

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS in New Hampshire



May 2004

Volume 104, Number 05

New Hampshire's Population Continues To Grow.....4

PowerPoint Slide Shows Available on Our Web Site.....6

Coos County Qualified as a Labor Surplus Area This Fiscal Year....7

Local Area Unemployment Statistics.....9

Current Employment Statistics10

For Additional Information.....12



Published by the Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau

New Hampshire
ELMIB
Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau

Foreign workers are a vital part of New Hampshire's economy

Since the late 1990's the number of permanent foreign workers has grown exponentially upward.

Why is New Hampshire Employment Security involved in the process of certifying foreign workers for jobs in New Hampshire? How is the labor market affected by an increase in the supply of foreign labor? Is there a correlation between the unemployment rate and the number of permanent visas?

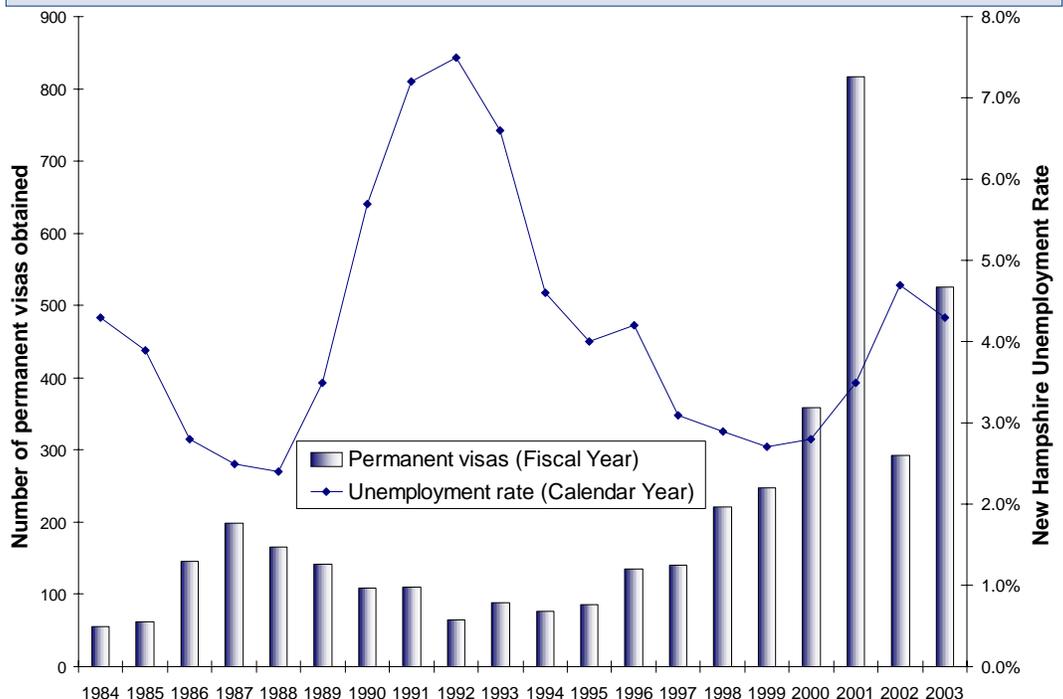
H-1B Specialty (Professional) Workers

The high tech boom in the late 1990's increased the demand for foreign workers to fill positions in certain specialty

occupations. These positions were filled with holders of H-1B visas. The Immigration Act of 1990 amended the Immigration and Nationality Act to allow the lawful employment of foreign workers in certain specialty occupations and as fashion models. This means that in order to hire a foreign worker on an H-1B visa, the job must be a professional position that requires, at a minimum, a bachelor's degree in the field of specialization (fashion model an exception). An H-1B certification is only valid for the period of

Continued on page 2

From 1984 to the turn of the century there has been a correlation between the unemployment rate and the number of foreign workers obtaining a permanent visa.



Continued from page 1

time indicated in the application and can initially only be given for up to three years. The H-1B status can, however, be extended for up to three more years.

Nationwide the Immigration Act of 1990 limited the number of H-1B visas to 65,000 per Fiscal Year (October 1st to September 30th). This cap was reached in 1997 and in 1998. Political pressure made the legislature increase the number of H-1B visas to 115,000 in FY 1999 and FY 2000.

It is the New Hampshire Employment Security's responsibility to make sure that employment of foreign workers will not adversely affect the wages and working conditions of similarly employed American workers.

As the need for foreign workers in the high tech industries continued to increase, the mandated cap was increased to 195,000 in 2001, 2002 and 2003. In 2001 the number of approved certifications exceeded the cap of 195,000 but in the following two years, the number of approved H-1B visas only reached about 100,000 per year.

New Hampshire Employment Security's role in the H-1B visa process

From October 1, 2001 to September 30, 2003, more than 2,200 applications were filed by companies for H-1B positions in New Hampshire. Only ten percent of these applications were denied. Most applications get certified as long as the prevailing wage requirements are met. This is where New Hampshire Employment Security has a decisive role. As part of the procedure the Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau (ELMI) of New Hampshire Employment Security determines whether the wage rate offered to the H-1B non-immigrant is comparable to the prevailing wage rate for the specific occupational classification in the area of employment. The prevailing wage rate is primarily determined by data provided by the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program. Of the approved H-1B visa applications made by New Hampshire

employers, 896 applications were approved in FY 2001, 552 applications were approved in FY 2002, and 608 applications were approved in FY 2003. Even though the majority of these applications only involved one immigrant, some of the applications are for multiple immigrants.

