



Employment Labor Market Information Bulletin

Volume 14 No. 5

May 2002

Rhode Island's Unemployment Rate Edges Up in April

The Unemployment Rate

Mirroring the national trend, Rhode Island's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate increased from March to April. The State unemployment rate edged up three-tenths of a percentage point in April to 4.5 percent after holding steady at 4.2 percent the prior two months. The unemployment rate for the nation climbed to 6.0 percent, its highest point in nearly eight years. Rhode Island's unemployment rate remained well below the national average for the ninth straight month. The number of unemployed Rhode Island residents increased by 1,400 over the month to 22,800. A year ago April, the unemployment rate was 4.7 percent, while the unemployment level stood at 23,800.

"Rhode Island's unemployment rate, while up slightly in April, remains below last year's level and is 1.5 percentage points lower than the national average," said DLT Director Dr. Lee H. Arnold. "The State continued to add jobs over the year and, although the pace of the recovery is slow, we feel the Rhode Island economy has turned the corner."

Rhode Island Job Highlights (Over the Year, Unadjusted Figures)

Jobs at Rhode Island businesses numbered 481,500 in April 2002, up 2,300 (+0.5%) from the 479,200 jobs reported last year. Although this is the smallest annual April gain since 1996, employment is at an all-time April high. Employment increases in Services (+4,200), Finance, Insurance and Real Estate (+1,300), Trade (+1,100) and Government (+600) offset reductions in Contract Construction (-500), Transportation and Public Utilities (-600) and Manufacturing (-3,800). Within the Services sector, a 2,300 job loss in Business Services was offset by increases in other sector components, the largest occurring in the "Other Services" (+3,500) category. This designation includes Engineering Services, Accounting Services, Membership Organizations, Landscape Services and unclassified employers. (Continued on Page 4)

It's Called Worksharing ...And It Works!

Layoffs can be agonizing for both employers and employees. Since 1991, however, the Department of Labor and Training has been able to offer employers an alternative to layoffs when economic conditions cause unwanted slowdowns. The program, called Worksharing, allows you to keep employees on the payroll by having all of the workers in a department or unit share reduced work hours. It does not require that the whole company be affected! Workers participating in Workshare will collect a percentage of Unemployment Insurance benefits for up to 26 weeks and continue to be compensated by their employer for the reduced hours they work! Any private sector employer with two or more employees may participate. Any employee who would be eligible to receive regular Unemployment Insurance benefits if laid off would be able to join in the Workshare program.

Advantages to Worksharing:

- Reduces hiring and retraining costs when business improves.
- Employees avoid financial and emotional hardships usually associated with layoffs.
- May improve employee morale.
- Employers can retain skilled workers.

As we approach the summer months and the usual cycle of slowdowns, "let worksharing work for you"! Learn more about this innovative program with a record of demonstrated achievement. Call the Workshare Office or contact the Employer Service Representative for your geographic area.

Workshare
(401)243-9177

Employer Service Unit
(401) 462-8724

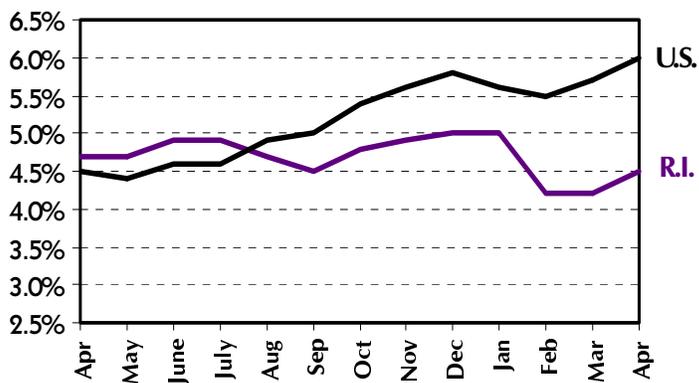
Rhode Island Labor Force Statistics* (in thousands)

