

Employment Labor Market Information Bulletin

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March 2000

The February Unemployment Rate Remained at 3.8 Percent for the Third Straight Month

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for February held steady at 3.8 percent for the third month in a row. The unemployment rate continued to show improvement over the year, dropping 0.5 of a percentage point from February 1999. The number of unemployed Rhode Island residents fell by 2,700 over the year. The number of jobs in Rhode Island rose by 9,600 or 2.1 percent, between February 1999 and February 2000.

The Unemployment Rate

The February unemployment rate of 3.8 percent was unchanged for the third straight month, matching December's ten-year low. The number of unemployed Rhode Islanders declined by 400 from January to February. Nationally, the unemployment rate for February climbed 0.1 of a percentage point to 4.1 percent. Rhode Island's unemployment figure remained below the US rate for the sixth straight month.

"The Rhode Island economy continued to prosper in terms of both job creation and ongoing low unemployment. The number of jobs in the State is up substantially from a year ago, while the unemployment rate of 3.8 percent over the last three months is the lowest since July 1989," said DLT Director Dr. Lee H. Arnold. (Continued on Page 4)

BusinessFirst

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Job Fairs-Expos-Recruitments & Seminars Take Center Stage

The historically busy March -May hiring months have been no exception this year. The Employer Service Unit (ESU) has been involved in a multitude of events designed to provide job seekers with quality employment opportunities and with local companies to expand their networks and business horizons. The Unit aggressively solicits resumes from individuals searching for employment and serves as an invaluable source of information for businesses as well. Tax credits, grants, training dollars, prevailing wages & hiring trends are just a few of the areas of their expertise that they share with employers. Following the success of the **Two Day Providence Journal Expo**, the unit's upcoming events are:

Citadel Communications & OSO.com Job Fair 2000
Roger Williams Park Casino, April 12th, Noon-7:00pm

Over 40 recruiting companies have already registered for the Citadel Communications/OSO.com Job Fair at the Roger Williams Park Casino in Providence. This historic nineteenth century building will provide a marvelous atmosphere for job seekers and companies alike. Organizers report that there will be a wide array of opportunities for all types of positions.... from entry level to upper management. A small sampling of some of the positions available are Account executives, Administrative staff, Banking/finance, Medical positions, Sales, and Technical positions. There is still time for any interested employer to secure a booth and participate in what is sure to be an exciting event. For more information, contact Ms. Sonja Almeida @ (401) 433-4200 ext.136 or sonja@efortress.com. (Continued on Page 3)

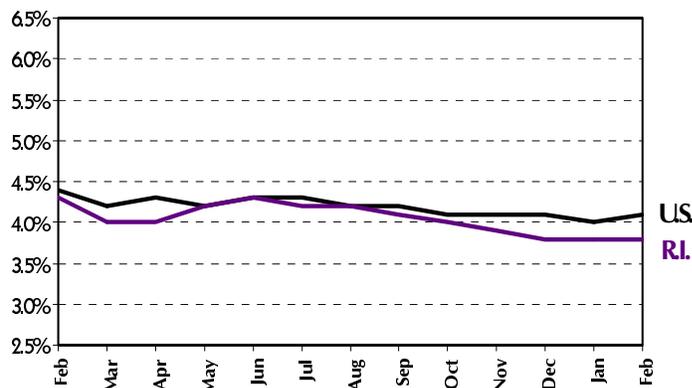
Rhode Island Labor Force Statistics* (in thousands)

	Unadjusted			Seasonally Adjusted		
	Feb 00	Jan 00	Feb 99	Feb 00	Jan 00	Feb 99
Civilian Labor Force	499.7	500.6	496.7	501.7	504.9	498.5
Resident Employment	475.2	476.9	469.4	482.9	485.6	476.9
Unemployment	24.5	23.7	27.3	18.8	19.2	21.5
Unemployment Rate	4.9%	4.7%	5.5%	3.8%	3.8%	4.3%

United States Labor Force Statistics (in thousands)

	Unadjusted			Seasonally Adjusted		
	Feb 00	Jan 00	Feb 99	Feb 00	Jan 00	Feb 99
Civilian Labor Force	140,185	139,621	138,202	141,165	140,910	139,137
Resident Employment	133,954	133,357	131,639	135,362	135,221	133,029
Unemployment	6,231	6,264	6,563	5,804	5,689	6,108
Unemployment Rate	4.4%	4.5%	4.7%	4.1%	4.0%	4.4%