Permanent Labor Certification

As the H-1B visas can only be given for a maximum of six years, many companies apply for a visa conversion to a permanent work status for their H-1B workers after four years. If the H-1B worker isn't in the process of getting a permanent labor certification or immigrant visa petition by the end of the six years, the H-1B worker will have to leave the county. About 85 percent of the permanent applications for alien labor certification in New Hampshire are conversions from H-1B visas. The H-1B visa is the predominant gateway to obtaining a permanent work permit in New Hampshire.

It is the U.S. employer that files for both the permanent and the H-1B Alien Labor Certification and in both cases the employer must pay at least the prevailing wage for the occupation in the area of intended employment. Once the foreign worker has obtained a permanent status, he/she is free to change employers. An H-1B non-immigrant, on the other hand, can only change employers if he/she can find another employer willing to sponsor them. A petition with the change has to be filed by the new employer.

Permanent visas on the rise in New Hampshire

(see chart on front page).

When the unemployment rate was high in the early 1990's, the number of approved permanent visas went down to a low of 65 in 1992. This was one-third the amount approved at the high point in 1987, when the unemployment rate was 2.5 percent. The number of approved permanent visas started to increase in the mid 1990's as the

Continued on page 3

unemployment rate dropped from 7.5 percent in 1992 to 4.0 percent by 1995. This increase in permanent visas since the mid 1990's did not seem to slow down even as the unemployment rate increased after the 2001 recession.

In 2001, the number of permanent visas approved in New Hampshire was exceptionally high at 817. This high number was caused by a general amnesty given to all employees who filed for legal permanent status by April 30, 2001. A large portion of these permanent status applications were filled by manufacturing companies for their skilled laborers (without a bachelor's degree). In FY 2002 the number of approved permanent visas was

down even in comparison to FY 2000. The reason for this reduction was partly due to huge influx of foreign workers in FY 2001 (the immigration lawyers were a bit overwhelmed), partly due to FY 2000 numbers being inflated by the fear of Y2K and partly due to the slow down of the economy.

Continued from page 2

In 2004 the congressional mandated cap on the number of available H-1B visas was reduced to the original 65,000 new foreign workers. As of February 17th, 2004, no new applications were being processed because the number of H-1B petitions had exceeded the mandated cap of 65,000.

Instead, if we look at the trend since the late 1990's, it shows the number of permanent visas has gone exponentially upward. So far in FY 2004, 510 perma-

Continued on page 12

Unemployment Compensation Claims Activity

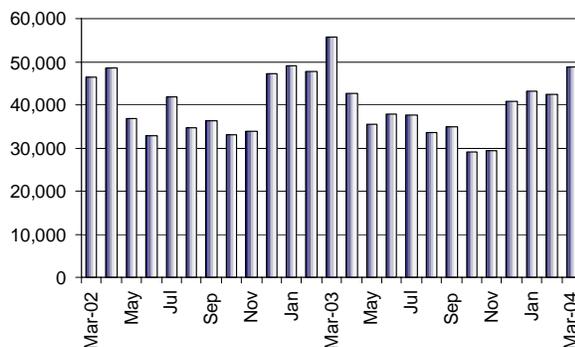
Total Regular Unemployment Compensation Programs:	Change from Previous							
	Mar-04		Mar-03		Month		Year	
	Mar-04	Feb-04	Mar-03	Mar-03	Net	Percent	Net	Percent
Initial Claims	4,233	4,356	4,333	4,333	-123	-2.8%	-100	-2.3%
Continued Weeks	48,737	42,349	47,862	47,862	6,388	15.1%	875	1.8%

Claims Activity

Unemployment Compensation Fund

Unemployment compensation fund balance at the end of March	\$212,905,751.08
Average payment for a week of total unemployment:	\$247.24
Net benefits paid:	\$9,428,062.33
Net contributions received during the month:	\$277,728.77
Interest Received:	\$3,284,421.70
Reed Act Distribution:	\$0.00
Reed Act Withdrawal for Administrative Costs:	\$61,915.59

Trust Fund



Continued Weeks Claimed

Mar. 2002 - Mar. 2004

Continued weeks claimed jumped nearly 6,400 over-the-month.

Mar-04	Feb-04	Mar-03	Change from Previous	
			Month	Year
187.4	186.2	184.2	0.6%	1.7%

United States All Urban Areas (CPI-U) (1982-1984=100)

Consumer Price Index

New Hampshire's population continues to grow

The Granite State claimed nearly 52,000 more residents since 2000

New Hampshire's population doubled from 1960 to 2000. This growth trend continued as the state's population grew another 4.2 percent (or 52,000 residents) during the first three years of the new millenium, reaching 1,287,687 in 2003. Only twelve states experienced population growth faster than New Hampshire during that time. The rest of New England had population increases ranging from 2.7 percent in Rhode Island to 1.3 percent in Massachusetts.

Nevada recorded the only statewide double-digit increase in population during this time period, 12.2 percent. Arizona's population increased by 8.8 percent; nationally population increased 3.3 percent from 2000 to 2003. What caused this increase in New Hampshire residents? Population can increase two ways. First, is natural increase. This simply means there were more births than deaths in the state during a given time period. Second is migration. Internal migration refers to those who moved to

New Hampshire from another state. International migration refers to those who moved to New Hampshire from outside the United States.

