

# Texas Economic Update

March 28, 2016

## Summary

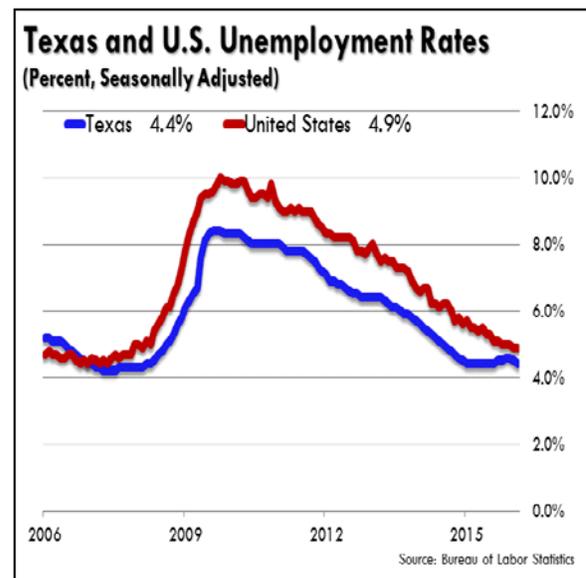
Nonfarm payroll employment in Texas increased by 2,100 jobs and the unemployment rate fell to 4.4 percent in February according to data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

## Texas Unemployment Rate

During February, the unemployment rate in Texas declined by 0.1 percentage point to 4.4 percent. The number of people counted as unemployed fell by 19,270 in February to 574,970, while the labor force grew by 48,004 to 13,215,777. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 19 posted lower unemployment rates for the month than Texas. A year earlier, the unemployment rate in Texas stood at 4.4 percent.

The 10 year peak for the unemployment rate in Texas was 8.4 percent in October 2009. The series high for the unemployment rate in Texas occurred in November 1986 when the unemployment rate reached 9.2 percent. The 10 year low for the unemployment rate in Texas was 4.2 percent in July 2007. The series low for the unemployment rate in Texas occurred in December 2000 when the unemployment rate reached 4.0 percent. BLS began publishing the state unemployment rate series in 1976.

The national unemployment rate was unchanged at 4.9 percent in February. February's unemployment rate was 0.6 percentage point lower than a year earlier. The 10-year high for the national unemployment rate was 10.0 percent in October 2009. The 10-year low was 4.4 percent in May 2007.



## Texas Payroll Employment

Texas nonfarm payrolls increased by 2,100 jobs, or 0.02 percent, on a seasonally adjusted basis during February. In the prior month, nonfarm payrolls increased by 31,200. Over the past 12 months nonfarm payrolls in Texas increased by 170,900, or 1.45 percent. Texas nonfarm payroll employment has increased in 11 of the past 12 months.

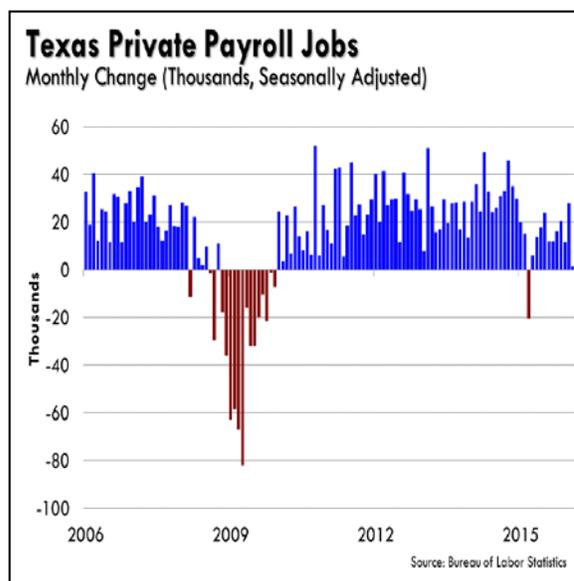
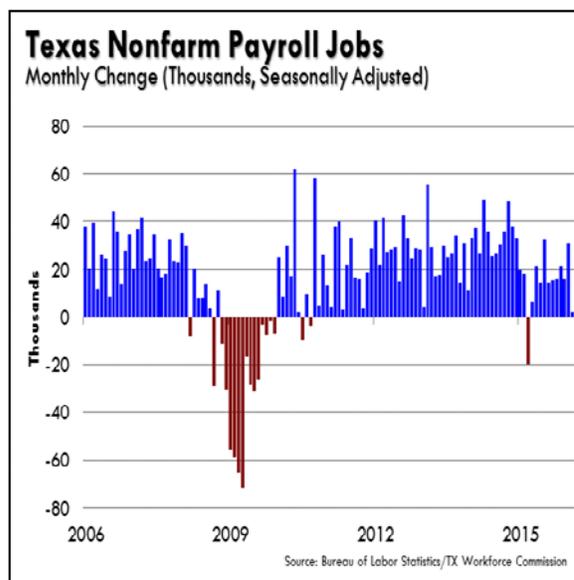
Nationally, nonfarm payrolls increased by 242,000 jobs in February, or 0.17 percent. Over the 12-month period ending February 2016 nonfarm payrolls grew by 2,672,000 jobs, or 1.9 percent. Texas ranks 29th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in nonfarm payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During February, Texas private sector payrolls increased by 1,600, or 0.02 percent. Private sector payrolls increased by 28,100 jobs in the prior month. Over the past 12 months, private sector payrolls in Texas increased by 142,800, or 1.44 percent. Texas private sector payroll employment has increased in 11 of the past 12 months.

