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For Immediate Release: March 23, 2018  
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## North Carolina's February Employment Figures Released

**RALEIGH** — The state's seasonally adjusted February unemployment rate was 4.5 percent, remaining unchanged from January's revised rate. The national rate remained unchanged at 4.1 percent.

North Carolina's February 2018 unemployment rate decreased 0.3 of a percentage point from a year ago. The number of people employed increased 4,236 over the month to 4,751,873 and increased 78,050 over the year. The number of people unemployed increased 289 over the month to 222,545 and decreased 14,055 over the year.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm industry employment, as gathered through the monthly establishment survey, increased 9,000 to 4,467,600 in February. The major industries with the largest over-the-month increases were Trade, Transportation & Utilities at 4,200, followed by Financial Activities, 1,700; Manufacturing, 1,400; Other Services, 1,200; Information, 900; Leisure & Hospitality Services, 500; Government, 300; and Professional & Business Services, 200. Major industries experiencing decreases were Education & Health Services, 1,100; and Construction, 300. Mining & Logging employment remained unchanged over the month.

### Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates since February 2017

	Feb 2017	Mar 2017	Apr 2017	May 2017	Jun 2017	Jul 2017	Aug 2017	Sep 2017	Oct 2017	Nov 2017	Dec 2017	Jan 2018	Feb 2018
<b>N.C.</b>	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
<b>U.S.</b>	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1

*Please note: 2017 numbers have been annually revised*

Since February 2017, Total Nonfarm jobs gained 71,300 with the Total Private sector growing by 64,300 and Government increasing by 7,000. The largest over-the-year increase among major industries was Professional & Business Services at 19,900, followed by Trade, Transportation & Utilities, 12,300; Leisure & Hospitality Services, 8,500; Financial Activities, 7,200; Government, 7,000; Education & Health Services, 4,700; Manufacturing, 4,300; Construction, 4,200; Information, 2,800; Mining & Logging, 200; and Other Services, 200.

The next unemployment update is scheduled for Wednesday, April 4, 2018 when the county unemployment rates for February 2018 will be released.

This information can be accessed on the Commerce website at <http://www.nccommerce.com/lead>

# North Carolina Department of Commerce

## Labor and Economic Analysis Division

### NORTH CAROLINA and U.S. LABOR FORCE DATA

*North Carolina data is embargoed until 10:00 A.M. Friday, March 23, 2018*

				<i>Month Ago</i>		<i>Year Ago</i>	
	<i>February 2018</i>	<i>January 2018</i>	<i>February 2017</i>	<i>Numeric Change</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>	<i>Numeric Change</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>
<b>North Carolina</b> <i>(Local Area Unemployment Statistics)</i>							
<i>Smoothed Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	4,974,418	4,969,893	4,910,423	4,525	0.1	63,995	1.3
<b>Employed</b>	4,751,873	4,747,637	4,673,823	4,236	0.1	78,050	1.7
<b>Unemployed</b>	222,545	222,256	236,600	289	0.1	-14,055	-5.9
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	4.5	4.5	4.8	0.0	xxx	-0.3	xxx
<i>Not Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	4,977,646	4,935,590	4,904,278	42,056	0.9	73,368	1.5
<b>Employed</b>	4,750,064	4,705,081	4,659,149	44,983	1.0	90,915	2.0
<b>Unemployed</b>	227,582	230,509	245,129	-2,927	-1.3	-17,547	-7.2
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	4.6	4.7	5.0	-0.1	xxx	-0.4	xxx
<b>United States</b> <i>(Current Population Survey)</i>							
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	161,921,000	161,115,000	159,997,000	806,000	0.5	xxx	xxx
<b>Employed</b>	155,215,000	154,430,000	152,511,000	785,000	0.5	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployed</b>	6,706,000	6,684,000	7,486,000	22,000	0.3	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	4.1	4.1	4.7	0.0	xxx	xxx	xxx
<i>Not Seasonally Adjusted</i>							
<b>Labor Force</b>	161,494,000	160,037,000	159,482,000	1,457,000	0.9	xxx	xxx
<b>Employed</b>	154,403,000	152,848,000	151,594,000	1,555,000	1.0	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployed</b>	7,091,000	7,189,000	7,887,000	-98,000	-1.4	xxx	xxx
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	4.4	4.5	4.9	-0.1	xxx	xxx	xxx

\*Effective January 2018, updated US population estimates are used in the national labor force estimates.

The annual population adjustments affect the comparability of national labor force estimates over time.