Natural Increase

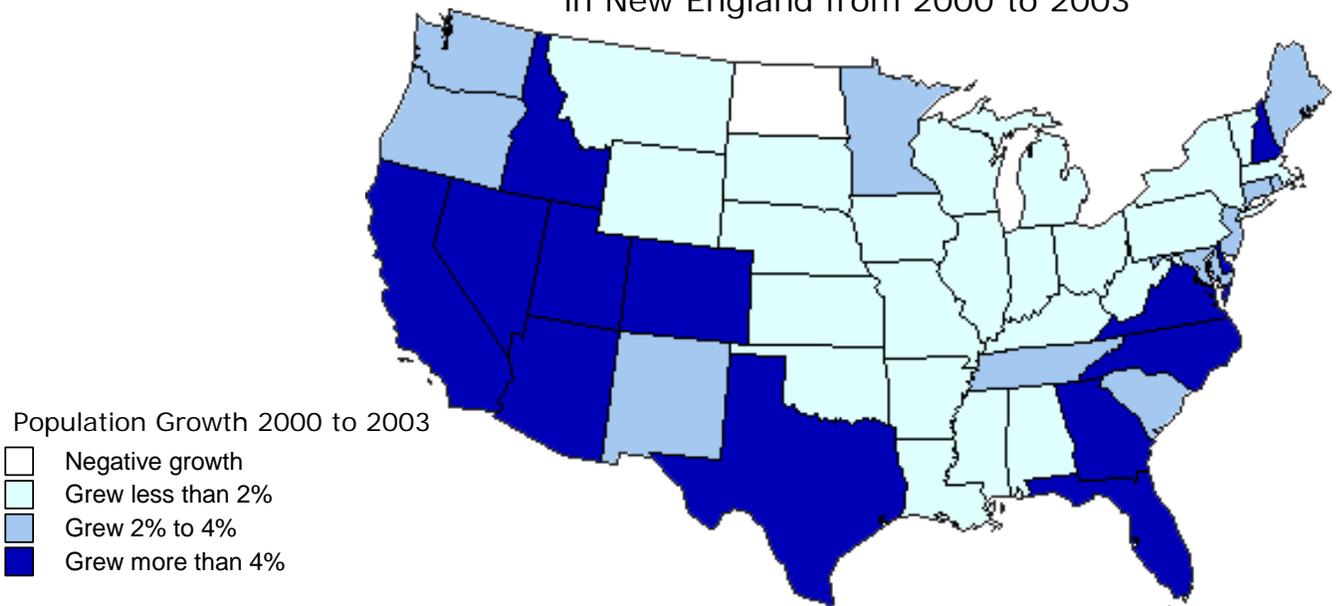
Just over 15,000 new residents were a result of natural increase from 2000 to 2003. Not surprisingly, the four most populous counties - Hillsborough, Rockingham, Merrimack, and Strafford - became home to almost all of these new residents. Conversely, Coos, Carroll, and Belknap counties each recorded more deaths than births during this three-year period.

Migration

Migration is a key component to the Granite State's population growth. Because of its quality of life, low tax burden, and educated work force, New Hampshire is a desirable destination for many people and companies. From 2000 to 2003, roughly 37,000 of the 52,000 new residents were a result of migration.

Continued on page 5

New Hampshire had the fastest population growth in New England from 2000 to 2003



Internal Migration

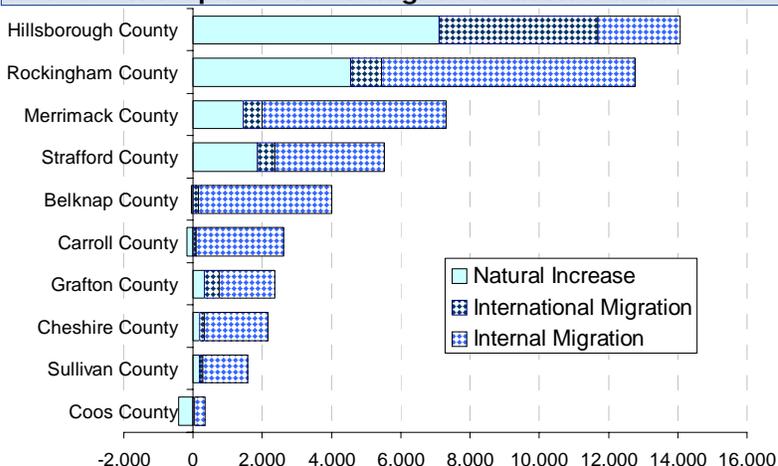
Nearly 30,000 of the new residents moved into New Hampshire from another state, the majority from the neighboring states of Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont. Where did they move? Just over 7,300 moved to Rockingham County while another 5,300 moved to Merrimack County from 2000 to 2003. Hillsborough County, the most populous county in New Hampshire, claimed only about 2,400 of these new residents.

It is interesting to note that the increase in population in the rest of the counties, although not as large, was primarily the result of internal migration. The more rural areas of New Hampshire may have been a destination to those living in cities in the surrounding states.

International Migration

Roughly 7,500 more residents moved into the Granite State from another country between 2000 and 2003. Where did they move? An overwhelming majority, nearly 4,600, of these new residents moved to Hillsborough County. This county is home to the state's two largest cities, which may provide more options for people looking to move to the state. Another 900 moved to Rockingham County, while Merrimack and Strafford

New Hampshire's population increase by county came mostly from migration, except for Hillsborough County where the increase was split between migration and natural increase



Counties each became home to about 500 new residents from 2000 to 2003.

Will this growth continue? According to New Hampshire's Office of Energy and State Planning, yes. They project New Hampshire will be home to another 350,000 residents by 2025. That's like adding the population of Concord every three years. Some communities already have master plans to help them address the issues of added demand on education systems, housing situations, and the environment caused by large population growth. Other municipalities may need to follow suit as the population spreads to their community.