	Seasonally Adjusted			Unadjusted		
	Apr 02	Mar 02	Apr 01	Apr 02	Mar 02	Apr 01
Civilian Labor Force	504.9	508.0	505.4	498.1	504.7	498.3
Resident Employment	482.1	486.6	481.6	477.7	481.3	477.0
Unemployment	22.8	21.4	23.8	20.3	23.4	21.3
Unemployment Rate	4.5%	4.2%	4.7%	4.1%	4.6%	4.3%

United States Labor Force Statistics (in thousands)

	Seasonally Adjusted			Unadjusted		
	Apr 02	Mar 02	Apr 01	Apr 02	Mar 02	Apr 01
Civilian Labor Force	142,570	142,005	141,734	141,886	142,092	141,073
Resident Employment	133,976	133,894	135,424	133,740	133,433	135,122
Unemployment	8,594	8,111	6,310	8,146	8,659	5,951
Unemployment Rate	6.0%	5.7%	4.5%	5.7%	6.1%	4.2%

Rhode Island & United States Unemployment Rates Seasonally Adjusted 2001 - 2002



City & Town Unadjusted Unemployment Rates

	Apr 02	Apr 01
Barrington	2.2	2.2
Bristol	3.5	3.4
Burrillville	4.4	4.3
Central Falls	6.9	9.0
Charlestown	4.5	5.0
Coventry	4.0	3.6
Cranston	3.8	4.0
Cumberland	4.0	4.0
East Greenwich	3.8	4.3
East Providence	4.4	4.8
Exeter	3.4	2.9
Foster	4.9	4.2
Glocester	3.0	3.0
Hopkinton	2.1	2.7
Jamestown	3.0	3.5
Johnston	4.4	4.8
Lincoln	3.7	3.6
Little Compton	3.4	2.7
Middletown	3.7	3.3
Narragansett	2.0	2.1
New Shoreham	8.8	14.1
Newport	3.7	4.3
North Kingstown	3.1	3.0
North Providence	3.6	3.8
North Smithfield	2.7	2.9
Pawtucket	5.1	5.8
Portsmouth	3.0	2.9
Providence	5.4	6.1
Richmond	2.6	1.6
Scituate	4.4	3.8
Smithfield	3.6	3.1
South Kingstown	2.8	2.7
Tiverton	4.6	4.3
Warren	4.0	3.5
Warwick	3.6	3.4
West Greenwich	4.3	3.4
West Warwick	4.1	4.4
Westerly	2.3	3.0
Woonsocket	5.3	5.0
State of R.I.	4.1	4.3

Unemployment Insurance Claims Activity

	Apr	Mar	Apr	% Change		Year to Date		
	2002	2002	2001	Mar 02	Apr 01	2002	2001	% Change
Initial Claims	8,085	6,037	8,373	33.9%	-3.4%	31,648	35,569	-11.0%
Number of Payments	71,033	67,601	53,968	5.1%	31.6%	288,221	234,353	23.0%
Amount of Payments (gross millions)	\$21.1	\$20.4	\$14.9	3.1%	41.5%	\$86.1	\$65.9	30.7%
Exhaustions (Final Payments)	2,123	1,499	1,266	41.6%	67.7%	6,365	4,330	47.0%
E.S. Fund Balance (millions)	\$247.2	\$261.8	\$259.6	-5.6%	-4.8%			

*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.

For additional information, comments or suggestions, contact

Labor Market Information, Phone (401)462-8740, Fax: (401)462-8766, www.dlt.state.ri.us/lmi

Occupational Employment Statistics

Nearly eleven hundred employers have been selected to participate in the new Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey. If you receive a copy, please help us out by completing the booklet and returning it as soon as possible. Your participation is essential in order for us to produce timely and accurate wage and employment data.

Can't find time for more paperwork? Call the OES staff at 401-462-8750. They will take your information over the telephone and complete the survey for you!