2018 estimates for the current month are preliminary. Estimates for the previous month have undergone monthly revision.

2017 estimates have undergone annual revision.

North Carolina Department of Commerce  
 Labor and Economic Analysis Division  
**NORTH CAROLINA EMPLOYMENT DATA**

*North Carolina data is embargoed until 10:00 A.M., Friday, March 23, 2018*

				<i>Month Ago</i>		<i>Year Ago</i>	
	<i>February 2018</i>	<i>January 2018</i>	<i>February 2017</i>	<i>Numeric Change</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>	<i>Numeric Change</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>
<b><i>North Carolina</i></b> <b><i>(Current Employment Statistics)</i></b>							
<b><i>Seasonally Adjusted</i></b>							
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	4,467,600	4,458,600	4,396,300	9,000	0.2	71,300	1.6
<b>Total Private</b>	3,731,600	3,722,900	3,667,300	8,700	0.2	64,300	1.8
<b>Mining &amp; Logging</b>	5,800	5,800	5,600	0	0.0	200	3.6
<b>Construction</b>	211,700	212,000	207,500	-300	-0.1	4,200	2.0
<b>Manufacturing</b>	470,500	469,100	466,200	1,400	0.3	4,300	0.9
<b>Trade, Transportation &amp; Utilities</b>	837,000	832,800	824,700	4,200	0.5	12,300	1.5
<b>Information</b>	81,600	80,700	78,800	900	1.1	2,800	3.6
<b>Financial Activities</b>	237,400	235,700	230,200	1,700	0.7	7,200	3.1
<b>Professional &amp; Business Services</b>	634,800	634,600	614,900	200	<0.1	19,900	3.2
<b>Education &amp; Health Services</b>	601,400	602,500	596,700	-1,100	-0.2	4,700	0.8
<b>Leisure &amp; Hospitality Services</b>	499,700	499,200	491,200	500	0.1	8,500	1.7
<b>Other Services</b>	151,700	150,500	151,500	1,200	0.8	200	0.1
<b>Government</b>	736,000	735,700	729,000	300	0.0	7,000	1.0
<b><i>North Carolina</i></b> <b><i>(Current Employment Statistics)</i></b>							
<b><i>Not Seasonally Adjusted</i></b>							
<b>Total Nonfarm</b>	4,428,000	4,396,300	4,355,700	31,700	0.7	72,300	1.7
<b>Total Private</b>	3,678,000	3,655,500	3,612,800	22,500	0.6	65,200	1.8
<b>Mining &amp; Logging</b>	5,700	5,700	5,600	0	0.0	100	1.8
<b>Construction</b>	208,700	205,700	202,400	3,000	1.5	6,300	3.1
<b>Manufacturing</b>	468,700	467,900	465,200	800	0.2	3,500	0.8
<b>Trade, Transportation &amp; Utilities</b>	825,700	823,800	812,400	1,900	0.2	13,300	1.6
<b>Information</b>	81,800	80,400	78,600	1,400	1.7	3,200	4.1
<b>Financial Activities</b>	234,800	233,400	227,700	1,400	0.6	7,100	3.1
<b>Professional &amp; Business Services</b>	624,600	621,200	606,000	3,400	0.5	18,600	3.1
<b>Education &amp; Health Services</b>	603,500	597,700	597,200	5,800	1.0	6,300	1.1
<b>Leisure &amp; Hospitality Services</b>	474,300	470,600	468,100	3,700	0.8	6,200	1.3
<b>Other Services</b>	150,200	149,100	149,600	1,100	0.7	600	0.4
<b>Government</b>	750,000	740,800	742,900	9,200	1.2	7,100	1.0

All 2018 Labor Force and CES data for the current month are preliminary.  
 All 2017 Labor Force and CES estimates have been benchmarked.  
 Estimates may not add to totals due to rounding.

## **Technical Notes**

This release presents labor force and unemployment estimates from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program. Also presented are nonfarm payroll employment estimates the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program. The LAUS and CES programs are both federal-state cooperative endeavors.