Elisabeth Picard

Components of Population Change for New Hampshire and its Counties, 2000 - 2003

Area	Population Change		Natural Increase			Net Migration		
	Net 2000 to 2003	Percent 2000 to 2003	Total	Births	Deaths	Total	Net International Migration	Net Internal Migration
New Hampshire	51,901	4.2%	15,006	47,194	32,188	37,082	7,454	29,628
Belknap County	4,031	7.2%	-48	1,838	1,886	4,014	150	3,864
Carroll County	2,468	5.7%	-186	1,217	1,403	2,613	91	2,522
Cheshire County	2,140	2.9%	186	2,496	2,310	1,978	137	1,841
Coos County	-92	-0.3%	-420	958	1,378	350	39	311
Grafton County	2,295	2.8%	321	2,528	2,207	2,028	442	1,586
Hillsborough County	13,822	3.6%	7,116	16,126	9,010	6,957	4,578	2,379
Merrimack County	7,397	5.4%	1,440	5,129	3,689	5,864	540	5,324
Rockingham County	12,743	4.6%	4,548	10,768	6,220	8,218	898	7,320
Strafford County	5,507	4.9%	1,863	4,610	2,747	3,665	495	3,170
Sullivan County	1,590	3.9%	186	1,524	1,338	1,395	84	1,311

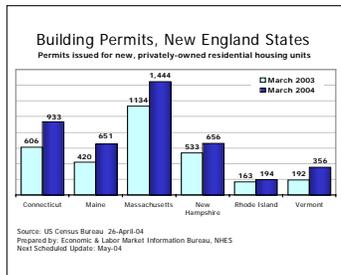
Source: US Census Bureau Numbers may not add due to residuals from National Population Control

PowerPoint Slide Shows Available on Our Web Site

More resources available from the Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau

If you have questions about labor market information, we have answers. Our Web site <www.nhes.state.nh.us/elmi/> is a valuable source of workforce and career information. Now you can view some of that information packaged in PowerPoint

slide shows right on our site! From current economic indicators to employment trends in the state to wage data by occupation, these slide shows provide you with information in a new format.



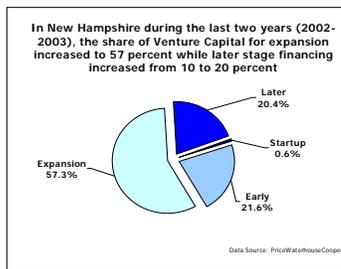
<www.nhes.state.nh.us/elmi/>

NH LMI Chart Room Current Economic Indicators

PowerPoint presentation
Updated regularly

This slide show provides easy access to current and historical economic indicators for New Hampshire. Where applicable, the indicators cover other states, the New England region, and the nation. Twenty-eight indicators are tracked including the

unemployment rate, monthly nonagricultural employment, building permits, claims data, and degrees granted, to name just a few. Many of these graphs are updated monthly.



<www.nhes.state.nh.us/elmi/>

Recent New Hampshire Economic Trends Employment Growth by Industry and Venture Capital

PowerPoint presentation
March 2004

This slide show takes a look at New Hampshire's industry sectors as of third quarter 2003. An over-the-quarter and over-the-year analysis explains which sectors were lagging, slipping, improving, or leading.

the venture capitalist? Why is it important to track the flow of it? It also shows which industries claimed the largest share of venture capital dollars in New Hampshire from 2002 to 2003, and which of the four business stages of development used the most venture capital dollars in New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and the nation.

The slide show also explains venture capital – what is it? What is the goal of

How to use Wage Survey data
(Occupational Employment and Wages)

Brought to you by:
Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau
New Hampshire Employment Security

<www.nhes.state.nh.us/elmi/ocfiles.htm >

How To Use Wage Survey Data An Occupational Employment and Wages Tutorial PowerPoint Presentation

New Hampshire occupational employment and wages are published semi-annually. The data for more than 550 occupations are a result of surveys sent to New Hampshire employers. This tutorial walks the user through:

- Finding the average wage rate for a specific occupation

- Finding wage rates for occupations in specific areas of the state
- Comparing occupational wage rates among areas
- Comparing wage rates for different levels of experience
- Finding a description of an occupation

Coos County qualified as a Labor Surplus Area this Fiscal Year

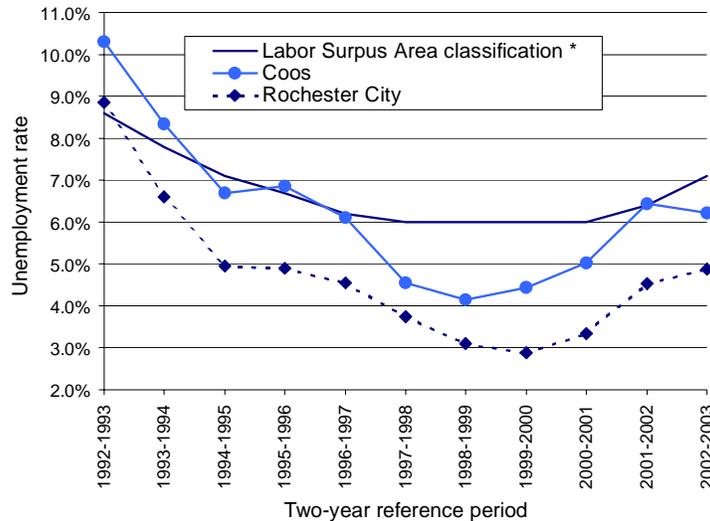
As of October 1, 2003, Coos County was designated as a Labor Surplus Area for the period October 1, 2003, to September 30, 2004 (Federal Fiscal Year 2004). This means that employers in Coos County in this period are given a preference when bidding for federal procurement contracts.

