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The Employment Situation in Maine – March 2025

Labor market conditions remained stable in March. There has been little change in the number of jobs or unemployment since last summer.

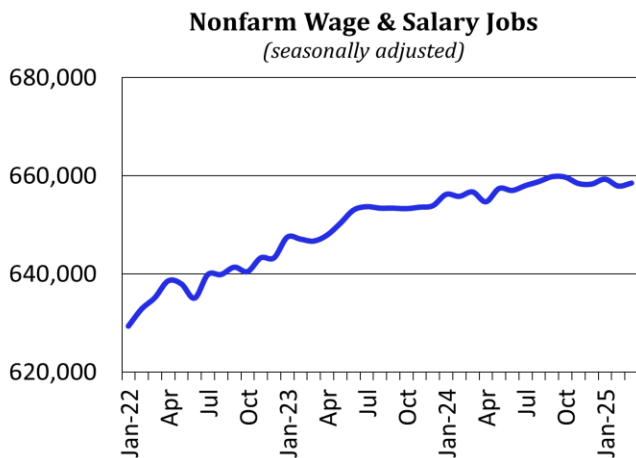


Figure 1: Nonfarm Wage and Salary Jobs

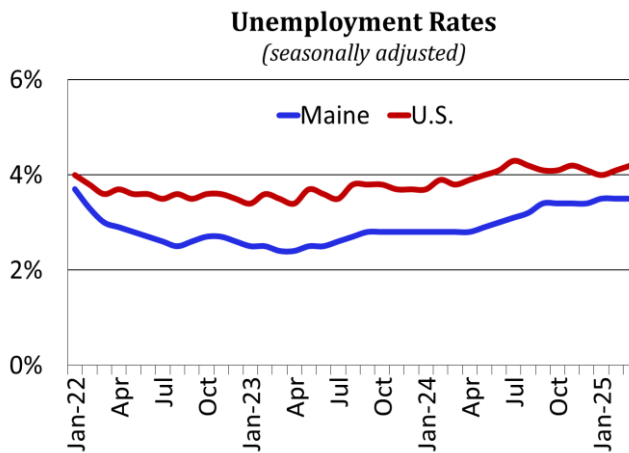


Figure 2: Unemployment Rates, Maine and U.S.

These estimates are derived from two monthly surveys. The Current Population Survey collects information from households on labor force status, including labor force participation, employment, and unemployment. The Current Employment Statistics survey collects information from nonfarm employers by industry on the number of wage and salary jobs, hours worked, and wages paid to individuals on their payrolls. Both surveys are administered by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Preliminary estimates from the two surveys sometimes diverge in direction or magnitude of change. Over extended periods they tend to be more aligned.

Seasonally Adjusted Statewide Labor Force Estimates

The preliminary 3.5 percent unemployment rate was unchanged from the previous two months, and little changed from 3.4 percent the prior four months. Unemployment has been below four percent for 40 months – the second longest such period – and below the U.S. average for all but three months for more than 17 years. The rate continued to be below the long-term average of 5.4 percent for the state since January 1976, when the current methodology was adopted.

Statewide Labor Force Estimates (seasonally adjusted)						
Metric	Last Two Months			Three-Month Averages		
	Feb	Mar	Change	Oct to Dec	Jan to Mar	Change
Labor Force Participation Rate	60.3%	60.2%	-0.1%	60.4%	60.3%	-0.1%
Employment Rate (Employment to Population Ratio)	58.2%	58.1%	-0.1%	58.3%	58.2%	-0.1%
Unemployment Rate	3.5%	3.5%	0.0%	3.4%	3.5%	0.1%

Figure 3: Statewide Labor Force Estimates

Unemployment averaged 4.0 percent for New England and 4.2 percent for the U.S.

Note on Preliminary Unemployment Estimates: They should be considered in the context of whether they are below, near, or above historical or U.S. averages, rather than if they are up or down a few tenths of a point from some other month. The household survey sample they are derived from is large enough for direct estimates for the nation. For states it is much smaller and [statistical modeling](#) is used to prevent large single-month changes that may overstate the magnitude or the direction of changes in labor market conditions.

One result of this is that preliminary unemployment rates for Maine tend to follow an undulating pattern, moving in one direction for several months and then the other through the course of a year. Revisions, published annually in March, have consistently smoothed these patterns. Upward or downward changes in preliminary unemployment or labor force participation rates often are not as indicative of improvement or deterioration in conditions as may appear. Though rates for many months will change when revised, unemployment rates for the early and latter parts of 2024 certainly will remain well below the long-term average.