The economic data we provide depends on the information you supply! To see how the information you provide is used, visit our web site at:

www.dlt.state.ri.us/lmi

Click on Wage Information

Total Establishment Employment in Rhode Island**

	Employment (in thousands)			Net Change From	
	Apr 02	Mar 02	Apr 01	Mar 02	Apr 01
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	481.5	473.8	479.2	7700	2300
GOODS PRODUCING	85.8	84.0	90.1	1800	-4300
Contract Construction	17.8	16.4	18.3	1400	-500
Manufacturing	68.0	67.6	71.8	400	-3800
SERVICE PRODUCING	395.7	389.8	389.1	5900	6600
Trans. & Public Utilities	16.7 *	16.6 *	17.3	100	-600
Trade (Wholesale & Retail)	106.7	105.4	105.6	1300	1100
Wholesale	18.6	18.6	19.0	-----	-400
Durables♦	11.5	11.4	11.7	100	-200
Nondurables♦	7.1	7.1	7.2	-----	-100
Retail	88.1	86.8	86.6	1300	1500
Building & Garden Supplies♦	2.7	2.6	2.3	100	400
General Merchandise	6.3	6.3	6.6	-----	-300
Food Stores♦	15.1	15.2	15.2	-100	-100
Automotive Dealers	7.8	7.8	7.7	-----	100
Apparel & Accessory Stores	4.4	4.3	4.3	100	100
Furn., Home Furn., & Equipt.♦	3.0	2.9	2.7	100	300
Eating and Drinking Places	32.5	31.4	31.6	1100	900
Miscellaneous Retail	16.3	16.3	16.1	-----	200
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	33.5	33.4	32.2	100	1300
Depository Institutions	9.6	9.5	9.1	100	500
Services	173.2	168.8	169.0	4400	4200
Hotels & Other Lodging♦	4.5	4.2	4.0	300	500
Business Services	25.0	24.8	27.3	200	-2300
Auto & Misc. Repair♦	5.6	5.6	5.5	-----	100
Amusement & Recreation	6.0	5.0	5.7	1000	300
Health Services	53.4	53.4	52.0	-----	1400
Educational Services	20.2	20.3	20.3	-100	-100
Social Services	16.8	16.6	16.1	200	700
Government	65.6	65.6	65.0	-----	600
Federal	10.2	10.2	10.4	-----	-200
State	18.4	18.3	18.3	100	100
Local	37.0	37.1	36.3	-100	700
Education♦	24.8	24.8	24.0	-----	800
Non Education♦	12.2	12.2	12.3	-----	-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		
	Apr 02	Mar 02	Apr 01	Mar 02	Apr 01	Apr 02	Mar 02	Apr 01	Apr 02	Mar 02	Apr 01
MANUFACTURING	68.0	67.6	71.8	400	-3800	40.2	40.1	39.7	12.29	12.28	12.15
DURABLE MFG.	44.7	44.3	47.7	400	-3000	40.5	40.2	39.9	12.08	12.09	11.94
Primary Metals	3.2	3.2	3.6	-----	-400	41.0	38.5	40.0	12.96	12.96	12.86
Fabricated Metals	7.7	7.5	8.3	200	-600	39.5	38.6	38.8	11.68	11.71	11.32
Nonelectrical Machinery	3.7	3.6	4.3	100	-600	41.9	41.7	40.1	13.71	13.75	13.60
Electrical Machinery	5.0	5.1	5.6	-100	-600	39.9	39.9	39.6	11.49	11.54	11.59
Trans. Equipment	4.0	3.9	3.6	100	400	40.5	40.6	40.2	14.46	14.46	14.41
Instruments	5.2	5.2	5.3	-----	-100	39.3	41.1	39.4	12.80	12.80	12.76
Miscellaneous Mfg.	12.2	12.2	13.2	-----	-1000	39.9	40.7	40.4	10.71	10.71	10.70
Jewelry, Incl. Costume	9.2	9.2	10.0	-----	-800	39.8	40.6	40.5	10.47	10.49	10.52
All Other Durables	3.7	3.6	3.8	100	-100	44.4	41.2	40.8	12.43	12.46	11.94
NONDURABLE MFG.	23.3	23.3	24.1	-----	-800	39.7	40.1	39.4	12.70	12.62	12.59
Textiles	5.3	5.3	5.8	-----	-500	40.1	39.9	39.9	10.92	10.90	10.90
Printing-Publishing	5.3	5.1	5.3	200	-----	39.4	40.2	38.4	16.62	16.63	16.62
Rubber & Plastic Products	4.4	4.3	4.7	100	-300	38.5	38.5	38.8	13.27	13.27	13.15
All Other Nondurables	8.3	8.6	8.3	-300	-----	40.2	40.8	39.8	11.74	11.73	11.78

**Current month figures are PRELIMINARY. Prior month & year are REVISED. Totals may not add due to rounding. Farmers, Self-employed, Domestic & Armed Services personnel are excluded from Establishment Employment figures.

