

Jobs & Opportunity Index (JOI), April 2017

Improvements May Reflect Sunny Estimates & Failing UHIP

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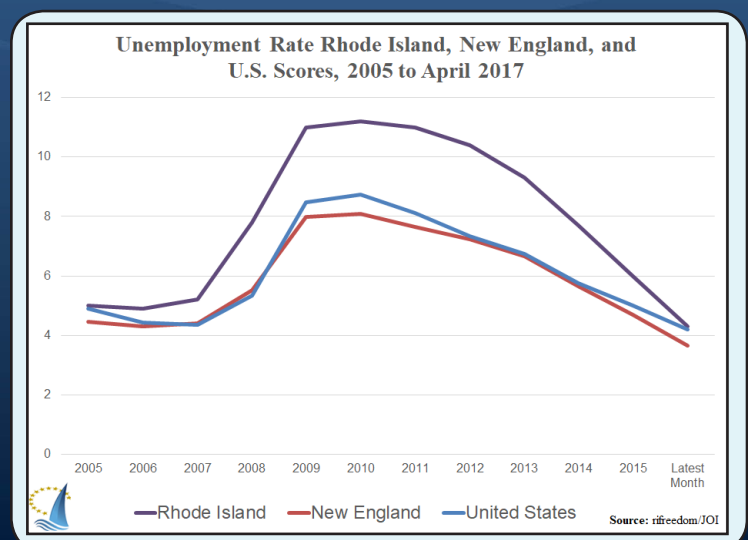
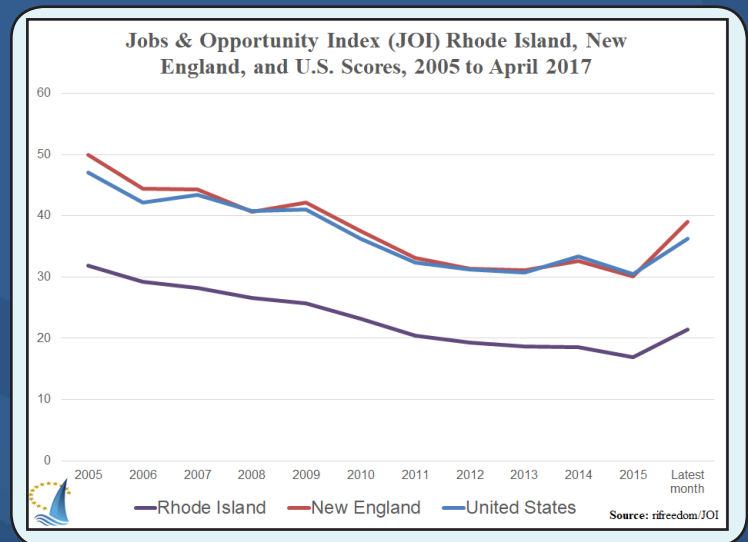
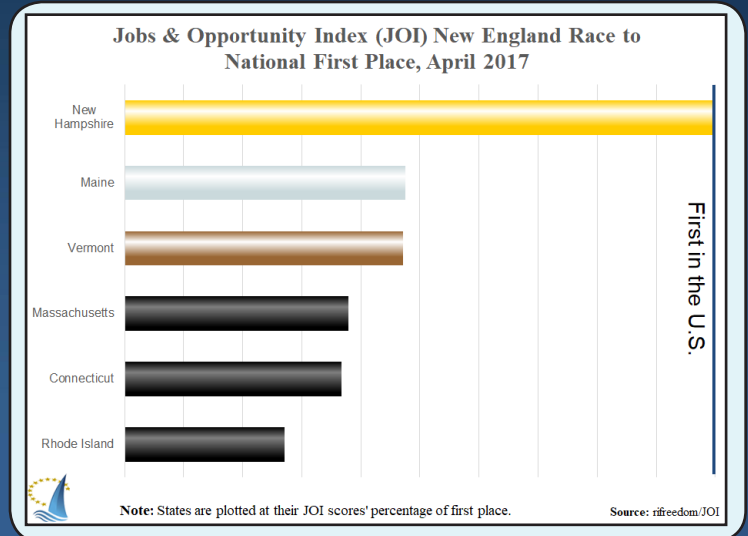
Rhode Island experienced substantial improvement on the Job Opportunity Factor of the RI Center for Freedom & Prosperity's Jobs & Opportunity Index (JOI), although the state's overall rank remained the same. That improvement reflects positive quarterly data addressing alternative measures of unemployment (such as long-term unemployment and involuntary part-time work). The state also did well with a decrease in SNAP enrollees, which may be indicative of distribution problems, rather than a decrease in residents' need for the service.

Eight of the 13 datapoints used for the index are newly updated. Employment was up 1,460 from the previously recorded number, while labor force rose 1,436. (This represents a continuation of an annual surge in these numbers that typically revised away.) RI-based jobs saw no change. Meanwhile, SNAP enrollment decreased for the second month in a row, by a huge 6,585, which may reflect problems the state has had distributing the benefit. Medicaid enrollment more than compensated, with an increase of 7,217. Regarding alternate employment measures, long-term unemployment was down 600 people, involuntary part-time employment was down 1,400, and marginally attached workers were down 1,300.

