

POLICY MATTERS OHIO

JOB WATCH

June 2005

Ohio jobs continue to edge higher

Ohio employment continues to edge higher, according to the latest seasonally adjusted payroll numbers issued June 17 by the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services. The state has gained 25,000 jobs since January, the recent low point in employment. However, nonfarm wage and salary employment still remains well below where it was when the recession officially ended in November, 2001, and 159,300 or 2.8 percent below where it was when the recession began in March of that year.

Month-to-month data can be volatile and each month's statistics are later revised, so it is unwise to put too much weight in a single month's statistics. The ODJFS adjusted its April count of nonfarm wage and salary employment upward by 4,500. The number of jobs in the state grew from 2003 lows to a high last summer, but then plateaued and dropped through January. With the May increase of 4,700 jobs, employment has recovered from the losses of last fall and winter and has reached the highest point since late 2002.

However, job gains in Ohio since the recession began more than four years ago still trail far behind those for the United States as a whole. Ohio is one of 17 states that have had a net loss in jobs since the recession began, and ranks behind only Michigan, Massachusetts and Illinois in relative job losses over that period. At this point after the early 1990s recession started, 202,800 jobs had been created in Ohio, an increase of 4.1 percent.

The ODJFS also reported from a separate survey of households that the Ohio unemployment rate remained at 6.1 percent in May, the same as in the previous month. The number of people who were unemployed was down by 1,000, to 362,000, while according to this survey, the number of employed fell from the month before.

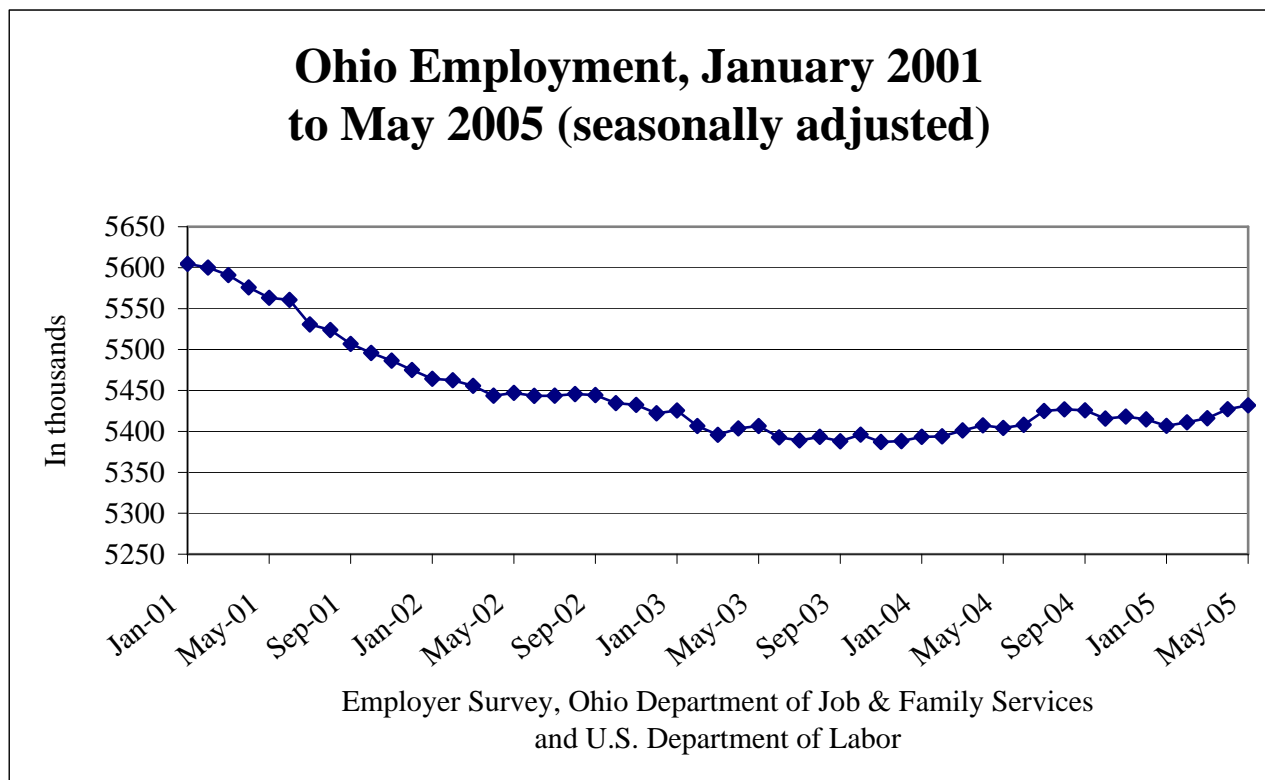
The following table by the Economic Policy Institute and Policy Matters Ohio puts the latest Ohio employment numbers in perspective:

	5/2005	1/2001	Percent Change since 1/2001	3/2001 (Start of recession)	Percent Change since 3/2001	11/2001 (End of recession)	Percent Change since 11/2001
Total Jobs	5,431.7	5,604.6	-3.1%	5,591	-2.8%	5,486.4	-1.0%
Manuf. Jobs	822.9	998.4	-17.6%	984.4	-16.4%	915.5	-10.1%

Source: Employer Survey, Ohio Department of Job & Family Services and U.S. Department of Labor, number of jobs in thousands.

The state has yet to recover all of the jobs lost since the recession officially ended in November 2001. At the comparable point after the end of the early 1990s recession, Ohio had gained 290,200 jobs, an increase of 6 percent, compared to the loss of 54,700, or 1 percent, since November 2001.

Though there have been recent job gains overall, Ohio manufacturing employment is stuck in neutral. The number of such jobs is lower than at any point in decades, according to the latest ODJFS employment report. The biggest employment gains over the past quarter have come in the leisure and hospitality sector.



JobWatch, an ongoing project of the Economic Policy Institute (www.epinet.org), tracks current trends in the U.S. labor market and offers up-to-date readings on its status.

Policy Matters Ohio, a nonprofit research institute, assists in the evaluation and release of the data in Ohio. A detailed description of the JobWatch project can be found at <http://www.jobwatch.org/>.

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