Rhode Island & United States Unemployment Rates Seasonally Adjusted 1999-2000



City & Town Unadjusted Unemployment Rates

	Feb 00	Feb 99
Barrington	2.9	2.9
Bristol	4.3	5.0
Burrillville	5.5	5.5
Central Falls	5.8	7.3
Charlestown	6.1	7.8
Coventry	4.5	4.9
Cranston	4.4	5.0
Cumberland	4.4	4.6
East Greenwich	4.1	5.1
East Providence	5.7	5.4
Exeter	5.2	6.3
Foster	5.4	6.9
Glocester	4.6	4.4
Hopkinton	4.1	4.6
Jamestown	4.3	4.7
Johnston	5.8	6.9
Lincoln	4.4	5.0
Little Compton	4.6	5.1
Middletown	4.8	5.7
Narragansett	2.8	3.5
New Shoreham	21.5	20.1
Newport	7.0	7.8
North Kingstown	3.6	4.2
North Providence	4.7	5.3
North Smithfield	3.8	4.2
Pawtucket	5.2	5.8
Portsmouth	4.3	5.3
Providence	5.7	6.4
Richmond	2.3	2.5
Scituate	5.1	5.7
Smithfield	4.7	4.9
South Kingstown	4.1	5.0
Tiverton	6.2	6.5
Warren	5.6	5.2
Warwick	4.2	4.8
West Greenwich	5.1	5.2
West Warwick	6.0	6.1
Westerly	4.6	5.6
Woonsocket	5.4	6.4
State of R.I.	4.9	5.5

Unemployment Insurance Claims Activity

	Feb.	Jan.	Feb.	% Change		Year to Date		
	2000	2000	1999	Jan 00	Feb 99	2000	1999	% Change
Initial Claims	8,003	11,326	8,853	-29.3%	-9.6%	19,329	23,538	-17.9%
Number of Payments	72,032	55,533	64,193	29.7%	12.2%	127,565	128,761	-0.9%
Amount of Payments (gross millions)	\$18.1	\$13.6	\$15.1	33.3%	20.3%	\$31.8	\$30.0	5.9%
Exhaustions (Final Payments)	945	1,102	1,089	-14.2%	-13.2%	2,047	2,258	-9.3%
E.S. Fund Balance (millions)	\$251.5	\$252.9	\$219.6	-0.6%	14.5%			

*PLEASE NOTE: Current month figures are PRELIMINARY, prior month & year are REVISED. Farmers, Self-employed, Domestic & Armed Services personnel are excluded from Establishment Employment figures. 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.

For additional information, comments or suggestions, contact
Labor Market Information, Phone (401)222-3706, Fax: (401)222-2731, www.dlt.state.ri.us/lmi

Job Fairs-Expos

(Continued from Page 1)

Northern Rhode Island Career Fair Bryant College, April 12th 8:00am-2:00pm

The ESU will again be a major player at Bryant College for their annual career fair. Students from across Rhode Island will visit throughout the day, asking specific questions of represented companies regarding hiring trends, prevailing wages and minimum qualifications. The ESU is arguably one of the busiest booths as students query them on job opportunities, juvenile restrictions to work, maximum hours and other pertinent information on entry-level/first time jobs.

Hiring in the Year 2000 Crown Plaza Hotel, Warwick, April 12th 8:00am-12:00pm

The University Affiliated Program, in conjunction with Rhode Island College, will be holding a job fair/seminar at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Warwick. The 8:00am seminar will concentrate on instructing employers on how to hire new employees and to retain them once they've been trained. All companies are welcome to attend.

