



Alaska Economic Update

September 18, 2015

Summary

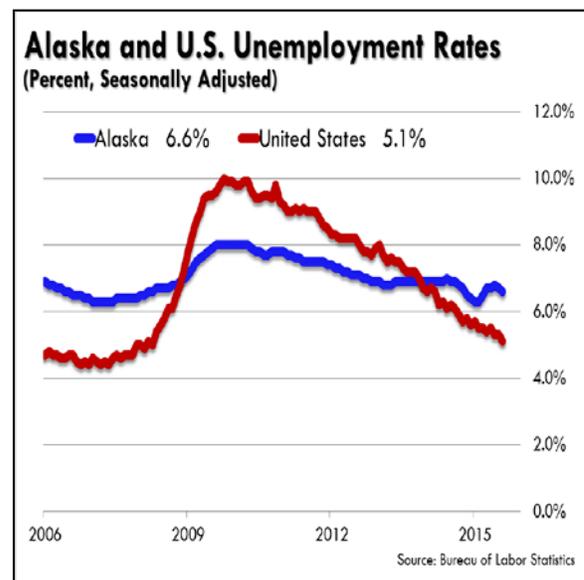
Nonfarm payroll employment in Alaska declined by 1,800 jobs and the unemployment rate fell to 6.6 percent in August according to data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Alaska Unemployment Rate

During August, the unemployment rate in Alaska declined by 0.1 percentage point to 6.6 percent. The number of people counted as unemployed fell by 612 in August to 23,841, while the labor force fell by 995 to 362,808. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 46 posted lower unemployment rates for the month than Alaska. A year earlier, the unemployment rate in Alaska stood at 6.9 percent.

The 10 year peak for the unemployment rate in Alaska was 8.0 percent in April 2010. The series high for the unemployment rate in Alaska occurred in August 1986 when the unemployment rate reached 11.2 percent. The 10 year low for the unemployment rate was 6.3 percent in February 2015. This also represents the series low for the unemployment rate in Alaska. BLS began publishing the state unemployment rate series in 1976.

The national unemployment rate declined by 0.2 percentage point to 5.1 percent in August. August's unemployment rate was 1.0 percentage point lower than a year earlier. 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.



Alaska Payroll Employment

Alaska nonfarm payrolls declined by 1,800 jobs, or 0.53 percent, on a seasonally adjusted basis during August. In the prior month, nonfarm payrolls declined by 600. Over the past 12 months nonfarm payrolls in Alaska declined by 1,400, or 0.42 percent. Alaska nonfarm payroll employment has increased in 6 of the past 12 months.

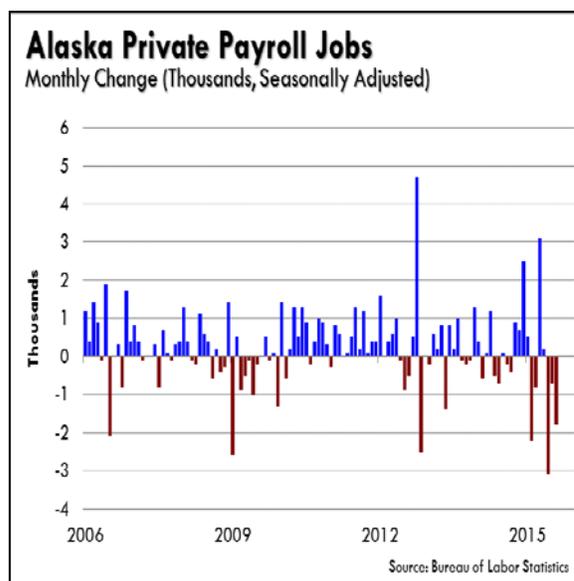
Nationally nonfarm payrolls increased by 173,000 jobs in August, or 0.12 percent. Over the 12 month period ending in August 2015 nonfarm payrolls grew by 2,919,000 jobs, or 2.09 percent. Alaska ranks 49th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in nonfarm payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During August, Alaska private sector payrolls declined by 1,800, or 0.70 percent. Private sector payrolls declined by 700 jobs in the prior month. Over the past 12 months, private sector payrolls in Alaska declined by 1,100, or 0.43 percent. Alaska private sector payroll employment has increased in 6 of the past 12 months.