Rhode Island's Unemployment Rate Edges Up in April

(Continued from Page 1)

Substantial increases were also reported in Health Services (+1,400), Social Services (+700) and Hotels (+500). Within the Trade sector, the largest gains were posted in Restaurants (+900), Building and Garden Supplies (+400) and Home Furnishings (+300). These increases overshadowed job cutbacks in General Merchandise Stores (-300) and Food Stores (-100). Job losses were noted in nearly all Manufacturing industries with the largest occurring in Jewelry/Silverware (-800), Fabricated Metals (-600), Nonelectrical Machinery (-600), Electrical Machinery (-600), Textiles (-500), Primary Metals (-400) and Rubber/Plastic Products (-300). Transportation Equipment reported the only over-the-year gain in manufacturing jobs (+400).

Rhode Island Job Highlights (Over the Month, Unadjusted Figures)

The number of jobs in Rhode Island rose by 7,700 over the month as seasonal increases were reported in Services, Contract Construction and Trade.

Services – The Services sector added 4,400 jobs in April with seasonal gains reported in “Other Services” (+2,800), Amusement & Recreation (+1,000) and Hotels (+300).

Contract Construction – Contract Construction employment was up 1,400 in April, due mostly to the seasonal hiring of special trade contractors.

Trade – Trade reported a gain of 1,300 jobs this month mostly due to a seasonal increase in Restaurant employment (+1,100).

Manufacturing – Manufacturing posted a net gain of 400 over the month. Increases were reported in Fabricated Metals (+200), Printing-Publishing (+200), Nonelectrical Machinery (+100), Transportation Equipment (+100), Rubber/Plastic Products (+100) and Other Durable Goods (+100). Partially negating this increase, job losses were noted in Other Durable Goods (-300) and Electrical Machinery (-100). All other industry components remained even over the month.

Transportation and Public Utilities – Transportation & Public Utilities increased by 100 jobs this month, due to an increase of 100 jobs in Transportation. Employment in Public Utilities remained unchanged as a result of an ongoing lockout at Providence Gas Company.

Finance, Insurance and Real Estate – Employment in this sector increased by 100 jobs in April, due to a small gain in Banking.

Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers

	Apr 02	Mar 02	Apr 01	% Change Prev. Year
All Items	179.8	178.8	176.9	1.6%

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

What is the Consumer Price Index?

The Consumer Price Index (CPI-U), published by the US Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), is a measure of the average change in the prices paid for a fixed market basket of goods and services purchased for consumption by the population covered by the index. The CPI, as the most widely used measure of price change, is often used in escalation agreements to adjust payments for changes in prices. The most frequently used escalation applications are in private sector collective bargaining agreements, rental contracts, insurance policies with automatic inflation protection, and alimony and child support payments. Due to the limited number of geographic areas for which a CPI is calculated, the information presented here is the US CPI figure, which is most commonly used for the State of Rhode Island. For more information, visit the BLS web site at www.bls.gov/cpi.

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

New England Unemployment Rates Seasonally Adjusted

	April 2002	March 2002	April 2001
Connecticut	3.8%	3.5%	2.9%
Maine	4.0%	4.1%	3.9%
Massachusetts	4.7%	4.3%	3.3%
New Hampshire	4.0%	4.1%	3.3%
Rhode Island	4.5%	4.2%	4.7%
Vermont	3.9%	3.9%	3.4%
New England	4.3%	4.1%	3.4%
United States	6.0%	5.7%	4.5%