Since 1952, the federal government has sought to combat high regional unemployment by funneling federal contracts into areas with a high unemployment rate and in 1980 the Labor Surplus Area program was authorized on a permanent basis.

Labor surplus areas are classified on the basis of civil jurisdictions. Civil jurisdictions are defined as all *cities* with a population of at least 25,000 and all counties. However there are some exceptions. In Connecticut, Massachusetts, Puerto Rico, and Rhode Island where counties have very limited or no government functions, the classifications are done for individual towns/municipios. The Employment and Training Administration (ETA) made the decision not to include Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire under this rule even though the county government functions in these three states are limited as well.

Coos County was also added to the list of labor surplus areas in April 2002, qualifying under exceptional circumstances. The two-year reference period in this case (Calendar years 1999-2000) showed an average unemployment rate of 4.5 percent, which did not qualify Coos County as a Labor Surplus Area. But with the closing of a paper manu-

In the past ten years, Coos County and Rochester City have been the only civil jurisdictions in New Hampshire that have qualified as a Labor Surplus Area



facturing plant in September 2001, the Economic and Labor Market Information Bureau made a petition to add Coos County to the list of Labor Surplus Areas. In order to qualify under exceptional circumstances the unemployment rate in the area should be at least 6.4 percent for each of the three most recent months and the projected unemployment rate should be at least 6.4 percent for each of the next twelve months. Additionally, documented information that the exceptional circumstance event has already occurred should be provided.

Annette Nielsen

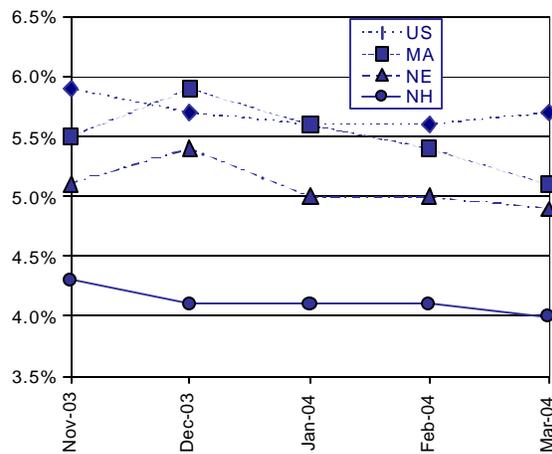
*** Labor Surplus Area classification:**

A civil jurisdiction is classified as a labor surplus area when its average unemployment rate is at least 20 percent above the average unemployment rate for all states (including the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico) during the previous two calendar years. During periods of high national unemployment, the 20 percent ratio is disregarded and an area is classified as a labor surplus area if its unemployment rate during the *previous two calendar years* was ten percent or more. This ten percent ceiling concept comes into operation whenever the two-year average unemployment rate for all states was 8.3 percent or above (i.e., 8.3 percent times the 1.20 ratio equals ten percent). Similarly, a "floor" concept of six percent is used during periods of low national unemployment for an area to be classified as a labor surplus area. The six percent "floor" comes into effect whenever the average unemployment rate for all states during the two-year reference period was five percent or less.

Additionally the regular labor surplus classification can be waived under exceptional circumstances when an area experiences a significant increase in unemployment which is not temporary or seasonal and which was not adequately reflected in the data for the two-year reference period.

N.H. and U.S. Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

New Hampshire's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate, 4.0 percent, was tenth lowest in the nation and second lowest in New England for March 2004.



Unemployment Rates by Region

	preliminary Mar-04	revised Feb-04	Mar-03
United States	5.7%	5.6%	5.8%
Northeast	5.6%	5.5%	5.9%
New England	4.9%	5.0%	5.5%
Connecticut	4.9%	4.8%	5.7%
Maine	4.9%	4.9%	4.9%
Massachusetts	5.1%	5.4%	5.9%
New Hampshire	4.0%	4.1%	4.4%
Rhode Island	5.6%	5.2%	5.5%
Vermont	3.6%	3.7%	4.5%
Mid Atlantic	5.8%	5.7%	6.1%
New Jersey	5.2%	5.4%	6.1%
New York	6.5%	6.3%	6.3%
Pennsylvania	5.3%	5.1%	5.8%

Seasonally Adjusted Labor Force Estimates

By Place of Residence

	Nov-03	Dec-03	Jan-04	revised Feb-04	preliminary Mar-04
--	--------	--------	--------	----------------	--------------------

New Hampshire

Unemployment Rate	4.3%	4.1%	4.1%	4.1%	4.0%
Civilian Labor Force	717,890	716,000	725,310	725,980	725,140
Number Employed	687,010	686,580	695,710	695,860	695,950
Number Unemployed	30,880	29,420	29,600	30,120	29,190

United States (in thousands)

Unemployment Rate	6.0%	5.9%	5.7%	5.6%	5.7%
Civilian Labor Force	146,793	147,277	146,878	146,863	146,650
Number Employed	138,014	138,603	138,479	138,566	138,298
Number Unemployed	8,779	8,674	8,398	8,297	8,352

Seasonally Adjusted Nonfarm Employment

By Place of Establishment

Supersector	Nov-03	Dec-03	Jan-04	revised Feb-04	preliminary Mar-04
-------------	--------	--------	--------	----------------	--------------------

