

Introduction

This edition of Kevin's Corner discusses trends in Vermont's labor market in 2024.

Sources

Current Employment Statistics (CES) is a program of the Economic & Labor Market Information Division in cooperation with our federal partners at the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. CES provides a monthly estimate of total nonfarm payroll employment for Vermont. It also estimates employment by industry. Estimates are derived from a survey of approximately 1,200 Vermont firms representing 2,500 establishments across all industries each month. All CES data can be found on our website [here](#).

Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) is a program of the Economic & Labor Market Information Division in cooperation with our federal partners at the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. LAUS incorporates data from the Current Population Survey (CPS), Vermont's Unemployment Insurance program, and Current Employment Statistics to generate monthly estimates of the number of Vermonters employed and unemployed (combined, the labor force). All LAUS data can be found on our website [here](#).

Unless noted, all data in this report is benchmarked and seasonally adjusted.

Note: All substate data in this review is based on new geographic definitions implemented with the release of benchmarked 2024 data. For more information please see the recent Kevin's Corner: "[Area Changes for Bureau of Labor Statistics Programs in Vermont](#)"



Current Employment Statistics (CES)

Statewide Total Nonfarm employment increased by 400 jobs (+0.1%) between December of 2023 and December of 2024. This increase leaves the Vermont economy approximately 4,800 jobs (-1.5%) below 2019 levels. See Table 1 below.

Table 1: Change in Total Nonfarm Employment - Statewide

	Employment	Over the Year Change	Percent
Dec 2024	311,200	+400	+0.1%
Dec 2023	310,800	+5,300	+1.7%
Dec 2022	305,500	+5,700	+1.9%
Dec 2021	299,800	+14,400	+5.0%
Dec 2020	285,400	-30,600	-9.7%
Dec 2019	316,000	-800	-0.3%

Burlington – South Burlington Metropolitan Statistical Area

Employment in the Burlington – South Burlington MSA stood at 125,100 in December of 2024, an increase of 900 jobs (+0.7%) over the same date in 2023. Employment in December 2024 remains slightly (-900) below December 2019 levels. See Table 2 below.

Table 2: Change in Total Nonfarm Employment - Burlington MSA

	Employment	Over the year Change	Percent
Dec 2024	125,100	+900	+0.7%
Dec 2023	124,200	+2,300	+1.9%
Dec 2022	121,900	+1,600	+1.3%
Dec 2021	120,300	+4,900	+4.2%
Dec 2020	115,400	-10,600	-8.4%
Dec 2019	126,000	+700	+0.6%

Kevin's Corner is an occasional review of Vermont economic and demographic data. It is written by Kevin Stapleton, Assistant Director of Economic & Labor Market Information (E&LMI) with support from E&LMI staff. Kevin can be reached at kevin.stapleton@vermont.gov. For more information visit our website at www.vtلمي.info.

Statewide Industry Analysis

While seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm employment increased by 400 (+0.1%) between December 2023 and December 2024, changes at the industry level were varied. The private sector lost 200 jobs (-0.1%). The public sector added 600, an increase of 1.1%. Goods Producing industries experienced a decline of 700 jobs (-1.6%) while Service-Providing industries saw an increase of 1,100 or 0.4%.

Industries with Significant Employment Gains

On a percentage basis the largest employment gain over the year was in Private Educational Services, which increased by 600 jobs or 4.8%. Other Services increased by 300 or 3.0%. The next highest growth on a percentage basis was Health Care & Social Assistance which grew by 1,000 jobs or 2.0%. Local and Federal Government grew by 500 (+1.6%) and 100 (+1.5%) respectively while State Government was unchanged.

Table 3: Employment Gains by Industry, Dec 2023 – Dec 2024

Industry	2023 Employment	2024 Employment	Numeric Change	%
Private Educational Services	12,400	13,000	+600	+4.8%
Other Services	10,000	10,300	+300	+3.0%
Health Care & Social Assistance	50,700	51,700	+1,000	+2.0%
Local Government	30,400	30,900	+500	+1.6%
Federal Government	6,800	6,900	+100	+1.5%

Industries with Employment Losses

Manufacturing employment led declines, losing 800 jobs or -2.9% in 2024. This follows a decline of 1,400 (-4.8%) the year prior. Durable Goods Manufacturing declined by 500 (-3.0%) in 2024 while Non-Durable Goods declined by 300 (-2.7%).

