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Employment Labor Market Information Bulletin

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Rhode Island's Unemployment Rate Inches Up in December

Rhode Island's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for December was 5.0 percent, reflecting little change from November's estimate of 4.9 percent. The number of unemployed Rhode Island residents edged up by 200 over the month to 28,100. A year ago, the unemployment rate was 5.5 percent and the jobless level stood at 30,800. The national jobless figure fell from 5.9 percent in November to 5.7 percent in December, as frustrated jobseekers gave up their search for work. Rhode Island's unemployment rate remained below the national average for the twenty-ninth straight month.

"Labor market conditions in Rhode Island remained relatively stable over the month as evidenced by the negligible change in our unemployment rate," said Acting Director Marvin D. Perry. "Even though the number of jobs increased in December, the gain of only 600 indicates that businesses remain cautious about adding workers."

Rhode Island Job Highlights

Rhode Island businesses reported a gain of 600 jobs last month bringing the December job count (seasonally adjusted) to 481,300. Professional & Business Services (includes Temporary Help Agencies) and Manufacturing reflected over-the-month gains of 600 and 100, respectively. Employment losses were noted in Trade, Transportation & Utilities (-1,000), Other Services (-300), Leisure & Hospitality (-200), Construction (-100) and Government (-100). (Continued on Page 4)

A Decade of Change in Rhode Island

*An Analysis of Private Sector
Employment in the Ocean State
1992 - 2002*

The past ten years have brought significant change to Rhode Island's economy. Between 1992 and 2002, nearly 43,700 private sector jobs have been added in the Ocean State, a 12.1 percent increase. Within the state, nearly all of the major economic sectors have contributed to this gain, led by Services and Retail Trade. Regionally, Rhode Island has trailed its neighbors in employment growth during most of this period. However, an analysis of short-term employment data shows that the Ocean State has fared the recent recession and subsequent period of economic stagnation better than other northeastern states to this point.

Using information collected by the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training and the United States Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, *A Decade of Change in Rhode Island* analyzes employment data and trends by industry on the statewide, county, and local levels. It also provides a snapshot of regional employment since 1992 and looks at what the future may hold for Rhode Island's workforce in the coming decade. This publication may be a useful tool in discovering how private industry employment in the Ocean State has changed over the past ten years...and where it may be headed during the coming decade.

This publication is available on the Labor Market Information web site at www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/publications/decade.htm or you may request a hard copy by calling Nick Ucci at 401-462-8429.

Business Expo 2004

Tim Russert, NBC's senior vice president, Washington bureau chief and moderator of Meet the Press, will be the keynote speaker for Business Expo 2004 on April 7 and 8 at the Rhode Island Convention Center. Tim Russert is one of the most influential journalists working in Washington today. His keynote address will open the 15th Annual Business Expo on April 7. For more information about exposition space, call the Greater Providence Chamber of Commerce at (401) 521-5000.

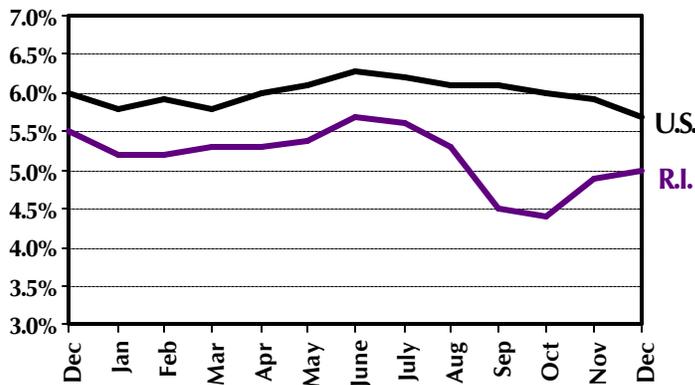
Rhode Island Labor Force Statistics* (in thousands)

	Seasonally Adjusted			Unadjusted		
	Dec 03	Nov 03	Dec 02	Dec 03	Nov 03	Dec 02
Civilian Labor Force	562.8	564.8	561.5	565.9	567.4	564.3
Resident Employment	534.7	536.9	530.6	539.0	542.3	535.1
Unemployment	28.1	27.9	30.8	26.9	25.2	29.2
Unemployment Rate	5.0%	4.9%	5.5%	4.8%	4.4%	5.2%