Nationally private-sector payroll jobs increased by 140,000 jobs in August, or 0.12 percent. Over the past 12 months, the nation's economy has added 2,789,000 jobs in the private sector, an increase of 2.37 percent.

Alaska ranks 49th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in private sector payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During August, total government payroll employment in Alaska was unchanged. Federal government payroll employment was unchanged. State government payroll employment increased by 100, or 0.39 percent, while local government payroll employment declined by 100, or 0.24 percent.



Over the past year, total government payroll employment declined by 300, or 0.37 percent. State government payroll employment declined by 800, or 3.03 percent. Local government payroll employment increased by 300, or 0.73 percent.

The best performing sectors on a seasonally adjusted basis during August were Trade, Transportation & Utilities (+500) and Educational & Health Services (+400). The poorest performing sectors during the month were Professional & Business Services (-900) and Manufacturing (-700).

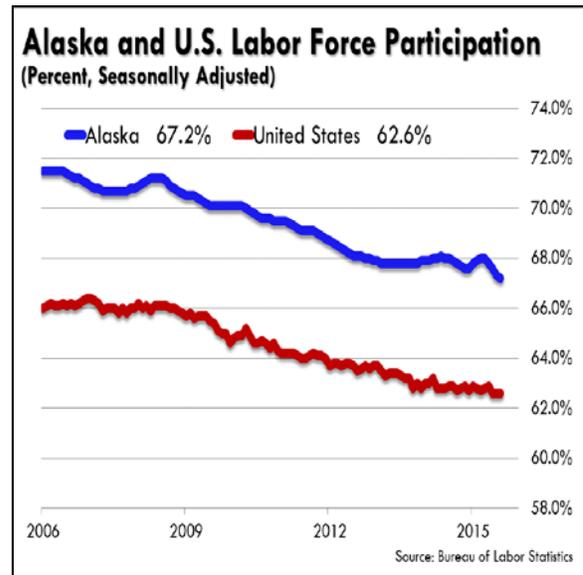
The best performing sectors during the last twelve months were Trade, Transportation & Utilities (+2,100) and Construction (+1,000). The poorest performing sectors for the year were Professional & Business Services (-2,200) and Manufacturing (-1,200).

Other Alaska Labor Force Statistics

The labor force participation rate in Alaska declined to 67.2 percent in August from 67.3 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 11 have a higher labor force participation rate than Alaska. The labor force participation rate in Alaska 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 Alaska was 71.8 percent in September 2005. The series high for the labor force participation rate in Alaska occurred in December 1989 when the labor force participation rate hit 74.4 percent. The 10 year low for the labor force participation rate was 67.2 percent in August 2015. This also represents the series low for the labor force participation rate in Alaska.

The national labor force participation rate was unchanged at 62.6 percent in August. That rate was 0.3 percentage point lower than a year earlier. At 62.6 percent, the labor force participation rate is at its lowest level since October 1977.



The employment-to-population ratio, or the percentage of the Alaska civilian noninstitutionalized population 16 years and older counted as employed, was unchanged at 62.8 percent in August. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 14 have higher employment-to-population ratios than Alaska. The employment-to-population ratio in Alaska is 0.4 percentage point lower than a year earlier.

The 10 year high for the employment-to-population ratio in Alaska was 66.8 percent in June 2006. The series high for the employment-to-population ratio in Alaska occurred in March 1998 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 69.5 percent. The 10 year low for the employment-to-population ratio was 62.8 percent in August 2015. The series low for the employment-to-population ratio occurred in September 1977 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 62.5 percent.

The national employment-to-population ratio rose by 0.1 percentage point to 59.4 percent in August. That rate was 0.4 percentage point higher than a year earlier. The employment-to-population ratio stood at 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 September is scheduled for release on Tuesday, October 20. The national employment situation report for September will be released on Friday, October 2.

