



# Virginia Economic Update

March 14, 2016

## Summary

Nonfarm payroll employment in Virginia increased by 1,900 jobs and the unemployment rate fell to 4.1 percent in January according to data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

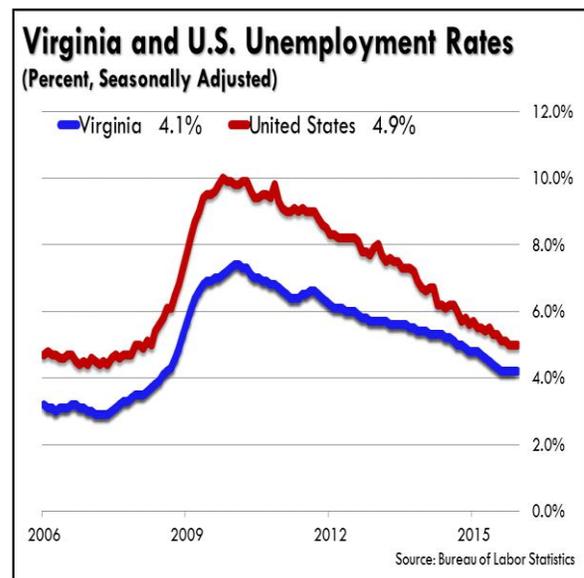
## Virginia Unemployment Rate

During January, the unemployment rate in Virginia declined by 0.1 percentage point to 4.1 percent. The number of people counted as unemployed fell by 648 in January to 175,985, while the labor force grew by 4,940 to 4,246,510. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 13 posted lower unemployment rates for the month than Virginia. A year earlier, the unemployment rate in Virginia stood at 4.8 percent.

The 10 year peak for the unemployment rate in Virginia was 7.4 percent in February 2010.

The series high for the unemployment rate in Virginia occurred in December 1982 when the unemployment rate reached 7.9 percent. The 10 year low for the unemployment rate in Virginia was 2.9 percent in May 2007. The series low for the unemployment rate in Virginia occurred in November 2000 when the unemployment rate reached 2.1 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.



## Virginia Payroll Employment

Virginia nonfarm payrolls increased by 1,900 jobs, or 0.05 percent, on a seasonally adjusted basis during January. In the prior month, nonfarm payrolls increased by 5,900. Over the past 12 months nonfarm payrolls in Virginia increased by 88,600, or 2.32 percent. Virginia nonfarm payroll employment has increased in 11 of the past 12 months.

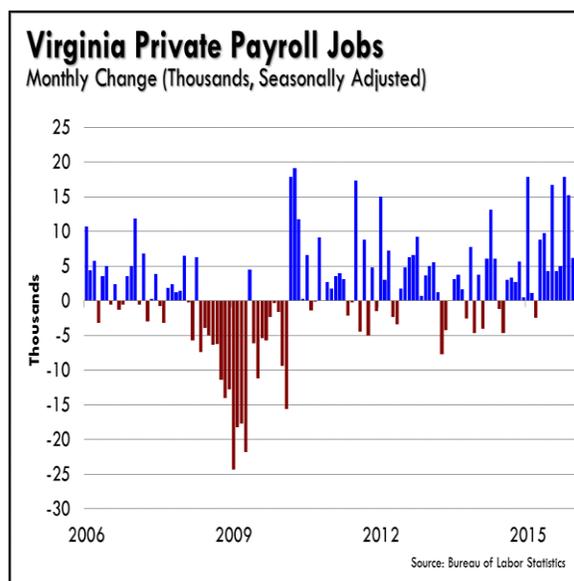
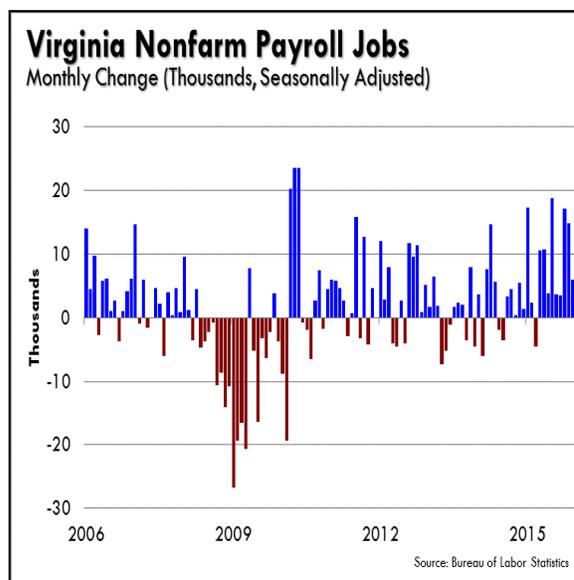
Nationally, nonfarm payrolls increased by 242,000 jobs in February, or 0.17 percent. Over the 12-month period ending February 2016 nonfarm payrolls grew by 2,672,000 jobs, or 1.9 percent. Virginia ranks 14th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in nonfarm payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During January, Virginia private sector payrolls declined by 300, or 0.01 percent. Private sector payrolls increased by 6,200 jobs in the prior month. Over the past 12 months, private sector payrolls in Virginia increased by 86,400, or 2.78 percent. Virginia private sector payroll employment has increased in 10 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.