Total Nonfarm	617,600	622,300	614,600	616,900	619,500
Construction	26,000	29,000	27,900	28,500	28,500
Manufacturing	81,100	78,700	77,800	77,100	77,000
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	139,700	140,500	139,100	140,700	141,300
Leisure and Hospitality	61,300	63,300	63,300	63,400	63,900
Government	91,000	92,000	90,000	90,300	90,100

Labor Force Estimates

New Hampshire	Mar-04	Feb-04	Mar-03
Number of workers	preliminary	revised	
Total Civilian Labor Force	722,210	721,140	710,100
Employed	691,030	689,470	677,060
Unemployed	31,180	31,670	33,040
Unemployment Rate (percent of labor force)	4.3%	4.4%	4.5%

Unemployment Rates by Area

	preliminary Mar-04	revised Feb-04	Mar-03
U.S and Regional States			
United States	6.0%	6.0%	6.2%
Northeast	5.9%	6.1%	6.3%
New England	5.3%	5.5%	6.0%
Connecticut	5.2%	5.3%	5.9%
Maine	5.6%	5.8%	5.7%
Massachusetts	5.6%	5.8%	6.4%
New Hampshire	4.3%	4.4%	4.7%
Rhode Island	5.9%	6.2%	5.9%
Vermont	4.2%	4.7%	5.2%
Mid Atlantic	6.1%	6.4%	6.4%
New Jersey	5.4%	5.6%	6.4%
New York	6.7%	6.9%	6.5%
Pennsylvania	5.8%	6.0%	6.2%
Labor Market Areas			
Berlin LMA	4.5%	4.4%	7.0%
Seabrook-South Hampton NH			
Portion Boston MA-NH PMSA	8.3%	8.0%	8.7%
Claremont LMA	3.4%	3.3%	2.9%
Colebrook LMA	13.6%	13.1%	4.1%
Concord LMA	3.4%	3.5%	3.6%
Conway LMA	3.4%	3.6%	3.9%
NH Portion Hartford-Lebanon, VT-NH LMA	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%
NH Portion Keene-Brattleboro, NH-VT LMA	3.3%	3.3%	3.1%
Laconia LMA	3.9%	4.0%	4.0%
Lancaster LMA	6.2%	6.3%	5.9%
Salem-Derry, NH Portion Lawrence, MA-NH PMSA	6.7%	6.8%	7.4%
Littleton LMA	3.7%	3.7%	4.0%
Pelham, NH Portion Lowell, MA-NH PMSA	6.2%	6.5%	6.7%
Manchester PMSA	4.2%	4.2%	4.6%
Nashua PMSA	4.9%	5.1%	5.6%
Peterborough LMA	3.8%	3.8%	4.2%
Plymouth LMA	3.0%	3.0%	3.6%
NH Portion Portsmouth- Rochester, NH-ME PMSA	4.0%	4.1%	4.3%
Counties			
Belknap	4.0%	4.2%	4.2%
Carroll	3.3%	3.4%	3.7%
Cheshire	3.5%	3.5%	3.4%
Coos	6.5%	6.3%	6.1%
Grafton	2.2%	2.3%	2.5%
Hillsborough	4.6%	4.6%	5.1%
Merrimack	3.3%	3.4%	3.4%
Rockingham	5.5%	5.7%	6.0%
Strafford	3.9%	3.9%	4.3%
Sullivan	3.4%	3.3%	2.9%

Note: 2003 preliminary benchmark figures are pending final review by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Washington, D.C. and are subject to change.

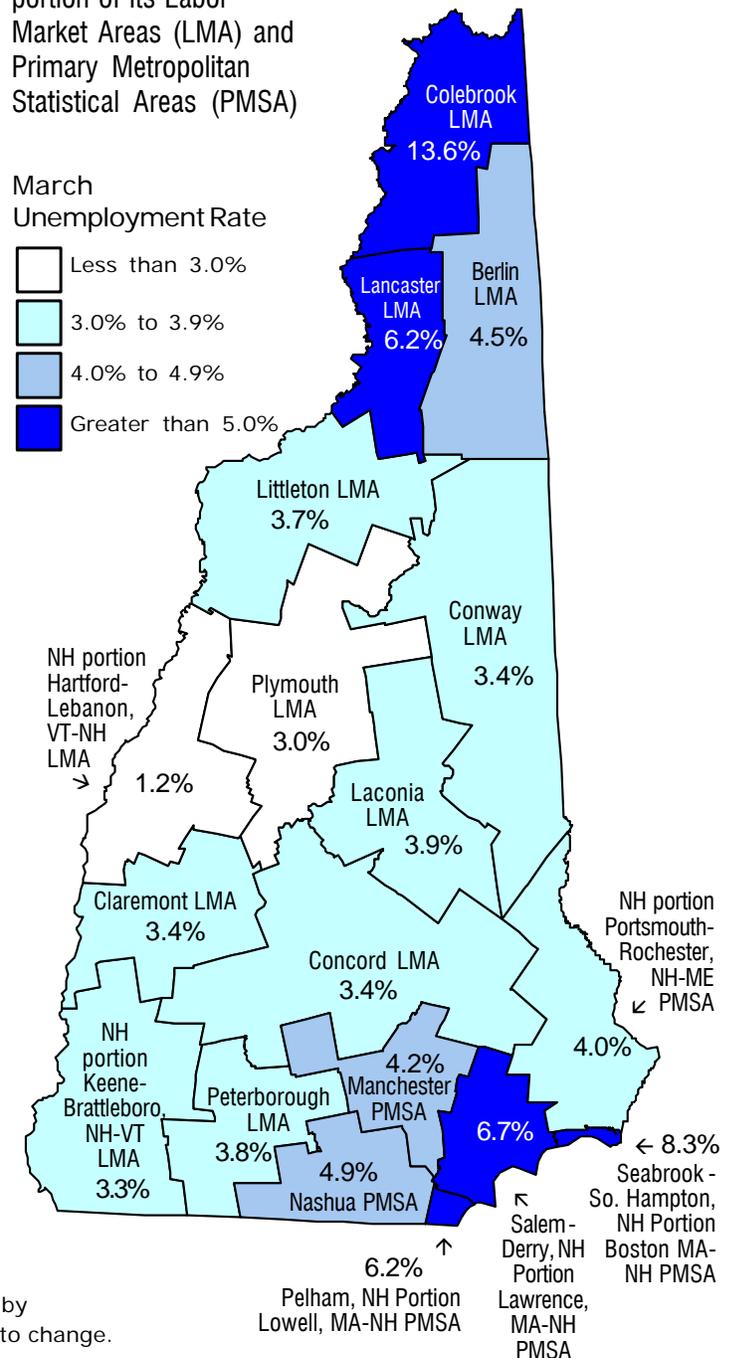
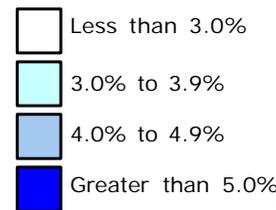
Local Area
Unemployment
Statistics
(LAUS)

