%).

The number of main jobs and secondary jobs increased in the December quarter, as well as over the year to December 2024. Compared to the pre-pandemic peak, secondary jobs growth has been much stronger than main jobs growth, with secondary jobs 24% higher in 2024 than in 2019. As a result, the share of secondary jobs in tourism reached a record high in December 2024 of 9.4% (Figure 5).

The secondary job share is higher for tourism than for the economy as a whole (Figure 5, bottom panel). The secondary job share for the economy as a whole was 7.0% in the December quarter 2024 and has been relatively stable over the past year.

**Figure 5.** Number of tourism main jobs and tourism secondary jobs (top panel) and share of secondary jobs in tourism and in the whole economy (bottom panel). March quarter 2017 to December quarter 2024.



Source: Tourism Satellite Account: quarterly tourism labour statistics, December quarter 2024. Accessed March 2025.

In the December quarter 2024, growth was particularly strong in female-held tourism jobs (up 29,500 jobs, 8%). Female jobs also increased markedly over the past year (up 15,200 jobs, 4%). Male jobs declined in the December quarter 2024 (down 5,800 jobs, -1.8%) and were relatively steady over the previous year (up 2,200 jobs, 0.7%).

At the end of 2024, female jobs were 17,200 more (4.6% higher) than at the end of 2019 (pre-pandemic). There were 14,600 more (4.8%) male jobs at the end of 2024 than there were at the end of 2019.

This suggests that some targeted action to recover female jobs in the post-pandemic period have been successful, after female job losses were more significant during the pandemic.

## Looking forward

Tourism Research Australia expects tourism job numbers to trend slightly higher going forward. Demand for domestic travel and the ongoing recovery in international visitor numbers should support tourism-related employment. However, growth in tourism employment is expected to be moderate, in response to issues such as ongoing cost pressures, some labour supply challenges.

The recently published [Tourism Investment Monitor](#) aligns with expectations of ongoing jobs growth. It highlights that investment in tourism infrastructure has been robust, with the tourism investment pipeline in 2023-24 growing by \$7.3 billion and 39 projects, which will further support the sector's future growth.