



Massachusetts Economic Update

April 21, 2015

Summary

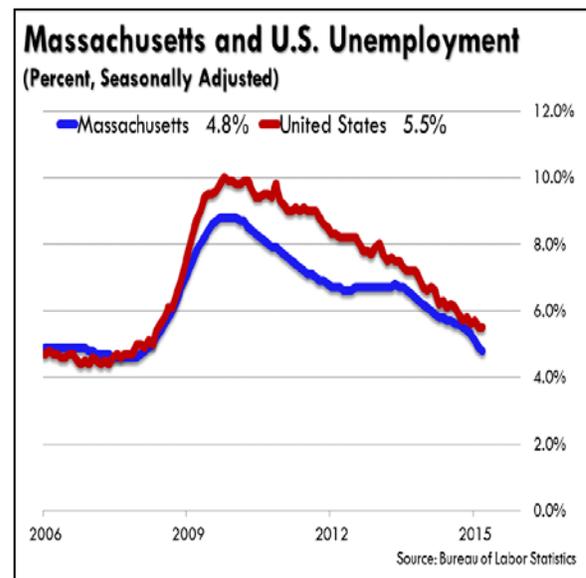
Nonfarm payroll employment in Massachusetts increased by 10,500 jobs and the unemployment rate fell to 4.8 percent in March according to data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Massachusetts Unemployment Rate

During March, the unemployment rate in Massachusetts declined by 0.1 percentage point to 4.8 percent. The number of people counted as unemployed fell by 2,169 in March to 175,159, while the labor force grew by 16,083 to 3,623,942. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 18 posted lower unemployment rates for the month than Massachusetts. A year earlier, the unemployment rate in Massachusetts stood at 5.9 percent.

The 10 year peak for the unemployment rate in Massachusetts was 8.8 percent in January 2010. The series high for the unemployment rate in Massachusetts occurred in January 1976 when the unemployment rate reached 10.7 percent. The 10 year low for the unemployment rate in Massachusetts was 4.6 percent in December 2007. The series low for the unemployment rate in Massachusetts occurred in October 2000 when the unemployment rate reached 2.6 percent. BLS began publishing the state unemployment rate series in 1976.

The national unemployment rate was unchanged at 5.5 percent in March. March's unemployment rate was 1.1 percentage points lower than a year earlier when the rate stood at 6.6 percent. The ten year high for the national unemployment rate was 10.0 percent in October 2009. The ten year low was 4.4 percent in May 2007.



Massachusetts Payroll Employment

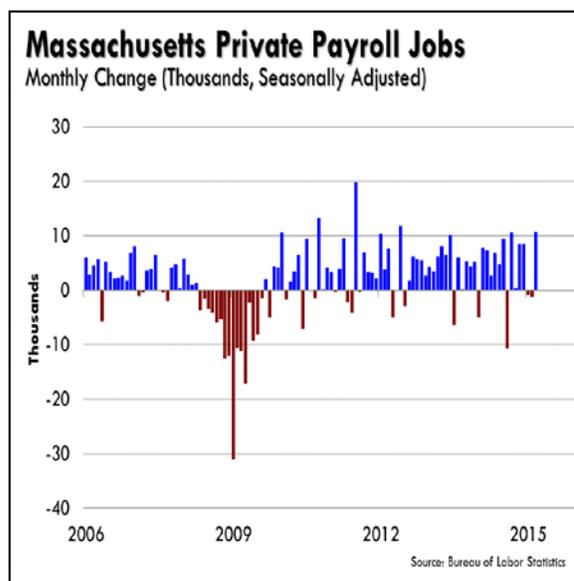
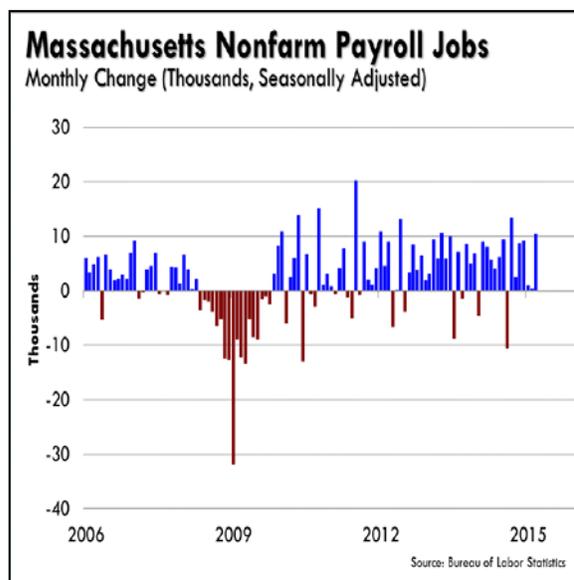
Massachusetts nonfarm payrolls increased by 10,500 jobs, or 0.30 percent, on a seasonally adjusted basis during March. In the prior month, nonfarm payrolls increased by 400. Over the past 12 months nonfarm payrolls in Massachusetts increased by 60,200, or 1.77 percent. Massachusetts nonfarm payroll employment has increased in 11 of the past 12 months.