Seasonally Adjusted Statewide Nonfarm Jobs Estimates

The 658,500 nonfarm wage and salary jobs increased slightly from the revised February estimate. In each of the last nine months jobs have been within 0.1 percent of the average for that period. Jobs were up 1,800 from a year ago, an average of 150 per month, mostly in early 2024. The annual increase was primarily in the leisure and hospitality sector.

Statewide Nonfarm Wage & Salary Jobs Estimates (seasonally adjusted)											
Industry	Jobs (thousands & percent)					Change in Jobs (thousands & percent)					
	2024		2025		Share of Jobs		Feb to Mar		Mar 24 to Mar 25		
	Mar	Feb	Mar	Mar 24	Mar 25	Net	Percent	Monthly Average	Net	Percent	
Total Nonfarm	656.7	657.9	658.5	100%	100%	0.6	0.1%	0.1	1.8	0.3%	
Total Private	554.6	556.0	556.4	84%	84%	0.4	0.1%	0.1	1.8	0.3%	
Healthcare & Social Assistance	110.3	110.5	110.1	17%	17%	-0.4	-0.4%	0.0	-0.2	-0.2%	
Retail Trade	82.3	82.8	82.6	13%	13%	-0.2	-0.2%	0.0	0.3	0.4%	
Professional & Business Services	78.0	77.8	78.0	12%	12%	0.2	0.3%	0.0	0.0	0.0%	
Leisure & Hospitality	69.8	71.0	71.5	11%	11%	0.5	0.7%	0.1	1.7	2.4%	
Manufacturing	52.3	51.5	51.7	8%	8%	0.2	0.4%	0.0	-0.6	-1.1%	
Construction	35.0	35.9	35.3	5%	5%	-0.6	-1.7%	0.0	0.3	0.9%	
Financial Activities	33.3	32.9	33.1	5%	5%	0.2	0.6%	0.0	-0.2	-0.6%	
Educational Services	22.6	23.0	23.4	3%	4%	0.4	1.7%	0.1	0.8	3.5%	
Other Services	23.0	22.7	22.8	4%	3%	0.1	0.4%	0.0	-0.2	-0.9%	
Wholesale Trade	19.2	18.7	18.9	3%	3%	0.2	1.1%	0.0	-0.3	-1.6%	
Transportation, Warehousing, Utilities	18.6	18.7	18.5	3%	3%	-0.2	-1.1%	0.0	-0.1	-0.5%	
Information	8.3	8.4	8.4	1%	1%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.1	1.2%	
Mining & Logging	1.9	2.1	2.1	0.3%	0.3%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.2	10.5%	
Government	102.1	101.9	102.1	16%	16%	0.2	0.2%	0.0	0.0	0.0%	
Local	61.6	61.1	61.3	9%	9%	0.2	0.3%	0.0	-0.3	-0.5%	
State	23.1	23.6	23.6	4%	4%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.5	2.2%	
Federal	17.4	17.2	17.2	3%	3%	0.0	0.0%	0.0	-0.2	-1.1%	

Industries in descending order by number of jobs in current month. Numbers may not add due to rounding.

Figure 4: Statewide Nonfarm Wage and Salary Estimates (Seasonally Adjusted)

Note on Preliminary Nonfarm Jobs Estimates: Preliminary estimates of nonfarm jobs from the payroll survey of employers tend to provide a better indication of the magnitude and direction of change than labor force and unemployment estimates from the household survey. The payroll survey is much larger and revisions to jobs estimates tend to be smaller.

Not Seasonally Adjusted County and Metro Area Labor Force Estimates

On a not seasonally adjusted basis the statewide unemployment rate was 3.8 percent. Rates were at least 0.3 percentage points higher than that in eight counties, at least 0.3 points lower than that in three, and close to the average in five. The lowest rates were in southern and central areas; the highest were along the northern rim of the state.

Among the three metro areas of the state, unemployment was below the statewide average in Portland-S. Portland and close to the average in Bangor and Lewiston-Auburn.

(Labor force estimates for substate areas, including unemployment rates, are not seasonally adjusted. Because of this, estimates for a certain month should be compared to the same month in other years and should not be compared to other months in the same or other years.)

