

Employment Summary for September 2015

The September Employment Situation released by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics was a bit disappointing, with lower than expected job growth and an unchanged unemployment rate.

A total of 142,000 jobs were added in September, much lower than the average monthly gains seen over the last 18 months, and below economists' expectations for 200,000 new jobs. The unemployment rate remained at 5.1 percent. The civilian labor force participation rate fell slightly, dropping from 62.6 percent to 62.4 percent. The amount of workers taking part-time jobs for economic reasons, also decreased by 447,000.

Small gains occur across major industries

The sector that experienced the most growth was healthcare, which added 34,000 jobs. Within this field, hospitals and ambulatory care services accounted for most of the gains. Information added 12,000 jobs in September, while food services payrolls expanded by 21,000 jobs. Business and professional services added 31,000 jobs, with most new positions appearing in the computer systems design and legal services subsectors. Retail hiring was also on the rise, as the field created 24,000 new jobs, mostly in general merchandise stores and automotive dealerships.

Manufacturing, construction, wholesale trade, financial activities, transportation and warehousing, and government all showed little or no change throughout September. Employment in the mining industry was once again on the decline, losing 10,000 positions over the course of the month. Average hourly earnings fell by \$0.01 to \$25.09. This slight decline comes after August's gain of \$0.09.

Lack of major growth raises concerns

Despite many economists' belief that the September job report shows the U.S. economy is weakening, others feel employers are temporarily holding off on hiring as a result of recent turmoil in the financial market. According to Fortune, job growth for all of 2015 is still hovering around 200,000 per month, which is quite strong. However, the source explained that the data should give pause to anyone hoping to claim that the U.S. economy has reached escape velocity. The New York Times added that the uncertainty caused by the July-September job

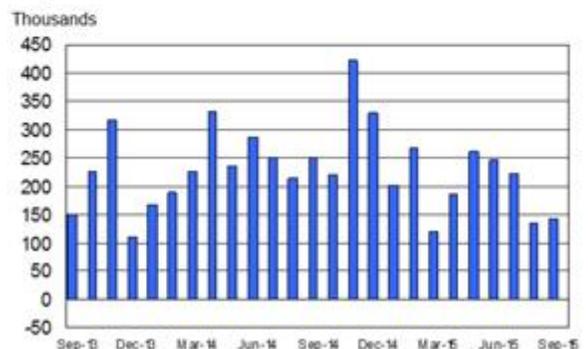
reports will likely inspire the Federal Reserve to hold off on increasing interest rates until next year, though earlier in 2015 they were expected to go up in the fall.

Labor Market Snapshot

Chart 1. Unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, September 2013 – September 2015



Chart 2. Nonfarm payroll employment over-the-month change, seasonally adjusted, September 2013 – September 2015



Full Report

The full Bureau of Labor Statistics report can be downloaded here:

