



Maine Economic Update

March 28, 2016

Summary

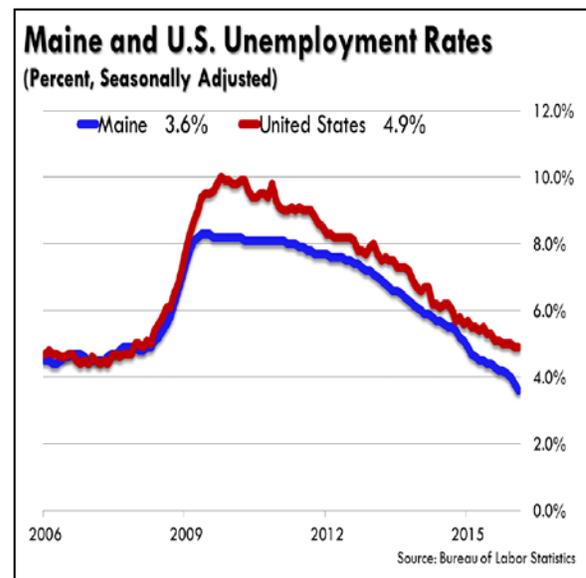
Nonfarm payroll employment in Maine declined by 1,300 jobs and the unemployment rate fell to 3.6 percent in February according to data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Maine Unemployment Rate

During February, the unemployment rate in Maine declined by 0.2 percentage point to 3.6 percent. The number of people counted as unemployed fell by 1,633 in February to 24,040, while the labor force fell by 114 to 673,786. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 8 posted lower unemployment rates for the month than Maine. A year earlier, the unemployment rate in Maine stood at 4.7 percent.

The 10 year peak for the unemployment rate in Maine was 8.3 percent in July 2009. The series high for the unemployment rate in Maine occurred in January 1977 when the unemployment rate reached 9.0 percent. The 10 year low for the unemployment rate in Maine was 3.6 percent in February 2016. The series low for the unemployment rate in Maine occurred in December 2000 when the unemployment rate reached 3.2 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.



Maine Payroll Employment

Maine nonfarm payrolls declined by 1,300 jobs, or 0.21 percent, on a seasonally adjusted basis during February. In the prior month, nonfarm payrolls increased by 3,700. Over the past 12 months nonfarm payrolls in Maine increased by 5,800, or 0.95 percent. Maine nonfarm payroll employment has increased in 7 of the past 12 months.

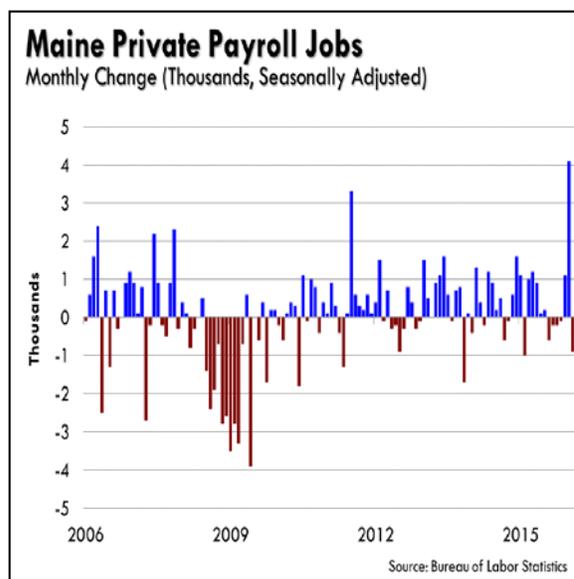
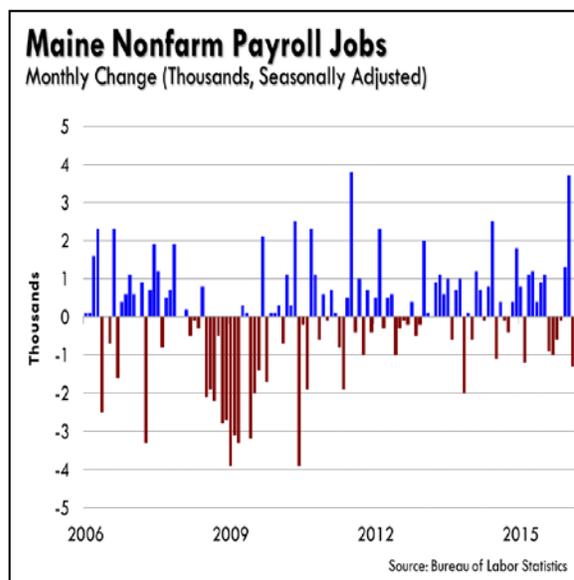
Nationally, nonfarm payrolls increased by 242,000 jobs in February, or 0.17 percent. Over the 12-month period ending February 2016 nonfarm payrolls grew by 2,672,000 jobs, or 1.9 percent. Maine ranks 39th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in nonfarm payroll employment over the past 12 months.

During February, Maine private sector payrolls declined by 900, or 0.17 percent. Private sector payrolls increased by 4,100 jobs in the prior month. Over the past 12 months, private sector payrolls in Maine increased by 6,600, or 1.30 percent. Maine private sector payroll employment has increased in 7 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.

Maine ranks 37th among the 50 states and the District of Columbia for percentage gain in private sector payroll employment over the past 12 months.

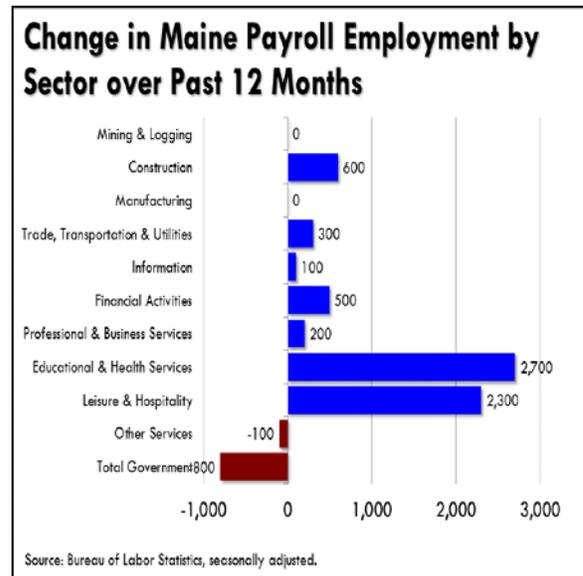
During February, total government payroll employment in Maine declined by 400, or 0.40 percent. Federal government payroll employment increased by 100, or 0.68 percent. State government payroll employment declined by 400, or 1.56 percent, while local government payroll employment declined by 100, or 0.17 percent.



Over the past year, total government payroll employment declined by 800, or 0.80 percent. State government payroll employment declined by 900, or 3.44 percent. Local government payroll employment declined by 600, or 1.02 percent.

The best performing sectors on a seasonally adjusted basis during February were Leisure & Hospitality (+1,400) and Educational & Health Services (+500). The poorest performing sectors during the month were Construction (-1,000) and Manufacturing (-800).

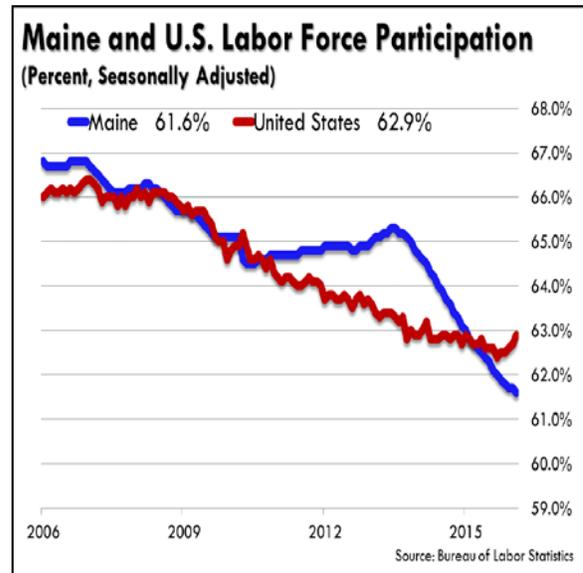
The best performing sectors during the last twelve months were Educational & Health Services (+2,700) and Leisure & Hospitality (+2,300). The poorest performing sectors for the year were Total Government (-800) and Other Services (-100).



Other Maine Labor Force Statistics

The labor force participation rate in Maine declined to 61.6 percent in February from 61.7 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 35 have a higher labor force participation rate than Maine. The labor force participation rate in Maine 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 Maine was 66.8 percent in December 2006. The series high for the labor force participation rate in Maine occurred in March 1991 when the labor force participation rate hit 68.9 percent. The 10 year low for the labor force participation rate was 61.6 percent in February 2016. The series low for the labor force participation rate occurred in March 1978 when the labor force participation rate hit 59.7 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 Maine civilian noninstitutionalized population 16 years and older counted as employed, rose to 59.4 percent in February from 59.3 percent the prior month. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, 32 have higher employment-to-population ratios than Maine. The employment-to-population ratio in Maine is 0.4 percentage point lower than a year earlier.

The 10 year high for the employment-to-population ratio in Maine was 63.8 percent in January 2007. The series high for the employment-to-population ratio in Maine

occurred in April 2000 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 66.4 percent. The 10 year low for the employment-to-population ratio was 59.2 percent in December 2015. The series low for the employment-to-population ratio occurred in December 1977 when the employment-to-population ratio hit 55.5 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.