Nationally nonfarm payrolls increased by 126,000 jobs in March, or 0.09 percent. Over the 12 month period ending in March 2015, nonfarm payrolls grew by 3,128,000 jobs, or 2.27 percent. Massachusetts ranks 20th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in nonfarm payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During March, Massachusetts private sector payrolls increased by 10,700, or 0.36 percent. Private sector payrolls declined by 1,200 jobs in the prior month. Over the past 12 months, private sector payrolls in Massachusetts increased by 49,400, or 1.68 percent. Massachusetts private sector payroll employment has increased in 9 of the past 12 months.

Nationally, private sector payroll jobs increased by 129,000 in March, or 0.11 percent. Over past 12 months, the nation's economy has added 3,056,000 private sector payroll jobs, an increase of 2.63 percent. Massachusetts ranks 31st among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in private sector payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During March, total government payroll employment in Massachusetts declined by 200, or 0.04 percent. Federal government payroll employment increased by 100, or 0.22 percent. State government payroll employment declined by 500, or 0.36 percent, while local government payroll employment increased by 200, or 0.07 percent.



Over the past year, total government payroll employment increased by 10,800, or 2.41 percent. State government payroll employment increased by 5,700, or 4.31 percent. Local government payroll employment increased by 4,800, or 1.77 percent.

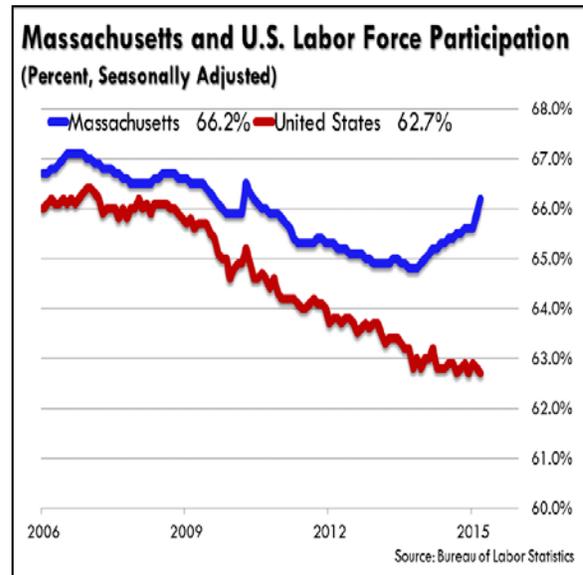
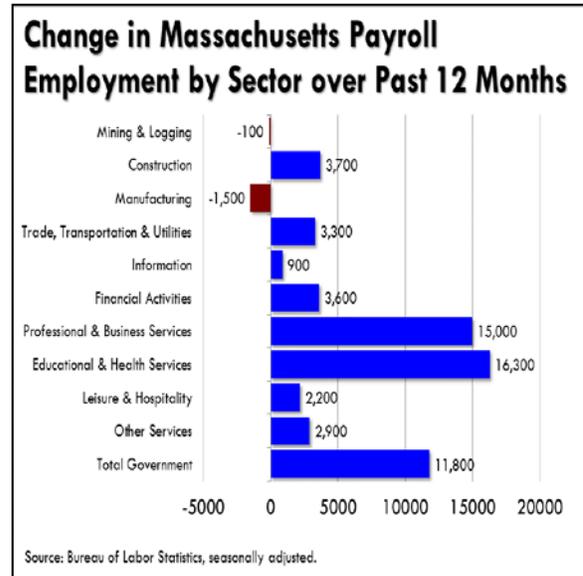
The best performing sectors on a seasonally adjusted basis during March were Educational & Health Services (+5,500) and Leisure & Hospitality (+4,900). The poorest performing sectors during the month were Construction (-2,100) and Financial Activities (-500).