United States Labor Force Statistics (in thousands)

	Seasonally Adjusted			Unadjusted		
	Dec 03	Nov 03	Dec 02	Dec 03	Nov 03	Dec 02
Civilian Labor Force	146,878	147,187	145,157	146,501	146,969	144,807
Resident Employment	138,479	138,533	136,459	138,556	138,700	136,599
Unemployment	8,398	8,653	8,698	7,945	8,269	8,209
Unemployment Rate	5.7%	5.9%	6.0%	5.4%	5.6%	5.7%

Rhode Island & United States Unemployment Rates Seasonally Adjusted 2002-2003



City & Town Unadjusted Unemployment Rates

	Dec 03	Dec 02**
Barrington	3.1	3.0
Bristol	4.4	4.7
Burrillville	4.9	5.5
Central Falls	7.5	8.6
Charlestown	5.0	5.2
Coventry	4.4	4.9
Cranston	4.5	4.8
Cumberland	4.8	4.9
East Greenwich	4.0	5.3
East Providence	5.1	6.0
Exeter	4.0	4.5
Foster	5.1	4.6
Glocester	4.1	4.2
Hopkinton	4.0	2.8
Jamestown	3.1	3.8
Johnston	5.0	5.3
Lincoln	4.4	4.7
Little Compton	4.8	5.5
Middletown	3.7	4.1
Narragansett	2.8	3.3
New Shoreham	17.2	17.2
Newport	4.4	4.6
North Kingstown	3.4	4.0
North Providence	4.5	5.2
North Smithfield	4.7	5.6
Pawtucket	6.1	6.2
Portsmouth	3.1	3.2
Providence	5.8	6.6
Richmond	2.7	2.5
Scituate	4.4	5.4
Smithfield	3.9	4.5
South Kingstown	3.8	3.7
Tiverton	6.1	5.1
Warren	4.2	4.6
Warwick	4.0	4.2
West Greenwich	4.8	5.6
West Warwick	5.0	5.3
Westerly	4.0	3.5
Woonsocket	6.0	7.3
State of R.I.	4.8	5.2

** Revised

Unemployment Insurance Claims Activity

	Dec	Nov	Dec	% Change		Year to Date		
	2003	2003	2002	Nov 03	Dec 02	2003	2002	% Change
Initial Claims	12,195	5,531	12,046	120.5%	1.2%	89,198	88,303	1.0%
Number of Payments	59,760	39,617	63,192	50.8%	-5.4%	695,359	703,694	-1.2%
Amount of Payments (gross millions)	\$18.5	\$12.3	\$18.9	50.3%	-2.4%	\$209.1	\$208.6	0.2%
Exhaustions (Final Payments)	1,614	1,241	1,608	30.1%	0.4%	18,255	18,166	0.5%
E.S. Fund Balance (millions)	\$205.5	\$221.4	\$253.8	-7.2%	-19.0%			

Rhode Island labor market information is available on the web at www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi. If you find that the LMI web site meets your need for labor market information and you would like to be removed from the mailing list for this publication, please call LMI at (401) 462-8740 or e-mail us at lmi@dlt.state.ri.us.

*Current month figures are preliminary; prior month and year are revised. Totals may not add due to rounding. Labor Force statistics are compiled by Labor Market Information, in cooperation with the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Labor.

Total Nonfarm Employment in Rhode Island* December 2003

Sectors reflect the recent conversion from the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system to the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).
Not all industries previously classified under a particular SIC are classified in a similarly titled NAICS sector.

