



# Massachusetts Economic Update

August 21, 2015

## Summary

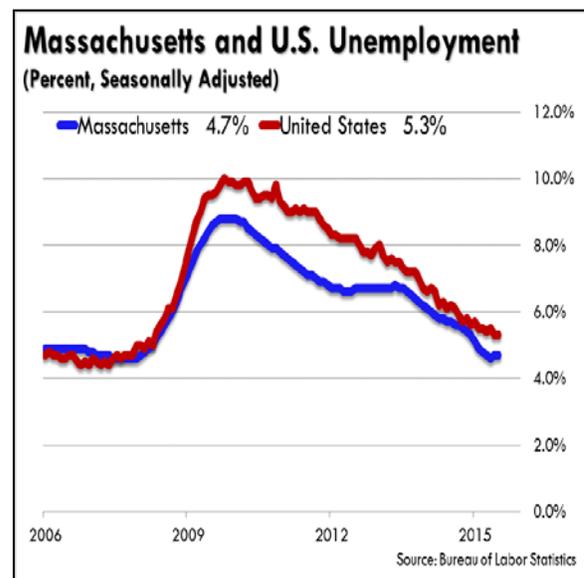
Nonfarm payroll employment in Massachusetts increased by 7,200 jobs and the unemployment rate was unchanged at 4.7 percent in July according to data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

## Massachusetts Unemployment Rate

During July, the unemployment rate in Massachusetts was unchanged at 4.7 percent. The number of people counted as unemployed rose by 944 in July to 169,982, while the labor force fell by 20,412 to 3,614,356. 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 5.7 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 May 2015. 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 5.3 percent in July. July's unemployment rate was 0.9 percentage point lower than a year earlier when the rate stood at 6.2 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 7,200 jobs, or 0.21 percent, on a seasonally adjusted basis during July. In the prior month, nonfarm payrolls increased by 9,300. Over the past 12 months nonfarm payrolls in Massachusetts increased by 69,300, or 2.02 percent. Massachusetts nonfarm payroll employment has increased in 11 of the past 12 months.

Nationally nonfarm payrolls increased by 215,000 jobs in July, or 0.15 percent. Over the 12 month period ending in July 2015, nonfarm payrolls grew by 2,915,000 jobs, or 2.09 percent. Massachusetts ranks 19th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in nonfarm payroll employment over the past 12 months.

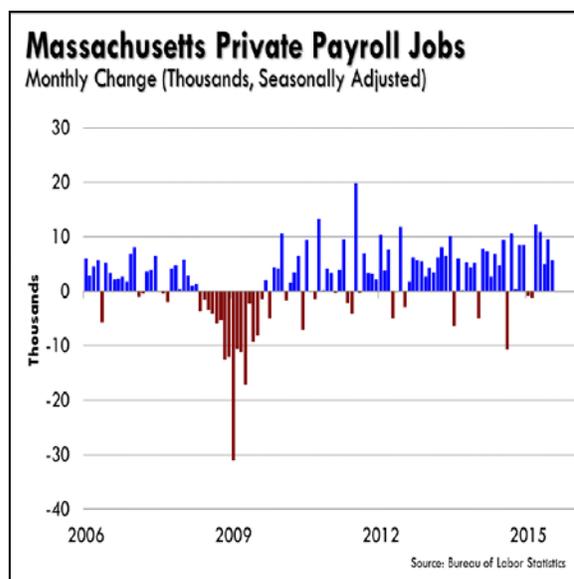
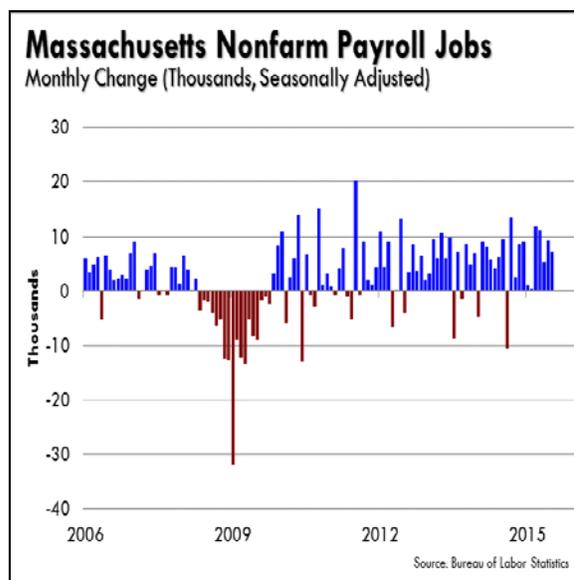
During July, Massachusetts private sector payrolls increased by 5,600, or 0.19 percent. Private sector payrolls increased by 9,500 jobs in the prior month. Over the past 12 months, private sector payrolls in Massachusetts increased by 58,100, or 1.95 percent. Massachusetts private sector payroll employment has increased in 9 of the past 12 months.