Virginia ranks 13th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in private sector payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During January, total government payroll employment in Virginia increased by 2,200, or 0.31 percent. Federal government payroll employment increased by 1,500, or 0.85 percent. State government payroll employment was unchanged, while local government payroll employment increased by 700, or 0.19 percent.



Over the past year, total government payroll employment increased by 2,200, or 0.31 percent. State government payroll employment declined by 400, or 0.25 percent. Local government payroll employment declined by 1,300, or 0.35 percent.

The best performing sectors on a seasonally adjusted basis during January were Educational & Health Services (+3,800) and Professional & Business Services (+2,500). The poorest performing sectors during the month were Construction (-6,400) and Other Services (-1,300).

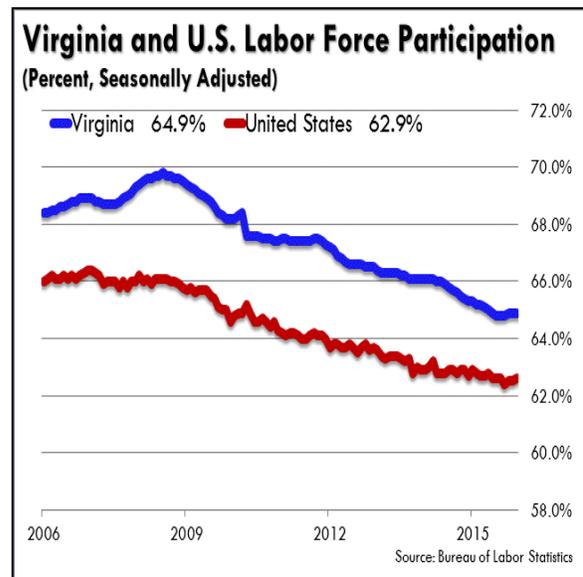
The best performing sectors during the last twelve months were Professional & Business Services (+29,400) and Trade, Transportation & Utilities (+18,500). The poorest performing sectors for the year were Information (-1,100) and Mining & Logging (-900).

### Other Virginia Labor Force Statistics

The labor force participation rate in Virginia was unchanged at 64.9 percent in January. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 18 have a higher labor force participation rate than Virginia. The labor force participation rate in Virginia 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 Virginia was 69.8 percent in July 2008. The series high for the labor force participation rate in Virginia occurred in May 1992 when the labor force participation rate hit 71.5 percent. The 10 year low for the labor force participation rate was 64.8 percent in September 2015. This also represents the series low for the labor force participation rate in Virginia.

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 Virginia civilian noninstitutionalized population 16 years and older counted as employed, rose to 62.3 percent in January from 62.2 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 16 have higher employment-to-population ratios than Virginia. The employment-to-population ratio in Virginia is 0.2 percentage point higher than a year earlier.

The 10 year high for the employment-to-population ratio in Virginia was 67.1 percent in April 2008. The series high for the employment-to-population ratio in Virginia occurred in December 1989 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 67.2 percent. The 10 year low for the employment-to-population ratio was 62.1 percent in September 2015. The series low for the employment-to-population ratio occurred in November 1982 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 61.0 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 February is scheduled for release on March 25, 2016. The national employment situation report for February was released on Friday, March 4, 2016.