	Employment in Thousands			Net Change From	
	Dec 2003	Nov 2003	Dec 2002	Nov 2003	Dec 2002
Total Nonfarm	487.1	487.9	486.1	-800	1,000
Goods Producing	80.7	81.4	81.3	-700	-600
Natural Resources & Mining	0.2	0.3	0.2	-100	0
Construction	20.0	20.7	19.4	-700	600
Specialty Trade Contractors	12.8	12.9	12.5	-100	300
Manufacturing	60.5	60.4	61.7	100	-1,200
Durable Goods	38.5	38.5	40.2	0	-1,700
Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.	8.5	8.4	8.7	100	-200
Computer & Electronic Product Mfg.	4.8	4.7	5.3	100	-500
Electrical Equipment & Appliance Mfg.	2.8	2.9	3.0	-100	-200
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	3.9	3.9	3.8	0	100
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	11.4	11.5	12.2	-100	-800
Jewelry & Silverware	8.6	8.6	9.2	0	-600
Non-Durable Goods	22.0	21.9	21.5	100	500
Chemical Manufacturing	3.6	3.6	3.8	0	-200
Plastics & Rubber Products Mfg.	3.5	3.5	3.2	0	300
Service Providing	406.4	406.5	404.8	-100	1,600
Wholesale Trade	17.4	17.5	16.7	-100	700
Retail Trade	58.1	57.1	56.5	1,000	1,600
Grocery Stores	6.4	6.4	6.4	0	0
Health & Personal Care Stores	5.8	5.8	5.7	0	100
General Merchandise Stores	12.3	12.2	12.3	100	0
Department Stores	5.8	5.7	5.9	100	-100
Other General Merchandise Stores	6.3	6.3	6.5	0	-200
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	11.5	11.6	11.6	-100	-100
Transportation & Warehousing	10.4	10.5	10.4	-100	0
Information	11.1	11.0	11.4	100	-300
Publishing	3.5	3.5	3.5	0	0
Financial Activities (including Real Estate)	32.2	32.4	32.6	-200	-400
Finance & Insurance	26.3	26.5	26.8	-200	-500
Credit Intermediation & Related Activities	12.2	12.1	12.0	100	200
Insurance Carriers & Related Activities	10.5	10.7	11.0	-200	-500
Professional & Technical Services	18.4	18.3	19.0	100	-600
Management of Companies & Enterprises	6.9	6.8	6.6	100	300
Administrative & Waste Services	23.6	23.8	23.0	-200	600
Educational Services	19.6	19.6	20.3	0	-700
Colleges & Universities	12.5	12.5	13.8	0	-1,300
Health Care & Social Assistance	71.6	71.5	70.6	100	1,000
Ambulatory Health Care Services	21.0	21.0	20.2	0	800
Hospitals	22.6	22.5	22.5	100	100
Nursing & Residential Care Facilities	17.9	17.9	17.9	0	0
Social Assistance	10.1	10.1	10.0	0	100
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	6.6	6.8	6.9	-200	-300
Accommodation & Food Services	39.3	39.9	39.5	-600	-200
Accommodation	3.8	4.1	3.9	-300	-100
Food Services & Drinking Places	35.5	35.8	35.6	-300	-100
Other Services	23.1	23.2	22.6	-100	500
Government	67.0	67.0	67.5	0	-500
Federal Government	10.5	10.4	10.6	100	-100
State Government	17.7	17.9	18.1	-200	-400
Local Government	38.8	38.7	38.8	100	0
Local Education	25.5	25.5	25.6	0	-100
Local Non-Ed	13.3	13.2	13.2	100	100

*Not seasonally adjusted.

For more detail see "Introducing NAICS" at www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/es202/naics/naics.htm.

Some subcategories are not additive.

Rhode Island's Unemployment Rate Inches Up in December

(Continued from Page 4)

The December employment figure is down 2,200 from the July peak, but still up 1,600 since the beginning of the year. Since January, employment increases were noted in Professional & Business Services (+1,000), Other Services (+700), and Construction (+600), while declines were evident in Manufacturing (-1,700), Trade, Transportation & Utilities (-800), Leisure & Hospitality (-600) and Government (-400).

The unadjusted job count for December stood at 487,100, down 800 from the revised November figure of 487,900. Over-the-month declines were reported in several sectors with the largest occurring in Construction (-700) and Accommodation & Food Services (-600). The Retail Trade sector posted a monthly gain of 1,000 jobs, predictable for this time of year.