The best performing sectors during the last twelve months were Educational & Health Services (+19,400) and Professional & Business Services (+15,700). The poorest performing sectors for the year were Mining & Logging (unchanged) and Manufacturing (unchanged).

Other Massachusetts Labor Force Statistics

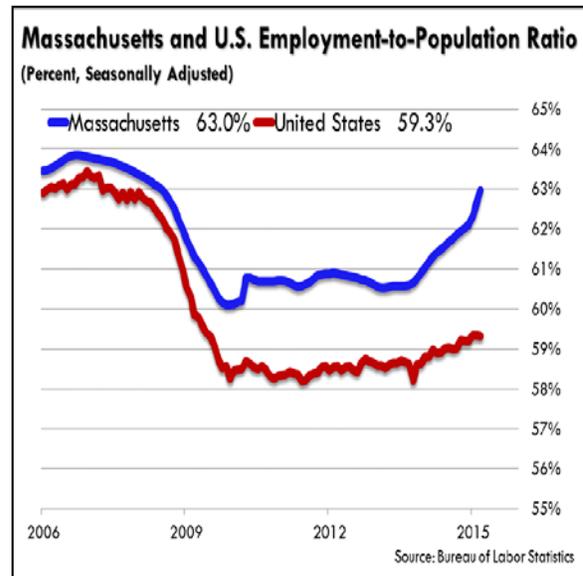
The labor force participation rate in Massachusetts rose to 66.2 percent in March from 65.9 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 16 have a higher labor force participation rate than Massachusetts. The labor force participation rate in Massachusetts is unchanged from a year earlier. The labor force participation rate is the percentage of the civilian noninstitutionalized population age 16 and older who are employed or actively looking for work.

The 10 year high for the labor force participation rate in Massachusetts was 67.1 percent in November 2006. The series high for the labor force participation rate in Massachusetts occurred in December 1989 when the labor force participation rate hit 69.1 percent. The 10 year low for the labor force participation rate was 64.8 percent in November 2013. The series low for the labor force participation rate occurred in January 1977 when the labor force participation rate hit 64.6 percent.



The national labor force participation rate declined by 0.1 percentage point to 62.7 percent in March, equaling the ten year low last reached in December 2014. That rate is 0.5 percentage point below the March 2014 level of 63.2 percent.

The employment-to-population ratio, or the percentage of the Massachusetts civilian noninstitutionalized population 16 years and older counted as employed, rose to 63.0 percent in March from 62.7 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 14 have higher employment-to-population ratios than Massachusetts. The employment-to-population ratio in Massachusetts is 1.7 percentage points higher than a year earlier.



The 10 year high for the employment-to-population ratio in Massachusetts was 63.8 percent in February 2007. The series high for the employment-to-population ratio in Massachusetts occurred in January 1999 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 66.7 percent. The 10 year low for the employment-to-population ratio was 60.1 percent in January 2010. The series low for the employment-to-population ratio occurred in March 1976 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 57.7 percent.

The national employment-to-population ratio was unchanged at 59.3 percent in March. At 59.3 percent, the national employment-to-population ratio is still below the level of 59.4 percent when the recession ended in June 2009. The all-time high for the employment-to-population ratio was 64.7 percent in April 2000. The 10 year high for the employment-to-population ratio was 63.4 percent in December 2006. The recent low occurred in October 2013 when the employment-to-population ratio dipped to 58.2 percent. The last time the employment-to-population posted a reading lower than 58.2 percent was July 1983.

State employment and unemployment data for April is scheduled for release on Wednesday, May 27. The national employment situation report for April is scheduled for release on Friday, May 8.