

For Vermont job-seekers 2015 is off to a promising start

More than 1,200 Vermonters left the unemployment lines so far this year, but they didn't all go back to work. In the first three months of 2015, employment—including self-employment—rose by 687, to 335,006. Meanwhile, the labor force—people working or seeking work—shrank by 577. During the same period, Vermont employers reported adding 1,900 non-farm

payroll jobs.

	MAR 2015	FEB 2015	MAR 2014
Labor Force	348,210	348,468	348,875
Employment	335,006	334,743	334,870
Unemployment	13,204	13,725	14,005
Unemployment Rate	3.8%	3.9%	4.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

The legacy of two recessions

In the first decade of this century, two recessions wiped out many more jobs than Vermont's private sector could create. For the last few years, Vermont has seen more gains than losses. But despite state and federal tax breaks intended to stimulate employment, private employers are still not matching the job growth of the 1990s.

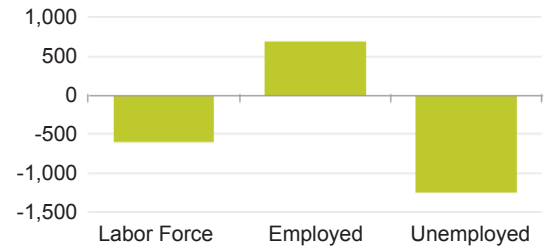
State-subsidized wages

More than half of the state and federal funds Vermont spent on public assistance programs went to working families, effectively subsidizing low-wage employers. A new [report](#) by the University of California Berkeley Labor Center shows that Vermont spent \$372 million a year* on programs including food stamps, Medicaid, Reach Up, and the earned income tax credit (EITC) to help working families which totaled more than 150,000 adults and children.

* Amounts in the report are based on 2009-11 U.S. Census data adjusted to 2013 dollars.

Unemployment is Down. So is the Labor Force

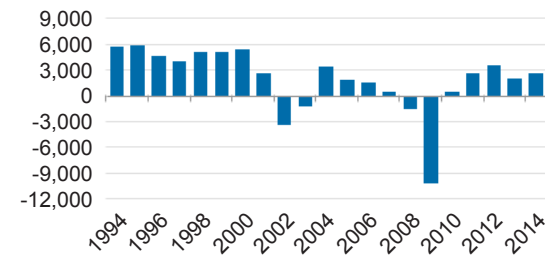
First-quarter change in labor force, employment, and unemployment, seasonally adjusted, 2015



Data source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Job Growth Has Sputtered this Century

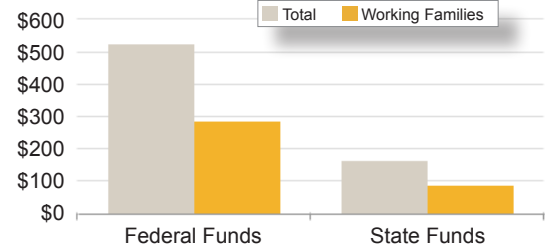
Annual change in Vermont private sector jobs, 1994-2014



Data source: Vermont Department of Labor

Low-Paying Jobs Add to Public Services Costs

Vermont annual expenditures on public assistance, in millions*



Data source: University of California Berkeley Center for Labor Research and Education