



# Colorado Economic Update

June 19, 2015

## Summary

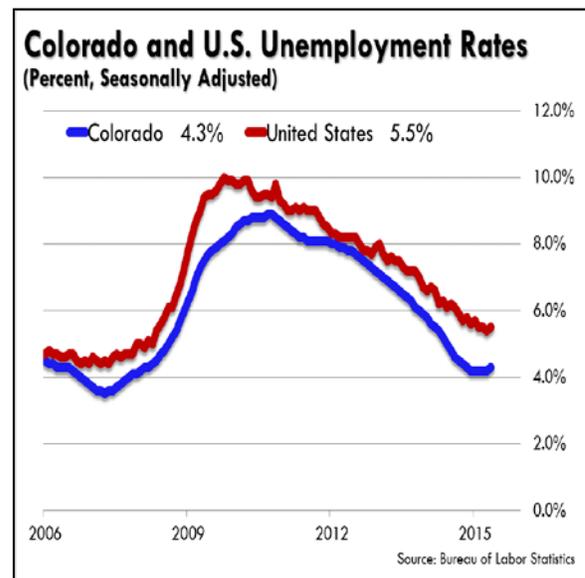
Nonfarm payroll employment in Colorado increased by 4,900 jobs and the unemployment rate rose to 4.3 percent in May according to data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

## Colorado Unemployment Rate

During May, the unemployment rate in Colorado increased by 0.1 percentage point to 4.3 percent. The number of people counted as unemployed rose by 3,110 in May to 122,929, while the labor force fell by 136 to 2,829,274. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 12 posted lower unemployment rates for the month than Colorado. A year earlier, the unemployment rate in Colorado stood at 5.2 percent.

The 10 year peak for the unemployment rate in Colorado was 8.9 percent in October 2010. This also represents the series high for the unemployment rate in Colorado. The 10 year low for the unemployment rate in Colorado was 3.5 percent in April 2007. The series low for the unemployment rate in Colorado occurred in December 2000 when the unemployment rate reached 2.7 percent. BLS began publishing the state unemployment rate series in 1976.

The national unemployment rate was inched up to 5.5 percent in May. May's unemployment rate was 0.8 percentage point lower than a year earlier when the rate stood at 6.3 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.



## Colorado Payroll Employment

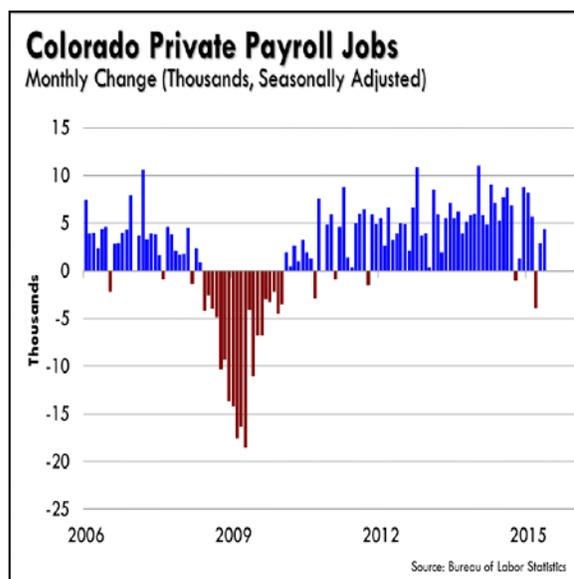
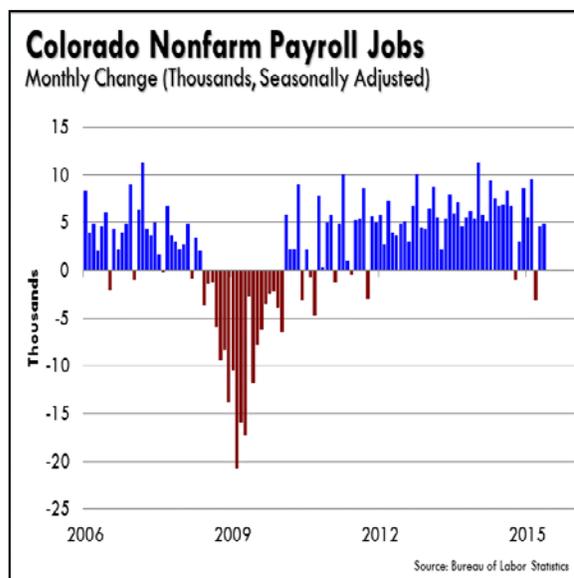
Colorado nonfarm payrolls increased by 4,900 jobs, or 0.20 percent, on a seasonally adjusted basis during May. In the prior month, nonfarm payrolls increased by 4,700. Over the past 12 months nonfarm payrolls in Colorado increased by 61,100, or 2.49 percent. Colorado nonfarm payroll employment has increased in 10 of the past 12 months.