### **Labor force and unemployment--from the LAUS program**

**Definitions.** The labor force and unemployment estimates are based on the same concepts and definitions as those used for the official national estimates obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a sample survey of households that is conducted for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau. The LAUS program measures employment and unemployment on a place-of-residence basis. The universe for each is the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over. Employed persons are those who did any work at all for pay or profit in the reference week (the week including the 12th of the month) or worked 15 hours or more without pay in a family business or farm, plus those not working who had a job from which they were temporarily absent, whether or not paid, for such reasons as bad weather, labor-management dispute, illness, or vacation. Unemployed persons are those who were not employed during the reference week (based on the definition above), had actively looked for a job sometime in the 4-week period ending with the reference week, and were currently available for work; persons on lay-off expecting recall need not be looking for work to be counted as unemployed. The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

**Method of estimation.** Statewide estimates are produced using an estimation algorithm administered by the BLS. This method, which underwent substantial enhancement at the beginning of 2015, utilizes data from several sources, including the CPS, the CES, and state unemployment insurance (UI) programs. Each month, census division estimates are controlled to national totals, and state estimates are then controlled to their respective division totals. Substate estimates are controlled to their respective state totals. For more information about LAUS estimation procedures, see the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/lau/laumthd.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/laumthd.htm)

**Revisions.** Labor force and unemployment data for the previous month reflect adjustments made in each subsequent month, while data for prior years reflect adjustments made at the end of each year. The monthly revisions incorporate updated model inputs, while the annually revised estimates reflect updated population data from the U.S. Census Bureau, any revisions in the other data sources, and model reestimation. In most years, historical data for the most recent five years (both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted) are revised near the beginning of each calendar year, prior to the release of January estimates.

**Seasonal adjustment.** The LAUS program introduced smoothed seasonally adjusted (SSA) estimates in January 2010. These are seasonally-adjusted data that have incorporated a long-run trend smoothing procedure, resulting in estimates that are less volatile than those previously produced. The estimates are smoothed using a filtering procedure, based on moving averages, to remove the irregular fluctuations from the seasonally-adjusted series, leaving the trend. The same process is used on both historical and current year estimates. For more information about the smoothing technique, see the BLS website at [www.bls.gov/lau/lassaqa.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lassaqa.htm).

Area definitions. The substate area data published in this release reflect the delineations that were issued by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget on July 15, 2015. A detailed list of the geographic definitions is available online at [www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm).

### Employment--from the CES program

Definitions. Employment data refer to persons on establishment payrolls who receive pay for any part of the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. Persons are counted at their place of work rather than at their place of residence; those appearing on more than one payroll are counted on each payroll. Industries are classified on the basis of their principal activity in accordance with the 2012 version of the North American Industry Classification System.

Method of estimation. CES State and Area employment data are produced using several estimation procedures. Where possible these data are produced using a "weighted link relative" estimation technique in which a ratio of current-month weighted employment to that of the previous-month weighted employment is computed from a sample of establishments reporting for both months. The estimates of employment for the current month are then obtained by multiplying these ratios by the previous month's employment estimates. The weighted link relative technique is utilized for data series where the sample size meets certain statistical criteria.

For some employment series, relatively small sample sizes limit the reliability of the weighted link-relative estimates. In these cases, BLS uses the CES small domain model (SDM) to generate employment estimates. The SDM combines the direct sample estimates (described above) and forecasts of historical (benchmarked) data to decrease the volatility of the estimates. For more detailed information about the CES small domain model, refer to the BLS Handbook of Methods.

Annual revisions. Employment estimates are adjusted annually to a complete count of jobs, called benchmarks, derived principally from tax reports that are submitted by employers who are covered under state unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The benchmark information is used to adjust the monthly estimates between the new benchmark and the preceding one and also to establish the level of employment for the new benchmark month. Thus, the benchmarking process establishes the level of employment, and the sample is used to measure the month-to-month changes in the level for the subsequent months. Information on recent benchmark revisions is available online at [www.bls.gov/sae/benchmark2017.pdf](http://www.bls.gov/sae/benchmark2017.pdf).

Seasonal adjustment. Payroll employment data are seasonally adjusted at the statewide supersector level. In some states, the seasonally adjusted payroll employment total is computed by aggregating the independently adjusted supersector series. In other states, the seasonally adjusted payroll employment total is independently adjusted. Revisions of historical data for the most recent 5 years are made once a year, coincident with annual benchmark adjustments.

### Reliability of the estimates

The estimates presented in this release are based on sample surveys, administrative data, and modeling and, thus, are subject to sampling and other types of errors. Sampling error is a measure of sampling variability—that is, variation that occurs by chance because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. Survey data also are subject to nonsampling errors, such as those which can be introduced into the data collection and processing operations. Estimates not directly derived from sample surveys are subject to additional errors resulting from the specific estimation processes used.