Not Seasonally
Adjusted

By Place of Residence

Unemployment rates in the New Hampshire portion of its Labor Market Areas (LMA) and Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSA)

March
Unemployment Rate



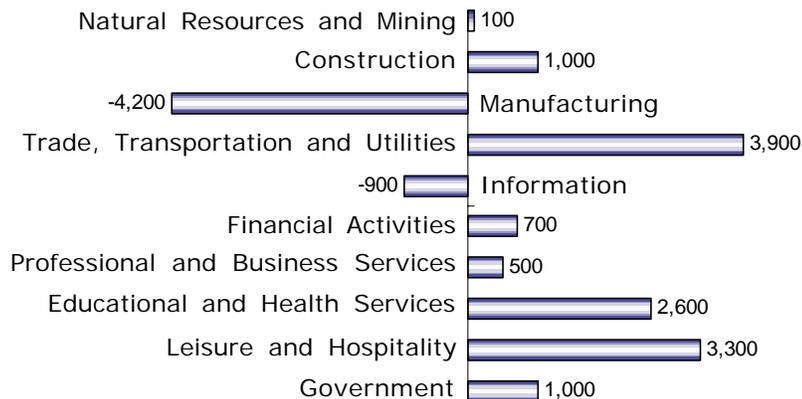
Monthly Not Seasonally Adjusted New Hampshire Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment

Current Employment Statistics Employment by Super Sector by place of establishment	Number of Jobs			Change from previous:	
	Mar-04 preliminary)	Feb-04 (revised)	Mar-03	Month	Year
	Total All Super Sectors	611,800	609,900	605,100	1,900
Private Employment Total	518,100	516,400	512,400	1,700	5,700
Natural Resources & Mining	1,000	900	900	100	100
Construction	26,200	26,000	25,200	200	1,000
Manufacturing	77,000	77,100	81,200	-100	-4,200
Durable Goods	57,800	58,000	60,000	-200	-2,200
Non-Durable Goods	19,200	19,100	21,200	100	-2,000
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	138,200	138,000	134,300	200	3,900
Wholesale Trade	27,400	27,500	26,000	-100	1,400
Retail Trade	94,800	94,600	92,700	200	2,100
Transportation and Utilities	16,000	15,900	15,600	100	400
Information	11,500	11,400	12,400	100	-900
Financial Activities	37,400	37,400	36,700	0	700
Professional and Business	52,600	52,600	52,100	0	500
Educational and Health	95,800	95,100	93,200	700	2,600
Leisure and Hospitality	59,200	58,900	55,900	300	3,300
Other Services	19,200	19,000	20,500	200	-1,300
Government Total	93,700	93,500	92,700	200	1,000

The 700 new jobs in the educational and health services supersector drove the over-the-month increase of 1,900 in total employment; the education side of this supersector added the majority of these new jobs.

Change in Nonfarm Employment

Mar. 2003 to Mar. 2004



Monthly Analysis of Current Employment Statistics (CES) Data

For further analysis please read the *Detailed Monthly Analysis of Industry Employment Data* on our Web site at <www.nhes.state.nh.us/elmi/nonfarm.htm>

Seasonally Adjusted: March’s seasonally adjusted estimates showed that New Hampshire’s total nonfarm employment grew by 2,600 jobs. Of the publishable supersectors, trade, transportation, and utilities (supersector 40) added 600 jobs, while leisure and hospitality (supersector 70) increased its force by 500 jobs.

Construction (supersector 20) employment held steady at the level established in the previous month.

On the down side of the ledger, government (supersector 90) employment declined by 200 jobs. Manufacturing (supersector 30) reduced its roster by 100 jobs.