Total Establishment Employment in Rhode Island*

	Employment (in thousands)			Net Change From	
	Feb 00	Jan 00	Feb 99	Jan 00	Feb 99
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	459.6	456.7	450.0	2900	9600
GOODS PRODUCING	89.5	89.7	90.2	-200	-700
Contract Construction	15.7	16.2	14.8	-500	900
Manufacturing	73.8	73.5	75.4	300	-1600
SERVICE PRODUCING	370.1	367.0	359.8	3100	10300
Trans. & Public Utilities	15.4	15.5	15.6	-100	-200
Trade (Wholesale & Retail)	102.4	102.6	97.5	-200	4900
Wholesale	20.1	20.0	19.3	100	800
Durables=	12.6	12.6	12.1	-----	500
Nondurables=	7.6	7.4	7.3	200	300
Retail	82.3	82.6	78.2	-300	4100
Building & Garden Supplies=	2.3	2.3	2.0	-----	300
General Merchandise	7.0	7.4	6.2	-400	800
Food Stores=	15.9	16.0	15.1	-100	800
Automotive Dealers	7.4	7.4	6.9	-----	500
Apparel & Accessory Stores	4.4	4.7	3.5	-300	900
Furn., Home Furn., & Equipt.=	2.4	2.4	2.3	-----	100
Eating and Drinking Places	28.3	27.8	27.8	500	500
Miscellaneous Retail	14.7	14.6	14.3	100	400
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	29.6	29.5	29.2	100	400
Depository Institutions	8.7	8.7	8.5	-----	200
Services	158.3	155.1	153.9	3200	4400
Hotels & Other Lodging=	3.7	3.6	3.2	100	500
Business Services	29.4	28.6	26.7	800	2700
Auto & Misc. Repair=	5.1	5.1	4.9	-----	200
Amusement & Recreation	4.6	4.4	3.8	200	800
Health Services	51.0	51.1**	51.8	-100	-800
Educational Services	18.0	16.0	18.2	2000	-200
Social Services	15.6	15.4	15.0	200	600
Government	64.4	64.3	63.6	100	800
Federal	10.3	10.5	10.5	-200	-200
State	18.4	18.4	18.2	-----	200
Local	35.7	35.4	34.9	300	800
Education=	23.1	22.8	22.5	300	600
Non Education=	12.5	12.6	12.4	-100	100

** Labor Dispute = Publication of these industries is not approved by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

Establishment Employment, Hours and Earnings in Manufacturing Industries in Rhode Island

	EMPLOYMENT (in thousands)					PRODUCTION-WORKER AVERAGES					
	Net Change					Weekly Hours			Hourly Earnings		
	Feb 00	Jan 00	Feb 99	Jan 00	Feb 99	Feb 00	Jan 00	Feb 99	Feb 00	Jan 00	Feb 99
MANUFACTURING	73.8	73.5	75.4	300	-1600	40.5	39.7	39.3	12.21	12.20	11.93
DURABLE MFG.	48.3	48.1	49.3	200	-1000	40.5	39.3	39.5	12.05	12.05	11.74
Lumber/Furniture	2.8	2.9	2.9	-100	-100	44.9	41.6	39.6	12.13	12.07	12.02
Stone-Clay-Glass	1.1	1.1	1.0	-----	100	41.2	40.0	42.6	13.93	13.89	13.60
Primary Metals	4.1	4.1	4.3	-----	-200	41.5	40.4	43.1	12.81	12.78	12.67
Fabricated Metals	8.2	8.2	8.3	-----	-100	37.1	37.0	36.8	11.35	11.23	10.87
Nonelectrical Mach.	5.1	5.0	4.9	100	200	41.9	41.9	39.2	13.52	13.53	13.33
Electrical Mach.	5.4	5.3	5.5	100	-100	41.7	40.7	40.5	11.46	11.64	11.36
Trans. Equipment	3.5	3.5	3.4	-----	100	43.3	39.3	43.2	14.37	14.33	14.25
Instruments	5.4	5.4	4.9	-----	500	39.6	39.2	42.7	12.77	12.76	12.66
Jewelry-Silverware	9.7	9.6	10.9	100	-1200	39.9	37.9	37.4	10.49	10.55	10.02
Miscellaneous Mfg.	3.0	3.0	3.2	-----	-200	39.6	37.9	37.3	11.64	11.52	10.87
NONDURABLE MFG.	25.5	25.4	26.1	100	-600	40.5	40.4	39.0	12.50	12.47	12.30
Food Beverage	2.8	2.8	2.7	-----	100	39.5	41.0	41.7	11.49	11.36	11.48
Textiles	6.9	6.8	7.2	100	-300	41.0	40.1	39.1	10.73	10.71	10.35
Apparel	0.8	0.9	0.8	-100	-----	38.3	38.9	36.8	9.22	9.40	9.05
Paper Products	2.0	2.0	1.9	-----	100	37.5	39.1	38.8	12.04	12.05	11.93
Printing-Publishing	5.5	5.4	5.8	100	-300	39.7	40.0	38.5	16.56	16.69	16.33
Chemical Products	2.0	1.9	2.0	100	-----	41.5	41.4	38.4	13.74	13.67	13.57
Rubber Products	0.5	0.5	0.5	-----	-----	42.5	44.2	41.4	12.97	13.03	12.89
Plastics Products	4.5	4.6	4.7	-100	-200	42.6	41.4	37.9	13.15	12.99	13.09
Leather Products	0.5	0.5	0.5	-----	-----	41.5	40.7	40.8	8.35	8.34	8.04

