Small Gains Struggle Against a Stubborn Jobs Trend

Vermont gained jobs again in June, making up for much of the loss in May. Vermont added 2,800 non-farm jobs and was one of only a dozen states that had statistically significant growth last month. Despite this growth, however, Vermont's unemployment rate rose slightly for the second month in row, to 5.5 percent in June from 5.4 percent the previous month. The number of unemployed Vermonters increased by 349, and the labor force shrank by 1,581.
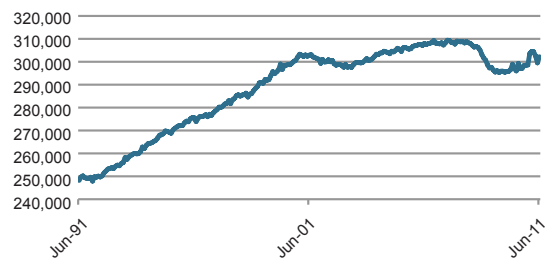
	June 2011	May 2011	June 2010
Labor Force	361,473	363,054	360,710
Employment	341,577	343,507	338,331
Unemployment	19,896	19,547	22,379
Rate	5.5%	5.4%	6.2%

Worse Than Ten Years Ago

With almost a 1 percent increase in non-farm jobs in June, Vermont did better than many other states. Over the past year—June 2010 to June 2011—Vermont also generated relatively more jobs than most other states. But viewed through a longer lens, the picture looks bleak. Figures released today show Vermont had 302,200 non-farm jobs (seasonally adjusted) in June 2011—700 fewer than 10 years earlier. This poor performance followed a decade—June 1991 to June 2001—when more than 50,000 jobs were added.

The last decade was dismal for jobs
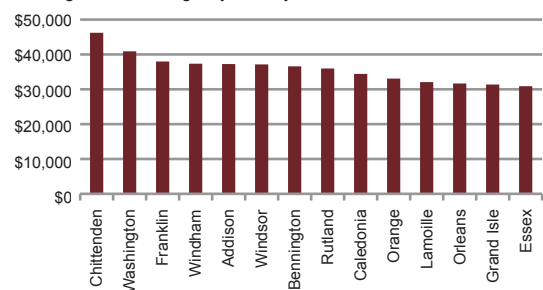Vermont non-farm jobs, seasonally adjusted, 1990-2011

Data source: Vermont Department of Labor

Where the Pay is Higher—or Not

The average wage paid in Chittenden County last year was 50 percent higher than the average wage in Essex County. New figures for 2010 released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics show that average annual wages in Vermont ranged from a low of $30,887 in Essex County to a high of $46,216 in Chittenden County. Washington County had the second-highest annual wage at $40,893. The averages are based on wages paid in all sectors, private and public. The average annual wage statewide was $39,430 last year, 1.7 percent higher than in 2009.

Wages vary widely across Vermont
Average annual wage by county, 2010

Data source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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