Unadjusted: New Hampshire’s total nonfarm employment grew by 1,900 jobs in March. All but three supersectors contributed to March’s increase. Those three were manufacturing (supersector 30), which dropped 100 jobs during the

Continued on page 7

Monthly Unadjusted Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment by Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas

Employment by Sector number of jobs by place of establishment	Manchester PMSA			Nashua PMSA			Portsmouth-Rochester NH-ME PMSA		
	Preliminary	Change from previous:		Preliminary	Change from previous:		Preliminary	Change from previous:	
		Mar-04	Month		Year	Mar-04		Month	Year
Total All Sectors	109,400	500	1,900	94,400	400	600	122,300	500	500
Private Employment Total	96,800	400	1,900	84,100	500	700	97,200	600	500
Natural Resources and Construction	5,900	100	400	4,000	100	300	4,300	100	300
Manufacturing	11,200	-100	-600	21,400	0	-300	11,700	0	-900
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	24,700	0	1,000	20,800	200	-100	24,800	0	200
Wholesale Trade	6,300	0	200	3,600	0	100	4,300	0	100
Retail Trade	14,600	-100	800	15,300	200	-200	18,200	0	200
Transportation and Utilities	3,800	100	0	1,900	0	0	2,300	0	-100
Information	3,100	100	100	1,900	0	0	2,900	0	-400
Financial Activities	8,700	0	-100	6,400	0	-300	7,400	0	-200
Professional and Business	13,900	100	800	8,200	0	600	12,200	100	700
Educational and Health	16,600	-200	200	11,400	100	300	18,700	100	700
Leisure and Hospitality	8,400	300	100	6,900	100	100	11,300	200	0
Services	4,300	100	0	3,100	0	100	8,500	200	0
Government Total	12,600	100	0	10,300	-100	-100	25,100	-100	0

Average Earnings and Hours of Production Workers in Manufacturing

Sector	Average Weekly Earnings			Average Weekly Hours			Average Hourly Earnings		
	Mar-04 prelim.	Feb-04 revised	Mar-03	Mar-04 prelim.	Feb-04 revised	Mar-03	Mar-04 prelim.	Feb-04 revised	Mar-03
New Hampshire									
All Manufacturing	\$609.34	\$613.27	\$603.05	40.3	40.4	40.5	\$15.12	\$15.18	\$14.89
Durable Goods	627.07	626.24	633.29	41.5	41.2	41.5	15.11	15.20	15.26
Nondurable Goods	559.04	576.07	524.40	36.9	38.1	38.0	15.15	15.12	13.80
Manchester PMSA									
All Manufacturing	\$624.23	\$606.93	\$625.28	38.7	38.1	39.6	\$16.13	\$15.93	\$15.79
Nashua PMSA									
All Manufacturing	\$647.74	\$647.74	\$595.23	41.1	41.1	40.3	\$15.76	\$15.76	\$14.77
Portsmouth-Rochester, NH-MA PMSA									
All Manufacturing	\$586.58	\$612.69	\$668.93	39.5	39.0	44.3	\$14.85	\$15.71	\$15.10

month, and professional and business services (supersector 60) and financial activities (supersector 55), which remained unchanged in over-the-month activity.

Education and health services (supersector 65) led the expansion with a 700-job addition. Leisure and hospitality (supersector 70) expanded its ranks by 300 jobs.

Four supersectors each added 200 jobs to the labor force. Those four were construction (supersector 20); trade, transportation, and utilities (supersector 40); other services (supersector 80); and government (supersector 90).

To complete March's increase, natural resources and mining (supersector 10) and information (supersector 50) each edged up employment levels by 100 jobs.

B. G. McKay

Continued from page 3

Employment SECURITY

NH Employment Security
Economic and Labor Market
Information Bureau:

General Information

(603)228-4124
elmi@nhes.state.nh.us
<www.nhes.state.nh.us/elmi/>

Research Unit

228-4173

Economist

228-4122

Covered Employment & Wages

228-4177

Current Employment Statistics

228-4127

Local Area Unemployment

Statistics

228-4175

Occupational Employment

Statistics

229-4315

ment visas have already been approved (October 1, 2003 to March 31, 2004), compared to the 526 permanent visas approved for the entire Fiscal Year 2003. One explanation of why the influx of foreign workers has increased dramatically is that the global competition has increased the need for highly skilled workers. Another explanation is that New Hampshire, as one of the smaller states in the Northeast, has a faster processing time and employers chose to apply through their New Hampshire location. Thirdly, since the cap on H-1B visas was dramatically increased in FY 1999, many H-1B immigrants are getting close to the six-year limit for extension on H-1B visas.

In a global economy, employers in the United States need highly professional labor in order to stay competitive. In certain areas of employment this means that foreign labor have to be imported. However, it is essential to make sure that imported labor gets the same wage as their American colleagues in similar employment in order not to undermine the wage structure and working conditions for the American workforce. After several years of working in the United States the H-1B immigrant might become a permanent visa resident. Once the foreign worker has obtained permanent status, he/she has the same rights as the American worker and is thereby part of the American workforce.

Annette Nielsen

Economic Conditions in New Hampshire is published monthly in coordination with the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor.

To Order Publications: Visit our Web site at <www.nhes.state.nh.us/elmi/>; call (603) 228-4124; or send a written request to the following address:

**ELMI Publications, NH Employment Security
32 South Main Street
Concord, NH 03301-4857**

NH Employment Security is a proud member of America's Workforce Network and NH WORKS. NHES is an Equal Opportunity Employer and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. TDD ACCESS: RELAY NH 1-800-735-2964.

NH EMPLOYMENT SECURITY
32 SOUTH MAIN STREET
CONCORD NH 03301-4857

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

New Hampshire
ELM B
Economic & Labor Market Information Bureau