Model-based error measures for seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data and for over-the-month and over-the-year changes to LAUS estimates are available online at [www.bls.gov/lau/lastderr.htm](http://www.bls.gov/lau/lastderr.htm). Measures of sampling error for state CES data at the total nonfarm and supersector levels are available online at [www.bls.gov/sae/790stderr.htm](http://www.bls.gov/sae/790stderr.htm).

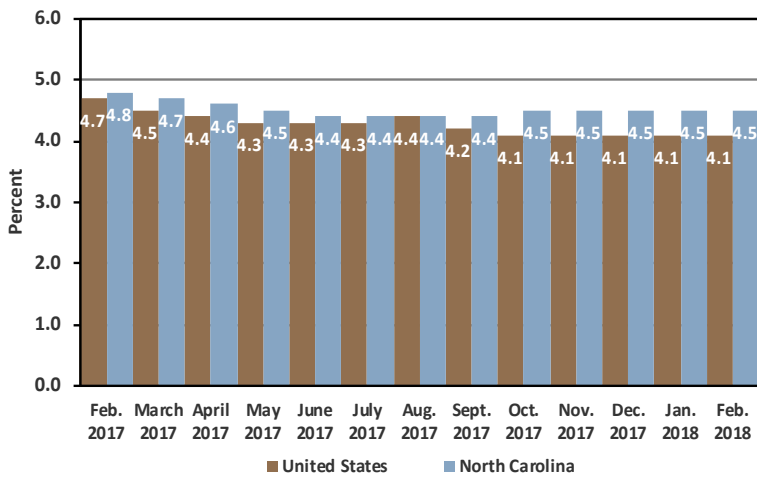
### **Release Dates**

The next unemployment update is scheduled for Wednesday, April 4, 2018 when the county unemployment rates for February 2018 will be released.

The complete 2018 data release schedule can be accessed at:

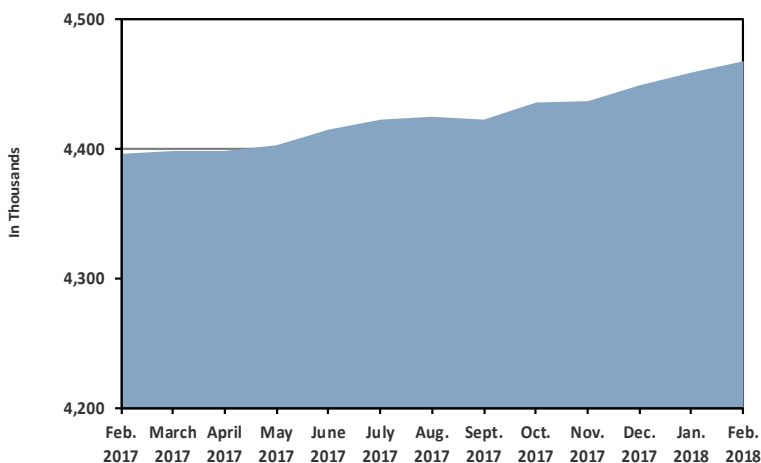
<http://www.nccommerce.com/lead/research-publications/schedule-of-release-dates>

