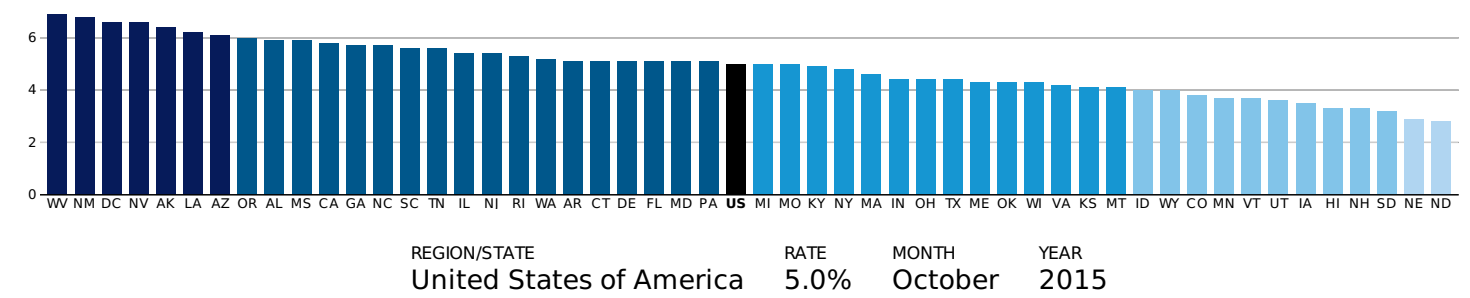


# EMPLOYMENT

Breaking down state data on unemployment rates, total (nonfarm) payroll employment, and government employment.

## Unemployment Rate (percent, seasonally adjusted)

The national unemployment rate was 5.0 percent as of October 2015.

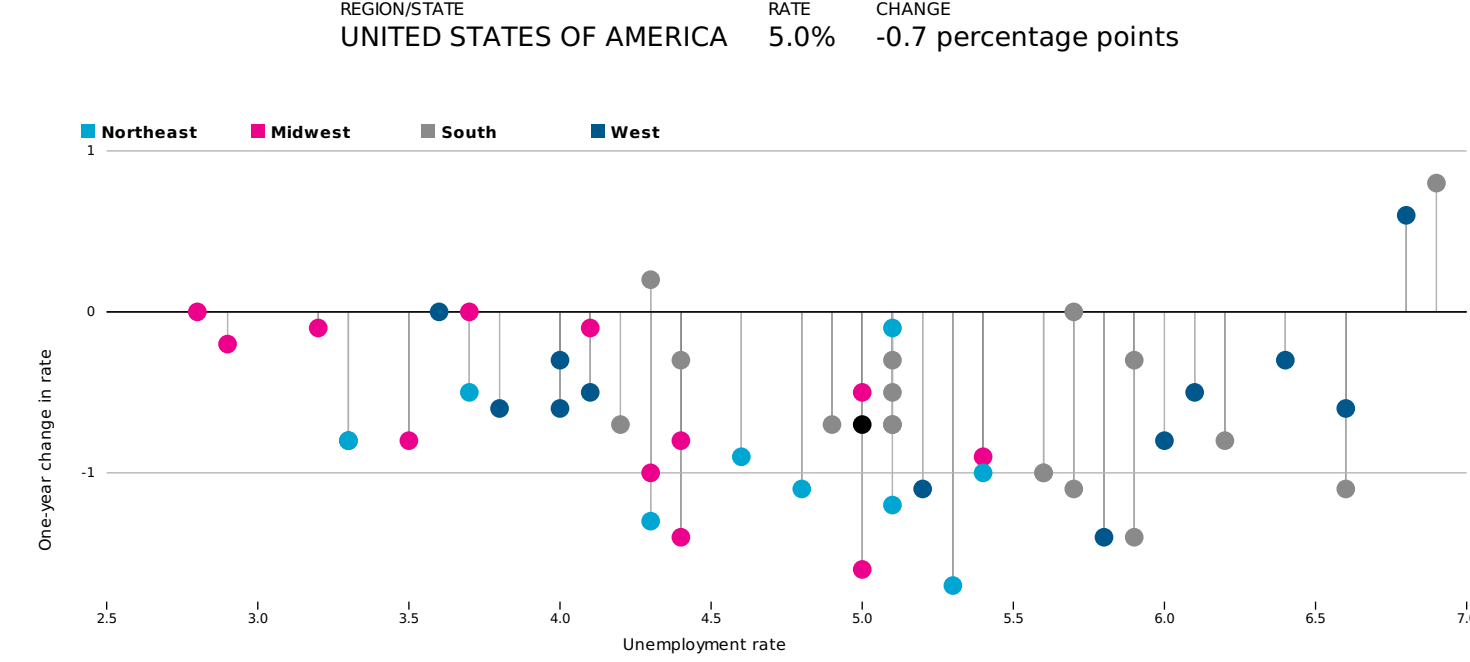


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. (<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/laus.t03.htm>)

