



2015 YEAR IN REVIEW: WASHINGTON

***Includes Bureau of Labor Statistics jobs, unemployment and earnings data through December 2015**
Last updated on January 26th; January 2016 data will be released on March 14th*

JOBS

- In 2015, private-sector employment in Washington grew by 79,000 jobs, an average of 6,580 jobs per month. This represents a slowdown in job growth from the 6,920 jobs per month added in 2014. In December, Washington businesses added 5,600 jobs.
- The state sectors with the greatest job gains in percentage terms in 2015 were: construction at 5.9 percent (9,900 jobs), leisure and hospitality at 4.8 percent (14,300 jobs) and professional and business services at 4.0 percent (15,000 jobs).
- Since February 2010, the national low point for private-sector employment, Washington businesses have added 368,800 jobs (an increase of 16.2 percent). Nationally, private payrolls have increased by 13.1 percent over this time.



UNEMPLOYMENT

- The Washington unemployment rate fell by 0.8 percentage point in 2015 and was 5.5 percent in December. The rate is 4.9 percentage points below its recent peak of 10.4 percent in January 2010.
- Unemployment in Washington was 0.5 percentage point above the national rate of 5.0 percent in December. The rate was up 0.2 percentage point from November.
- There were 193,200 state residents unemployed in December, down 30,100 from one year prior.

EARNINGS

- Adjusting for inflation, average hourly earnings of private-sector workers in Washington rose by 3.3 percent in 2015. Nationally, these earnings increased by 1.7 percent (not seasonally adjusted).
- In December, average hourly earnings of private-sector workers were \$30.23. The average workweek was 34.0 hours, and average weekly earnings were \$1,027.82.

STATE QUICK FACTS

		Washington	United States
Private-Sector Jobs Added	In 2015	79,000	2.6 million
	Since Feb. 2010	368,800	14.1 million
Unemployment Rate	December 2015	5.5%	5.0%
	December 2014	6.3%	5.6%
	Recession-Era Peak	10.4%	10.0%
Median Household Income (2014 \$)	2014	\$59,100	\$53,700
	2007 (Pre-Recession)	\$66,300	\$57,400
Poverty Rate	2014	12.0%	14.8%
	2007 (Pre-Recession)	10.2%	12.5%
All Veterans' Unemployment Rate	2014	6.4%	5.3%
Post-9/11 Veterans' Unemployment Rate	2014	11.4%	7.2%
Percentage Without Health Insurance	2014	9.2%	11.7%
	2013	14.0%	14.5%

Note: full 2015 data are not yet available for many indicators on this page; they will be included in future reports

STATE GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT

- Real gross domestic product (GDP) in Washington grew by 3.1 percent in 2014, above the national average growth rate of 2.2 percent.*
- Since 2009, annual Washington GDP growth has averaged 1.9 percent, compared with a national average annual growth rate of 1.8 percent.

HOUSING

- Home prices in Washington increased by 9.4 percent from the third quarter of 2014 to the third quarter of 2015. They are up 33.9 percent since their recent low in the fourth quarter of 2011.
- In November 2015, builders in Washington broke ground on 33,170 new housing units (seasonally adjusted annual rate), bringing the average over the past 12 months to 39,257 units. That marks an increase of 23.3 percent from the average over the prior 12 months.

EXPORTS

- In Washington, goods exports totaled \$7.9 billion in November and \$86.0 billion over the past year, up 5.0 percent from the 12 months ending in November 2014 (inflation-adjusted).
- Exports over the past 12 months are up 61.1 percent from their level in 2009 (inflation-adjusted).

* Note: Because of methodological differences, total U.S. real GDP by state differs slightly from headline national GDP figures

** A list of sources used to compile the Washington economic snapshot is available at: <http://bit.ly/JEC-state-by-state-sources>

*** For additional Washington-specific labor sector statistics, please refer to the Washington office: <http://www.workforceexplorer.com/>