Over the year, employment (unadjusted) was up 1,000 from the 486,100 jobs reported in December 2002. Increases in Retail Trade (+1,600), Health Care & Social Assistance (+1,000), Wholesale Trade (+700), Construction (+600), Administrative & Waste Services (+600) and Other Services (+500) overshadowed the major decreases in Manufacturing (-1,200), Educational Services (-700), Professional & Technical Services (-600), Government (-500) and Financial Activities & Real Estate (-400).

The \$12.93 average hourly wage earned by the Manufacturing sector's production workers in December 2003 represents a yearly gain of nine cents per hour and an over-the-month loss of four cents per hour. In December 2003, Manufacturing employees worked an average of 41.2 hours per week, an increase 0.8 of an hour from November and 1.2 hours from December 2002. This was the longest workweek reported in the Manufacturing sector since June 1998.

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers

	Dec 03	Nov 03	Dec 02	% Change
				Prev. Year
All Items	184.3	184.5	180.9	1.9%

Source: U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

Multiple Jobholders in the Ocean State

In 2002, an estimated 32,000 Ocean State residents held multiple jobs, accounting for 6.2 percent of employed Rhode Islanders sixteen years and older. This represents a significant decline in the state's multiple jobholder rate since 1999, when 8.1 percent (39,000) of workers held two or more jobs. It is also the lowest rate reported since 1994, when an estimated 6.8 percent (32,000) of the state's residents fell into this category.

During the past nine years, Rhode Island's multiple jobholder rate has remained above the national average. In 1994, 6.0 percent of all United States workers held two or more jobs - 0.8 percentage points less than the Ocean State. This gap widened to 2.3 percentage points in 1999, but steadily declined to 0.9 percentage points by 2002. In comparison to other states, Rhode Island has consistently ranked among the top two-fifths of states with the highest multiple jobholder rates.

For more information regarding multiple jobholders in Rhode Island and across the nation, including industry and occupational analysis, please visit the LMI web site at www.dlt.ri.gov/lmi/publications/mjh.htm. Multiple Jobholders in the Ocean State is available for viewing and downloading in Adobe PDF format. If you require a hard copy, please contact Nick Ucci at (401) 462-8429 or nucci@dlt.state.ri.us.

Manufacturing Employment in Rhode Island, Not Seasonally Adjusted December 2003

	Employment					Production Worker Averages					
	(in thousands)			Net Change From:		Weekly Hours			Hourly Earnings		
	Dec 03	Nov 03	Dec 02	Nov 03	Dec 02	Dec 03	Nov 03	Dec 02	Dec 03	Nov 03	Dec 02
Manufacturing	60.5	60.4	61.7	100	-1200	41.2	40.4	40.0	12.93	12.97	12.84
Durable Goods	38.5	38.5	40.2	0	-1700	40.4	39.6	39.0	12.87	12.94	12.83
Fabricated Metal Product Mfg.	8.5	8.4	8.7	100	-200	39.0	39.8	39.7	11.60	11.60	11.35
Computer & Electronic Product Mfg.	4.8	4.7	5.3	100	-500	38.5	37.5	41.3	13.80	13.71	13.74
Electrical Equipment & Appliance Mfg.	2.8	2.9	3.0	-100	-200	36.4	37.0	36.1	9.50	9.50	9.40
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	3.9	3.9	3.8	0	100	40.0	39.8	43.2	15.30	15.30	15.57
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	11.4	11.5	12.2	-100	-800	38.8	39.2	39.4	10.60	10.70	10.59
Jewelry and Silverware	8.6	8.6	9.2	0	-600	39.3	40.2	40.1	10.03	10.11	9.90
Non-Durable Goods	22.0	21.9	21.5	100	500	42.4	41.6	41.7	13.02	13.02	12.86
Chemical Manufacturing	3.6	3.6	3.8	0	-200	39.9	39.6	41.7	15.55	15.57	15.76
Plastics & Rubber Products Mfg.	3.5	3.5	3.2	0	300	41.0	40.0	42.8	14.58	14.65	14.56