Nationally nonfarm payrolls increased by 280,000 jobs in May, or 0.20 percent. Over the 12 month period ending in May 2015, nonfarm payrolls grew by 3,058,000 jobs, or 2.21 percent. Colorado ranks 11st among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in nonfarm payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During May, Colorado private sector payrolls increased by 4,400, or 0.21 percent. Private sector payrolls increased by 2,900 jobs in the prior month. Over the past 12 months, private sector payrolls in Colorado increased by 54,700, or 2.67 percent. Colorado private sector payroll employment has increased in 10 of the past 12 months.

Nationally, private sector payroll jobs increased by 262,000 in May, or 0.22 percent. Over the past 12 months, the nation's economy has added 2,958,000 private sector payroll jobs, an increase of 2.53 percent. Colorado ranks 13rd among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in private sector payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During May, total government payroll employment in Colorado increased by 500, or 0.12 percent. Federal government payroll employment declined by 300, or 0.56 percent. State government payroll employment increased by 900, or 0.81 percent, while local government payroll employment declined by 100, or 0.04 percent.



Over the past year, total government payroll employment increased by 6,400, or 1.57 percent. State government payroll employment increased by 1,900, or 1.74 percent. Local government payroll employment increased by 4,000, or 1.63 percent.

The best performing sectors on a seasonally adjusted basis during May were Financial Activities (+2,600) and Leisure & Hospitality (+1,500). The poorest performing sectors during the month were Trade, Transportation & Utilities (-2,300) and Construction (-1,000).

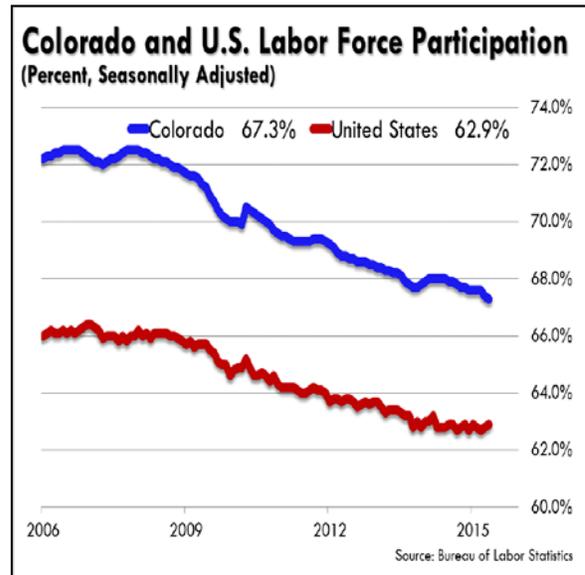
The best performing sectors during the last twelve months were Educational & Health Services (+15,700) and Leisure & Hospitality (+13,500). The poorest performing sectors for the year were Information (-1,900) and Trade, Transportation & Utilities (+600).

#### Other Colorado Labor Force Statistics

The labor force participation rate in Colorado declined to 67.3 percent in May from 67.4 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 13 have a higher labor force participation rate than Colorado. The labor force participation rate in Colorado 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 Colorado was 72.5 percent in January 2008. The series high for the labor force participation rate in Colorado occurred in August 1998 when the labor force participation rate hit 74.5 percent. The 10 year low for the labor force participation rate was 67.3 percent in May 2015. The series low for the labor force participation rate occurred in June 1976 when the labor force participation rate hit 66.4 percent.

The national labor force participation rate rose by 0.1 percentage point to 62.9 percent in May. That rate is 0.1 percentage point higher than a year earlier.



The employment-to-population ratio, or the percentage of the Colorado civilian noninstitutionalized population 16 years and older counted as employed, declined to 64.4 percent in May from 64.5 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 12 have higher employment-to-population ratios than Colorado. The employment-to-population ratio in Colorado is 0.1 percentage point lower than a year earlier.

The 10 year high for the employment-to-population ratio in Colorado was 69.6 percent in October 2007. The series high for the employment-to-population ratio in Colorado occurred in February 1999 when the

employment-to-population ratio hit 71.7 percent. The 10 year low for the employment-to-population ratio was 63.4 percent in August 2012. The series low for the employment-to-population ratio occurred in October 1976 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 62.6 percent.

The national employment-to-population ratio ticked up to 59.4 percent in May. At 59.4 percent, the national employment-to-population ratio has finally risen back to the level it was at when the recession ended in June 2009. The all-time high for the employment-to-population ratio was 64.7 percent in May 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 May is scheduled for release on Tuesday, July 21. The national employment situation report for June is scheduled for release on Thursday, July 2. The national employment report is being released on Thursday instead of Friday due to the Independence Day holiday.