**United States/North Carolina Unemployment Rates**  
February 2017–February 2018  
(Smoothed Seasonally Adjusted\*\*)

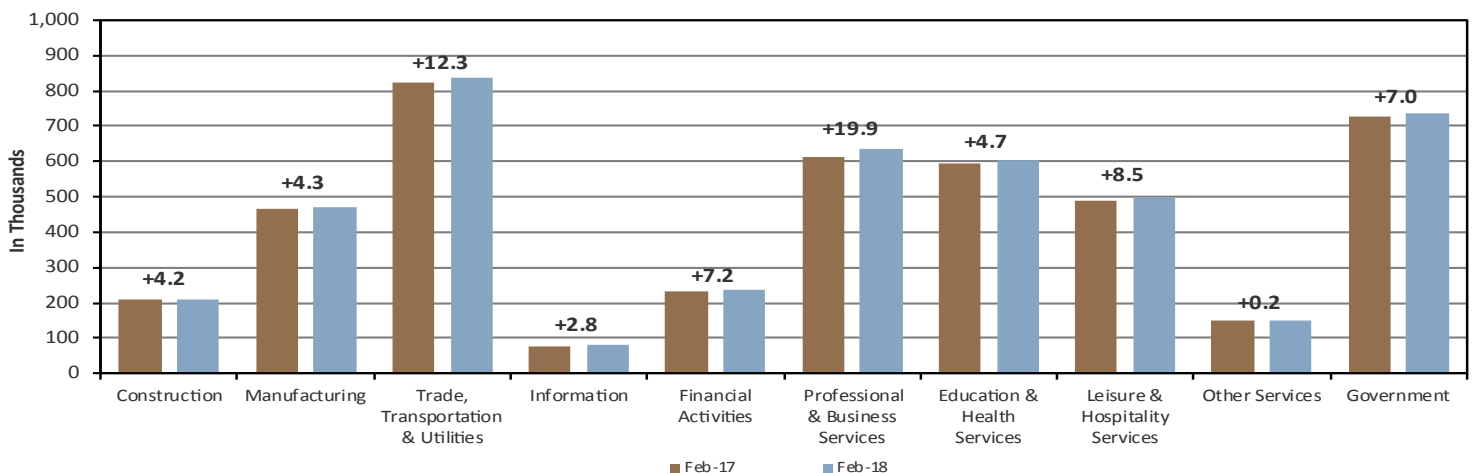


\*\*US data are not smoothed.

**North Carolina Total Nonfarm Employment**  
February 2017–February 2018  
(Seasonally Adjusted)



**Changes in Employment by NAICS Industries**  
February 2017 Compared to February 2018  
(Seasonally Adjusted)



\*N.C. current month data are preliminary, while all other seasonally adjusted data have undergone annual revision. U.S. data have undergone annual revision.

The North Carolina smoothed seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 4.5 percent in February, remaining unchanged from the previous month and falling 0.3 of a percentage point from February 2017. Over the month, the number of persons unemployed grew by 289 (0.1%). The civilian labor force increased by 4,525 (0.1%) to 4,974,418.

Nationally, February's unemployment rate was 4.1 percent. The number of persons unemployed was 6,706,000, while the civilian labor force was 161,921,000.

Seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm industry employment (4,467,600) increased 9,000 (0.2%) since January 2018 and 71,300 (1.6%) since February 2017.<sup>1</sup> Private sector employment grew over the month by 8,700 (0.2%) and 64,300 (1.8%) over the year.

Of the major industries for which payroll data are seasonally adjusted, Trade, Transportation & Utilities (4,200; 0.5%) had the largest over-the-month gain in jobs, followed by Financial Activities (1,700; 0.7%), Manufacturing (1,400; 0.3%), Other Services (1,200; 0.8%), Information (900; 3.1%), Leisure & Hospitality Services (500; 0.1%), Government (300; <0.1%), and Professional & Business Services (200; <0.1%). Education & Health Services (1,100; 0.2%) reported the largest over-the-month decrease, followed by Construction (300; 0.1%). Mining & Logging remained unchanged.

Since February 2017, Professional & Business Services added the largest number of jobs (19,900; 3.2%), followed by Trade, Transportation & Utilities (12,300; 1.5%), Leisure & Hospitality (8,500; 1.7%), Financial Activities (7,200; 3.1%), Government (7,000; 1.0%), Education & Health Services (4,700; 0.8%), Manufacturing (4,300; 0.9%), Construction (4,200; 2.0%), Information (2,800; 3.6%), Mining & Logging (200; 3.6%), and Other Services (200; 0.1%).

<sup>1</sup>It is important to note that industry employment estimates are subject to large seasonal patterns. Seasonal adjustment factors are applied to the data. However, these factors may not be fully capturing the seasonal trend. Therefore, when interpreting the changes in industry employment, it is advisable to focus on over-the-year changes in both the seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted series.

# North Carolina Labor Market Conditions

The February 2018 not seasonally adjusted Total Nonfarm employment level of 4,428,000 was 31,700 (0.7%) less than the January 2018 revised employment level of 4,396,300. Among the major industries in North Carolina, Government had the largest over-the-month increase in employment at 9,200 (1.2%), followed by Education & Health Services (5,800; 1.0%), Leisure & Hospitality (3,700; 0.8%), Professional & Business Services (3,400; 0.6%), Construction (3,000; 1.5%), Trade, Transportation & Utilities (1,900; 0.2%), Financial Activities (1,400; 0.6%), Information (1,400; 1.7%), Other Services (1,100; 0.7%), and Manufacturing (800; 0.2%). Mining & Logging remained unchanged.