Nationally private-sector payroll jobs increased by 230,000 jobs in 1.9, or 0.19 percent. Over the past 12 months, the nation's economy has added 2,597,000 jobs in the private sector, an increase of 2.18 percent.

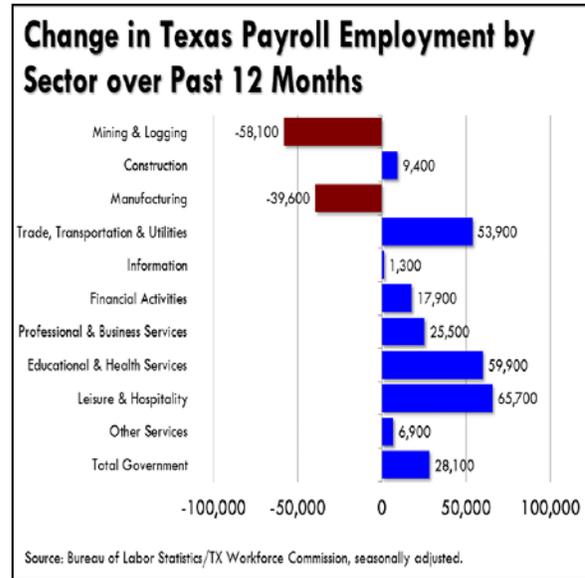
Texas ranks 34th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in private sector payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During February, total government payroll employment in Texas increased by 500, or 0.03 percent. Federal government payroll employment increased by 800, or 0.41 percent. State government payroll employment increased by 700, or 0.19 percent, while local government payroll employment declined by 1,000, or 0.08 percent.



Over the past year, total government payroll employment increased by 28,100, or 1.53 percent. State government payroll employment increased by 6,400, or 1.75 percent. Local government payroll employment increased by 19,400, or 1.51 percent.

The best performing sectors on a seasonally adjusted basis during February were Educational & Health Services (+6,100) and Trade, Transportation & Utilities (+5,500). The poorest performing sectors during the month were Manufacturing (-6,800) and Mining & Logging (-6,600).



The best performing sectors during the last twelve months were Leisure & Hospitality (+65,700) and Educational & Health Services (+59,900). The poorest performing sectors for the year were Mining & Logging (-58,100) and Manufacturing (-39,600).

#### Other Texas Labor Force Statistics

The labor force participation rate in Texas rose to 63.6 percent in February from 63.4 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 25 have a higher labor force participation rate than Texas. The labor force participation rate in Texas 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 Texas was 66.8 percent in March 2006. The series high for the labor force participation rate in Texas occurred in September 1995 when the labor force participation rate hit 69.4 percent. The 10 year low for the labor force participation rate was 63.4 percent in January 2016. The series low for the labor force participation rate occurred in January 1976 when the labor force participation rate hit 63.2 percent.

The national labor force participation rate rose by 0.2 percentage point to 62.9 percent in February, but remains near its 38-year low of 62.4 percent.

The employment-to-population ratio, or the percentage of the Texas civilian noninstitutionalized population 16 years and older counted as employed, rose to 60.8 percent in February from 60.6 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 25 have higher employment-to-population ratios than Texas. The employment-to-population ratio in Texas is 0.3 percentage point lower than a year earlier.

The 10 year high for the employment-to-population ratio in Texas was 63.4 percent in March 2006. The series high for the employment-to-population ratio in Texas occurred in November 1998 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 65.7 percent. The 10 year low for the employment-to-population ratio was 60.5 percent in December 2015. The series low for the employment-to-population ratio occurred in March 1976 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 59.5 percent.

The national employment-to-population ratio rose by 0.2 percentage point to 59.8 percent in February. That rate was 0.5 percentage point higher than a year earlier. The all-time high for the employment-to-population ratio was 64.7 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 ratio posted a reading lower than 58.2 percent was July 1983.

State employment and unemployment data for March is scheduled for release on April 15, 2016. The national employment situation report for March will be released on Friday, April 1, 2016.