March Labor Force Estimates (not seasonally adjusted)						
Area	Employed		Unemployed		Unemployment Rate	
	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025
Maine	672,840	671,930	22,390	26,340	3.2%	3.8%
U.S. (in thousands)	161,360	163,410	6,600	7,240	3.9%	4.2%
Counties						
Androscoggin	53,810	53,100	1,750	2,060	3.1%	3.7%
Aroostook	27,800	27,720	1,300	1,530	4.5%	5.2%
Cumberland	167,880	167,970	4,280	5,130	2.5%	3.0%
Franklin	13,900	14,020	580	610	4.0%	4.2%
Hancock	25,480	25,430	1,230	1,470	4.6%	5.5%
Kennebec	61,120	61,700	1,780	2,080	2.8%	3.3%
Knox	18,560	18,450	710	760	3.7%	3.9%
Lincoln	15,460	15,490	560	650	3.5%	4.0%
Oxford	25,920	25,760	920	1,110	3.4%	4.1%
Penobscot	73,200	72,790	2,570	3,070	3.4%	4.0%
Piscataquis	6,180	6,150	390	400	5.9%	6.0%
Sagadahoc	18,880	18,870	490	570	2.5%	3.0%
Somerset	21,510	21,530	970	1,160	4.3%	5.1%
Waldo	17,860	17,730	680	800	3.7%	4.3%
Washington	11,690	11,610	700	770	5.6%	6.2%
York	113,590	113,590	3,500	4,180	3.0%	3.6%
Metropolitan Areas						
Bangor	73,200	72,790	2,570	3,070	3.4%	4.0%
Lewiston-Auburn	53,810	53,100	1,750	2,060	3.1%	3.7%
Portland-S Portland	300,350	300,430	8,270	9,880	2.7%	3.2%

Figure 5: February Not Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Estimates

Not Seasonally Adjusted Statewide and Metro Area Hours and Earnings Estimates

The private sector workweek averaged 33.2 hours and earnings averaged \$32.22 per hour in March. Average hours were little changed and hourly earnings increased 3.0 percent from a year ago. The workweek was longest in construction and shortest in leisure and hospitality. Earnings were highest in professional and business services and lowest in leisure and hospitality.

Hourly earnings were above the statewide average in the Portland-S. Portland and slightly below in the Bangor and Lewiston-Auburn metros.

March Private Sector Average Hours & Earnings Estimates (not seasonally adjusted)						
Sector/Area	Weekly Hours			Hourly Earnings		
	2024	2025	Change	2024	2025	Change
Maine	33.1	33.2	0.1	\$31.29	\$32.22	3.0%
United States	34.2	34.5	0.3	\$34.65	\$36.20	4.5%
Sectors Statewide						
Construction	38.8	39.8	1.0	\$31.80	\$33.94	6.7%
Manufacturing	37.9	37.2	-0.7	\$30.58	\$32.74	7.1%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	31.9	32.1	0.2	\$26.35	\$27.47	4.3%
Professional & Business Services	34.8	34.4	-0.4	\$37.02	\$36.93	-0.2%
Education & Health Services	32.9	32.8	-0.1	\$34.00	\$33.88	-0.4%
Leisure & Hospitality	26.0	25.6	-0.4	\$22.82	\$23.47	2.8%
Metropolitan Areas						
Bangor	34.4	32.9	-1.5	\$29.94	\$31.00	3.5%
Lewiston-Auburn	34.1	33.9	-0.2	\$29.26	\$29.84	2.0%
Portland-S Portland	32.4	33.0	0.6	\$34.04	\$34.72	2.0%

Figure 6: January Private Sector Hour and Earnings Estimates

April workforce estimates will be published Wednesday, May 21 at 10 a.m. The data release schedule is [here](#)

Nonfarm jobs data is available [here](#)

Unemployment and labor force data is available [here](#)

NOTES:

1. Preliminary seasonally adjusted labor force estimates, including rates (labor force participation, employment, and unemployment rates), and levels (labor force, employed, and unemployed), as well as nonfarm wage and salary job estimates are inexact. Annual revisions (published in March each year) add accuracy. A comparison of 2023 and 2024 revised and previously published estimates is available in [this blog](#).
2. The 90 percent confidence interval for the statewide seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for March was between 2.7 and 4.2 percent.
3. Nonfarm wage and salary jobs from the payroll survey provide a better indication of changes in employment than resident employment from the household survey. The payroll survey is larger and has smaller margins of error.
4. Nonfarm payroll jobs estimates tend to be variable from month to month because the representativeness of reporting employers can differ. Seasonal adjustment is imperfect because weather, the beginning and ending of school semesters, and other events do not always occur with the same timing relative to the pay period that includes the 12th day of the month, which is the survey reference period. This sometimes exacerbates monthly changes in jobs estimates. Users should look to the trend over multiple months rather than the change from one specific month to another. Jobs estimates for the period from April 2024 to September 2025 will be replaced with payroll data in March 2026. Those benchmark revisions usually show less monthly variability than previously published estimates.