Nationally, private sector payroll jobs increased by 210,000 in July, or 0.18 percent. Over the past 12 months, the nation's economy

has added 2,853,000 private sector payroll jobs, an increase of 2.43 percent.

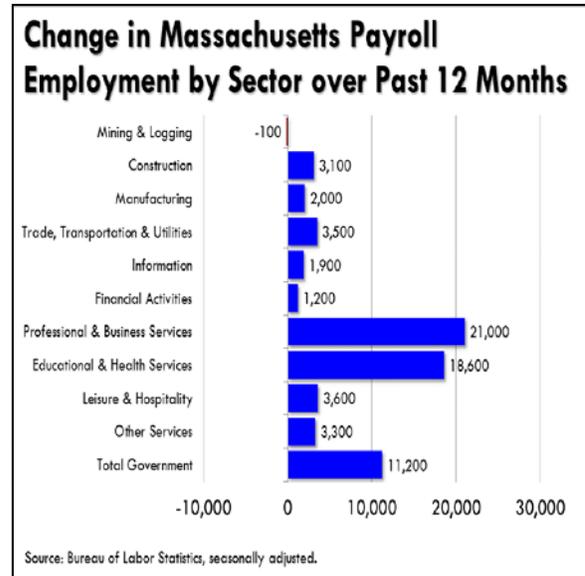
Massachusetts ranks 25th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in private sector payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During July, total government payroll employment in Massachusetts increased by 1,600, or 0.35 percent. Federal government payroll employment increased by 200, or 0.44 percent. State government payroll employment increased by 1,600, or 1.17 percent, while local government payroll employment declined by 200, or 0.07 percent.



Over the past year, total government payroll employment increased by 11,200, or 2.49 percent. State government payroll employment increased by 5,500, or 4.14 percent. Local government payroll employment increased by 5,200, or 1.91 percent.

The best performing sectors on a seasonally adjusted basis during July were Educational & Health Services (+3,600) and Professional & Business Services (+2,000). The poorest performing sectors during the month were Leisure & Hospitality (-2,200) and Financial Activities (-700).



The best performing sectors during the last twelve months were Professional & Business Services (+21,000) and Educational & Health Services (+18,600). The poorest performing sectors for the year were Mining & Logging (-100) and Financial Activities (+1,200).

### Other Massachusetts Labor Force Statistics

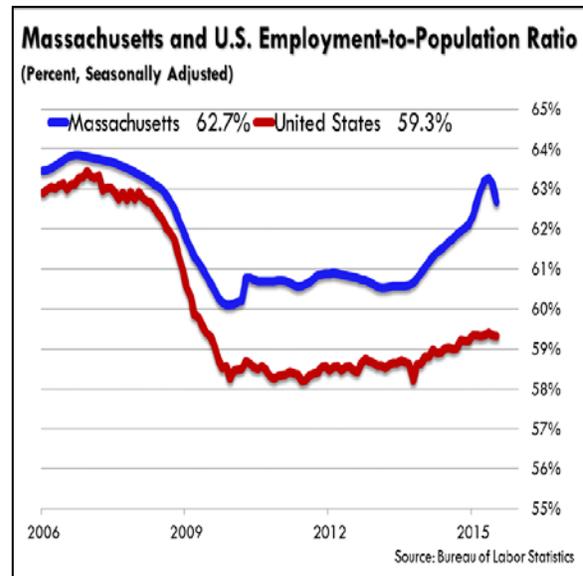
The labor force participation rate in Massachusetts declined to 65.8 percent in July from 66.2 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 16 have a higher labor force participation rate than Massachusetts. The labor force participation rate in Massachusetts is unchanged 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 remained at 62.6 percent in July. That rate is 0.2 percentage point lower than a year earlier. The rate for June and July are the lowest recorded since October 1977.

The employment-to-population ratio, or the percentage of the Massachusetts civilian noninstitutionalized population 16 years and older counted as employed, declined to 62.7 percent in July from 63.1 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 15 have higher employment-to-population ratios than Massachusetts. The employment-to-population ratio in Massachusetts is 1.0 percentage point 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 held steady at 59.3 percent in July. At 59.3 percent, the national employment-to-population ratio is below its 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 August is scheduled for release on Friday, September 18. The national employment situation report for August will be released on Friday, September 4.