Other industries with large losses included Administrative & Support & Waste Management which declined by 600 (-4.4%) and Accommodation & Food Services (-300 or -1.0%), its first decline since 2020. Wholesale Trade also declined by 300 (-3.3%).

Table 4: Employment Losses by Industry, Dec 2023 – Dec 2024

Industry	2023 Employment	2024 Employment	Numeric Change	%
Manufacturing	27,800	27,000	-800	-2.9%
Administrative, Support & Waste Management	13,600	13,000	-600	-4.4%
Accommodations & Food Services	30,400	30,100	-300	-1.0%
Wholesale Trade	9,000	8,700	-300	-3.3%

Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

Statewide Labor Force Changes

The number of employed Vermonters increased in every month of 2024, growing by a total of 1,871 (+0.5%) between December of 2023 and December of 2024. In December 2024, 348,204 Vermonters were employed, the highest number of employed Vermonters in the history of the series.

The number of unemployed persons increased by 1,876 (+26.1%) between December of 2023 and December of 2024. The number of unemployed persons increased steadily over the first 9 months of the year before plateauing in the final 3 months at just over 9,000.

The Labor Force is defined as the sum of the employed and the unemployed. Vermont's labor force increased by 3,747 (+1.1%) after growing by 7,756 in the previous year. The labor force increased in every month of the year by an average of 312 Vermonters. The labor force gains in December of 2024 represent the fiftieth straight month of gains dating back to November 2020. It is the highest figure since October of 2011.

The Unemployment Rate

The unemployment rate (the percent of the labor force that is unemployed) ended the year at 2.5%, five-tenths of a point higher than December of 2023. It either remained steady or climbed by one-tenth of a percent each month of the year. While 2.5% is very low by historic standards, the rate was last this high in January of 2022. For some perspective, Vermont's unemployment rate averaged 3.9% between 2010 and 2019 and 4.0% in the decade prior. See Table 5.

Long-Term Unemployed (The U-1)

The U-1 unemployment rate is a measure of a specific subset of the unemployed, those who have been unemployed 15-weeks or longer. In 2021 this figure peaked at 1.9% of Vermont's labor force. Between 2021 and 2023 it fell to 0.5%, the lowest figure in the series dating back to 2003. The 2024 figure increased slightly to 0.6%. While the turn is notable the rate is still well below the 1.5% average of the previous decade.

Labor Force Participation

The civilian labor force participation rate is the percent of the civilian, non-institutionalized population over the age of 16 that is in the labor force. Between December of 2023 and December of 2024 the rate increased from 64.9 to 65.5. While the December 2024 level is below December 2019's 66.2, the participation rate has either increased or remained level every month since August of 2021. The highest rate since the year 2000 was 71.9 in May of 2009. See Table 5.

Table 5: Vermont Labor Force Data, 2024

Month	Labor Force	Employed	Unem- ployed	Unemp Rate	Participation Rate
January	353,890	346,746	7,144	2.0	65.0
February	354,238	347,070	7,168	2.0	65.0
March	354,585	347,290	7,295	2.1	65.1
April	355,015	347,490	7,525	2.1	65.2
May	355,547	347,725	7,822	2.2	65.2
June	356,039	347,900	8,139	2.3	65.3
July	356,441	347,978	8,463	2.4	65.4
August	356,760	348,018	8,742	2.5	65.4
September	356,974	348,022	8,952	2.5	65.4
October	357,118	348,030	9,088	2.5	65.4
November	357,186	348,098	9,088	2.5	65.4
December	357,262	348,204	9,058	2.5	65.5

Labor Market Under-Utilization

The Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Economic & Labor Market Information Division publish other measures of labor market under-utilization. The most inclusive alternative measure is the U-6, an under-utilization measure that includes unemployed persons plus these two categories:

- 1) Marginally attached workers: Those persons not in the labor force who want and are available for work, and who have looked for a job sometime in the prior 12 months, but have not searched for work in the preceding 4 weeks.
- 2) Those working part-time for economic reasons: People who want to work full time but are not able to find full time work and are therefore working part-time.

This figure is published on a quarterly basis and based upon the average of the previous four quarters. The average annual value of the U-6 for 2024 was 4.7%, an increase of 0.8 percentage points from 2023. Despite this increase, it is still the second-lowest figure in the series dating back to 2003. Between 2003 and 2019 the U6 averaged 8.4%. See Table 6.

Table 6: Annual Labor Market Under-Utilization Rates