The February Unemployment Rate Remained at 3.8 Percent for the Third Straight Month

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The Number of Jobs in Rhode Island (Over the Year)

Since February 1999, the number of jobs in Rhode Island increased by 9,600. Year-over-year growth was especially strong in trade and services, which increased by 4,900 and 4,400 jobs, respectively. Within the trade sector, all

component industries added jobs. Apparel/accessory stores, general merchandise stores, and miscellaneous retail stores reported a combined annual gain of 2,100 jobs, mostly due to the opening of Providence Place Mall. A substantial increase in business services (primarily temporary help agencies) along with smaller gains in amusement/recreation, hotels/lodging, automotive repair, and social services boosted services payrolls. Contract construction picked up 900 jobs over the year with special trades construction accounting for the bulk of the increase. Government reported a net gain of 800 jobs due to increases in the state and local segments. The number of jobs in finance/insurance/real estate expanded by 400. In contrast, transportation/public utilities (-200) and manufacturing (-1,600) registered annual job declines. The largest factory job loss occurred in jewelry-silverware (-1,200).

Rhode Island Job Highlights (Over the Month)

The number of jobs in Rhode Island rose by 2,900 from January to February. A large increase in private education and business services more than offset seasonal declines in contract construction and trade.

Services – Services employment rose by 3,200 in February with the largest gain reported in private educational services. Private educational institutions recouped 2,000 jobs as school workers and college students returned following the winter break. Business services added 800 jobs, mostly due to increases at personnel supply agencies. The services industry hit a record high February employment level of 158,300.

Manufacturing – Rhode Island manufacturers experienced a net employment gain of 300 with several industries in both the durable and nondurable goods categories registering modest increases.

Government – Government employment recorded a net gain of 100 from January to February. Local government added 300 jobs in the public education sector. At the same time, federal government declined by 200, mostly due to a reduction in the number of postal workers hired for the holiday season. State government remained even.

Trade – Trade employment registered a net drop in February. Retailers trimmed their payrolls by 300 jobs partly due to additional post-holiday cutbacks in general merchandise and apparel/accessory stores. Food stores also posted a job loss. In contrast, restaurants and miscellaneous retail stores increased their payrolls.

Contract Construction – Contract construction employment declined by 500 over the month as the cold winter weather reduced building activity.

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers

	Feb 00	Jan 00	Feb 99	% Change Prev. Year
All Items	169.7	168.7	164.5	3.2%

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

County Population Trends

From 1998 to 1999, four out of the five counties in Rhode Island recorded population gains. Washington County experienced the healthiest increase during this period, growing by 1,660 residents. In addition to the natural increase (births minus deaths), much of the growth was due to people moving into the county. Kent County added 702 residents between 1998 and 1999, while Newport County and Providence County increased their numbers by 438 and 407, respectively. The population in Bristol County dwindled by 92 due to the out-migration of residents from that area.

State and County Population Estimates

	1990 Census Population	7/1/98	7/1/99	1990-1999 Population Change	1998-1999 Population Change
Rhode Island	1,003,464	987,704	990,819	-12,645	3,115
Bristol County	48,859	49,194	49,102	243	-92
Kent County	161,143	161,418	162,120	977	702
Newport County	87,194	82,586	83,024	-4,170	438
Providence County	596,270	573,701	574,108	-22,162	407
Washington County	109,998	120,805	122,465	12,467	1,660

Source: Population Estimates Program, Population Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census