The national unemployment rate was 5.0 percent in October 2015. For a sixth consecutive month (<http://www.urban.org/policy-centers/cross-center-initiatives/state-local-finance-initiative/state-and-local-backgrounders/state-and-local-revenues>), West Virginia's unemployment rate (6.9 percent) was the highest of any state. However, the state's rate was down 0.7 points from its 2015 peak in August. October unemployment rates were also above 6.0 percent in New Mexico (6.8 percent), District of Columbia (DC) and Nevada (both 6.6 percent), Alaska (6.4 percent), Louisiana (6.2 percent), and Arizona (6.1 percent). The lowest unemployment rates were in North Dakota (2.8 percent) and Nebraska (2.9 percent). North Dakota's rate has been below 3.0 percent since August but Nebraska's rate has been below 3.0 for all of 2015 (<http://www.urban.org/policy-centers/cross-center-initiatives/state-local-finance-initiative/state-and-local-backgrounders/state-and-local-revenues>). Another eight states had unemployment rates below 4.0 percent: South Dakota (3.2 percent), Hawaii and New Hampshire (both 3.3 percent), Iowa (3.5 percent), Utah (3.6 percent), Minnesota and Vermont (both 3.7 percent), and Colorado (3.8 percent).

## Unemployment Rate: Level vs. One-Year-Change

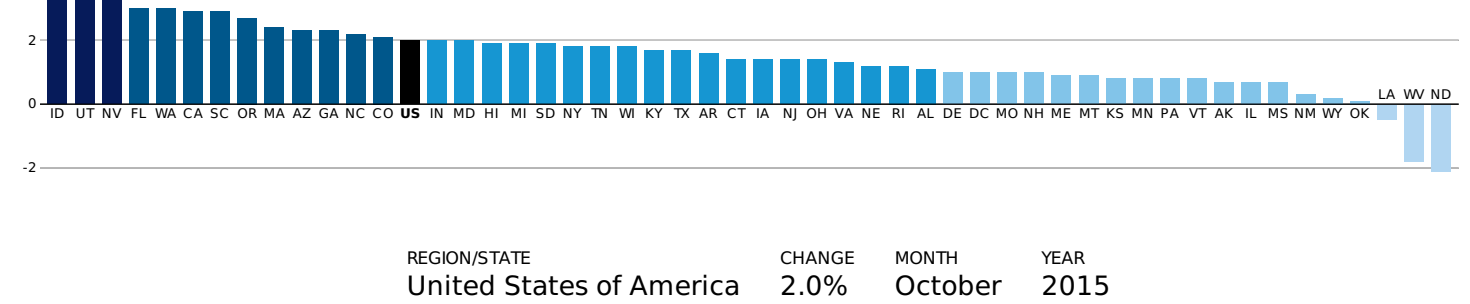
The national unemployment rate decreased 0.7 percentage points to a value of 5.0 percent between October 2014 and October 2015.



The national unemployment rate fell 0.7 percentage points between October 2014 and October 2015. West Virginia's 0.8 percentage point increase was the greatest of any state. Two other states had unemployment rate increases over the year—New Mexico (0.6 points) and Oklahoma (0.2 points)—and four states had no change: Minnesota, North Carolina, North Dakota, and Utah. However, among these seven states, four (Minnesota, North Dakota, Oklahoma, and Utah) had October unemployment rates below 5.0 percent. The unemployment rate decreased the most over the year in Rhode Island (-1.7 points). In total, 14 states and DC had unemployment rates fall 1.0 points or more over the year. This included nine states and DC that had October unemployment rates above 5.0 percent: DC (6.6 percent), Mississippi (5.9 percent), California (5.8 percent), Georgia (5.7 percent), South Carolina and Tennessee (both 5.6 percent), New Jersey (5.4 percent), Rhode Island (5.3 percent), Washington (5.2 percent), and Connecticut (5.1 percent).

## Total Employment (percent change year over year)

Total (public and private) nonfarm payroll employment increased 2.0 percent from October 2014 to October 2015.