Over the year, the Service Providing sector (all industries except Mining & Logging, Construction, and Manufacturing) showed an increase of 62,400 (1.7%) jobs. Professional & Business Services experienced the largest employment increase at 18,600 (3.1%), followed by Trade, Transportation & Utilities (13,300; 1.6%), Government (7,100; 1.0%), Financial Activities (7,100; 3.1%), Education & Health Services (6,300; 1.1%), Leisure & Hospitality (6,200; 1.3%), Information (3,200; 4.1%) and Other Services (600; 0.4%).

The Goods Producing sector grew by 9,900 (1.5%) jobs over the year. Construction had the largest increase with 6,300 (3.1%), followed by Manufacturing (3,500; 0.8%), and Mining & Logging (100; 1.8%).

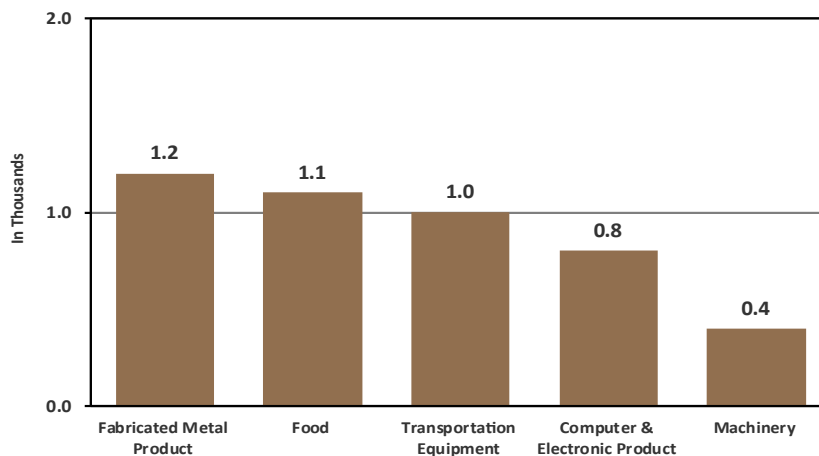
Amongst manufacturing industries, Fabricated Metal Product had the largest net over-the-year increase at 1,200. Other manufacturing industries with gains were: Food, 1,100; Transportation Equipment, 1,000; Computer & Electronic Product, 800; Machinery, 400; and Beverage & Tobacco Product, 200.

Furniture & Related Product and Electrical Equipment, Appliance & Component had the largest net over-the-year decrease at 600 in February 2018. Other industries with decreases were: Apparel, 500; Textile Mills, 500; Printing & Related Product, 100; Textile Product Mills, 100; and Wood Product, 100. Chemical and Plastics & Rubber Products remained unchanged.

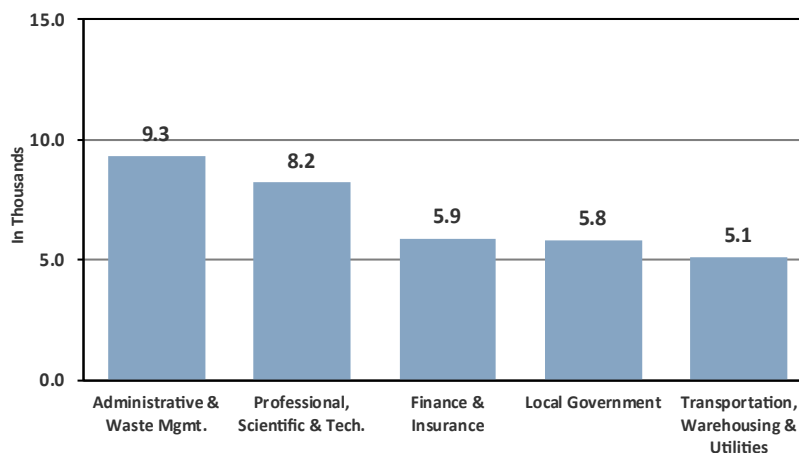
Over the month, Average Weekly Hours for total private workers in February increased 48 minutes from January's revised rate of 33.9. Average Hourly Earnings grew by \$0.06 to \$24.85, as Average Weekly Earnings increased by \$21.92 to \$862.30.

Over the year, Average Weekly Hours for total private workers in February increased 18 minutes from the revised rate of 34.4 in February 2017. Average Hourly Earnings grew by \$0.87 and Average Weekly Earnings increased \$37.39.

**Selected Manufacturing Industries With Job Gains**  
February 2017–February 2018  
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)



**Selected Service Industries With Job Gains**  
February 2017–February 2018  
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)



**Total Private Average Weekly Wage**  
February 2015–February 2018  
(Not Seasonally Adjusted)