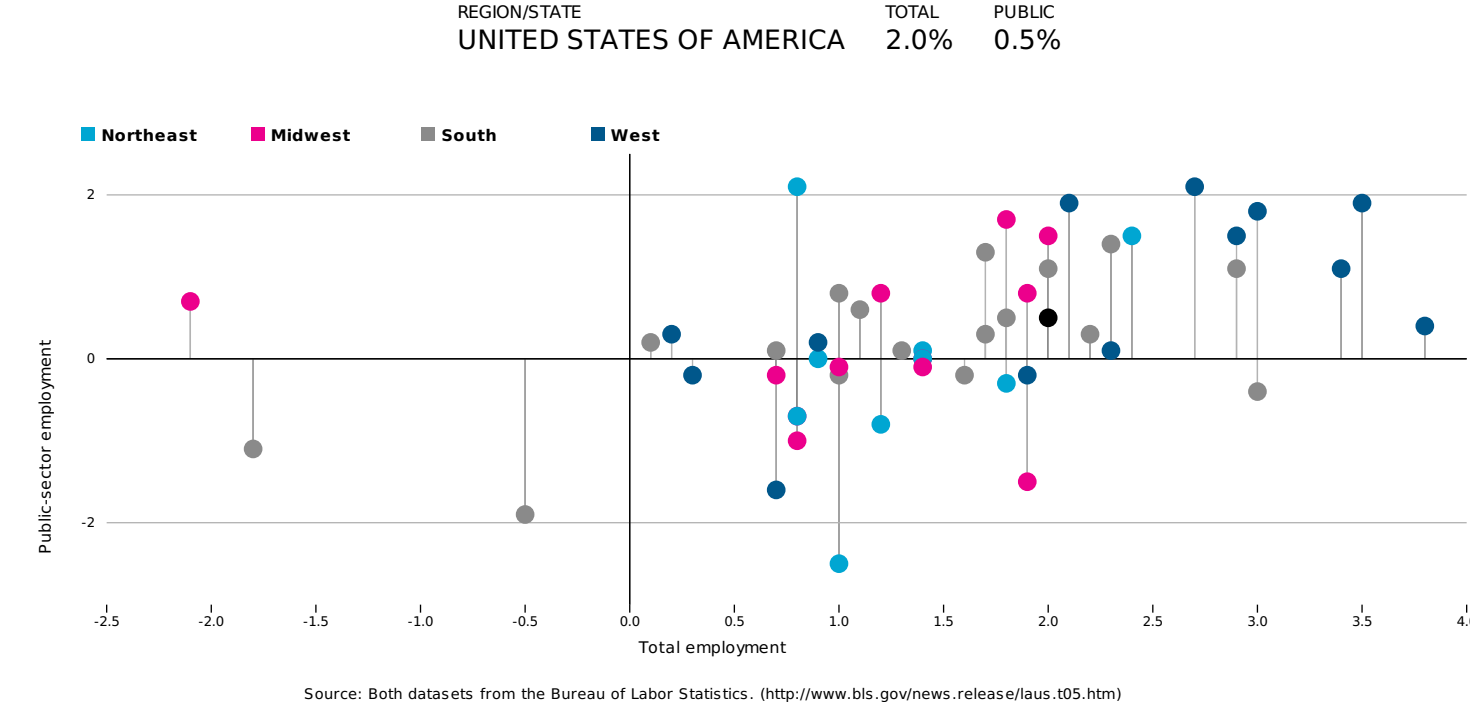


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. (<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/laus.t05.htm>)

Total national (public and private) nonfarm payroll employment increased 2.0 percent from October 2014 to October 2015. Total employment increased in all but three states: North Dakota (-2.1 percent), West Virginia (-1.8 percent), and Louisiana (-0.5 percent). North Dakota's biggest job losses were in the trade, transportation, and utilities sector, West Virginia's biggest decline was in construction, and Louisiana lost jobs in the trade, transportation, and utilities sector and government sector. The largest increase in total employment was in Idaho (3.8 percent), which had job growth in all sectors. Total employment grew 3.0 percent or more over the past 12 months in four additional states: Utah (3.5 percent), Nevada (3.4 percent), and Florida and Washington (both 3.0 percent).

## Total Employment vs. Public Employment

Total public-sector employment increased 0.5 percent from October 2014 to October 2015, staying well below the 2.0 percent increase in total employment.



Total public-sector employment increased 0.5 percent from October 2014 to October 2015. The largest decrease in government employment over the year was in New Hampshire (-2.5 percent). This is the fifth consecutive month (<http://www.urban.org/policy-centers/cross-center-initiatives/state-local-finance-initiative/state-and-local-backgrounders/state-and-local-revenues>) New Hampshire has had a year-over-year decline in public jobs, primarily local government jobs. In total, 17 states and DC saw public employment drop over the year. The decline was 1.0 percent or more in six states: New Hampshire, Louisiana (-1.9 percent), Alaska (-1.6 percent), Michigan (-1.5 percent), West Virginia (-1.1 percent), and Kansas (-1.0 percent). Public employment increased the most in Oregon and Vermont (both 2.1 percent). Fourteen additional states had public employment increase more than 1.0 percent. Among these 14 states, three also had total employment increase 3.0 percent or more: Nevada, Utah, and Washington.

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Note: The unemployment rate is from a US Bureau of Labor Statistics survey based on place of residence. The employment data are from a US Bureau of Labor Statistics survey based on place of work. All data are seasonally adjusted.