The first chart at right shows Rhode Island still in the last position in New England, 48th in the country. Three other New England states remained in their ranks, with New Hampshire 1st in the country, Maine 19th, and Connecticut 35th. Massachusetts and Vermont both moved up one slot, Massachusetts to 32nd and Vermont to 20th.

The second chart shows the gap between Rhode Island and New England and the United States on JOI. Both gaps closed slightly. Switching to the official unemployment rate, Rhode Island made up some ground in New England but slipped slightly on a national scale. Results for the three underlying JOI factors were:

- **Job Outlook Factor** (measuring optimism that adequate work is available): RI jumped six, to 29th.
- **Freedom Factor** (measuring the level of work against reliance on welfare programs): RI remained at 42nd.
- **Prosperity Factor** (measuring the financial motivation of income versus taxes): RI held at 46th.



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	JOI			Job Outlook Factor			Freedom Factor			Prosperity Factor		
	Rank	Trend	Score	Rank	Trend	Score	Rank	Trend	Score	Rank	Trend	Score
New Hampshire	1	👉	79.1	4	👉	8.5	4	👉	8.2	2	👉	9.5
Utah	2	👉	69.4	11	👎	7.5	3	👎	9.6	11	👉	7.8
Wyoming	3	👉	63.7	26	👎	5.8	1	👉	10.0	17	👉	7.5
North Dakota	4	👉	60.2	2	👉	9.3	2	👉	9.6	33	👉	6.3
South Dakota	5	👎	58.2	1	👉	10.0	8	👉	6.8	18	👉	7.3
Virginia	6	👉	53.1	23	👉	5.9	6	👉	7.5	15	👉	7.6
Kansas	7	👉	49.2	16	👎	7.0	7	👉	7.5	26	👉	6.7
Colorado	8	👉	48.1	12	👉	7.4	17	👎	5.0	7	👉	8.3
Idaho	9	👎	46.9	9	👎	7.7	13	👉	5.4	16	👉	7.5
Iowa	10	👎	46.0	6	👎	8.2	14	👉	5.3	19	👉	7.3
Nebraska	11	👉	43.7	3	👉	9.0	5	👉	7.9	44	👉	5.3
Montana	12	👉	43.0	17	👉	6.7	24	👎	4.3	4	👉	8.3
South Carolina	13	👉	42.0	24	👉	5.9	31	👉	4.2	3	👉	8.8
Hawaii	14	👉	41.9	13	👉	7.1	26	👉	4.3	9	👉	8.0
Alaska	15	👎	41.4	50	👎	4.2	33	👎	4.1	1	👉	10.0
Wisconsin	16	👉	40.3	14	👎	7.1	10	👉	5.7	31	👉	6.5
Alabama	17	👉	38.3	30	👉	5.6	36	👎	4.1	6	👉	8.3
Maryland	18	👎	38.1	20	👎	6.4	18	👉	4.9	20	👉	7.0
Maine	19	👉	37.6	25	👎	5.8	25	👉	4.3	13	👉	7.8
Vermont	20	👉	37.3	5	👉	8.3	23	👉	4.3	29	👉	6.5
Texas	21	👎	36.4	21	👎	6.2	16	👉	5.0	25	👉	6.7
Indiana	22	👉	35.1	7	👉	7.9	19	👉	4.9	36	👉	5.9
Oklahoma	23	👉	33.8	19	👉	6.5	37	👉	4.1	22	👉	6.9
Missouri	24	👎	33.7	15	👎	7.0	11	👉	5.6	43	👉	5.5
Nevada	25	👎	33.5	48	👉	4.3	28	👉	4.2	10	👉	7.9
Arizona	26	👉	32.5	42	👎	5.0	40	👉	3.8	14	👉	7.8
Georgia	27	👉	32.0	37	👉	5.4	21	👉	4.6	28	👉	6.5
Mississippi	28	👉	31.8	41	👉	5.1	44	👉	3.3	8	👉	8.1
Washington	29	👎	31.5	32	👎	5.5	34	👉	4.1	23	👉	6.9
North Carolina	30	👎	30.8	34	👎	5.5	22	👉	4.4	32	👉	6.4
Florida	31	👉	30.2	44	👎	4.9	35	👉	4.1	21	👉	6.9
Massachusetts	32	👉	30.0	18	👉	6.5	20	👎	4.8	42	👉	5.5
Michigan	33	👎	29.9	35	👉	5.5	32	👉	4.1	30	👉	6.5
Oregon	34	👉	29.4	36	👎	5.5	41	👉	3.7	24	👉	6.8
Connecticut	35	👉	29.1	46	👎	4.8	15	👉	5.0	38	👉	5.9
Pennsylvania	36	👉	27.8	38	👉	5.3	30	👎	4.2	34	👉	6.1
New Jersey	37	👎	27.3	39	👎	5.2	12	👉	5.5	45	👉	5.1
West Virginia	38	👉	27.2	45	👎	4.8	49	👉	2.8	12	👉	7.8
Tennessee	39	👉	26.6	27	👎	5.7	38	👉	3.9	39	👉	5.9
Illinois	40	👉	25.5	43	👉	4.9	29	👎	4.2	40	👉	5.7
Minnesota	41	👎	25.3	8	👉	7.8	9	👉	6.5	49	👉	3.7
New Mexico	42	👉	24.8	49	👎	4.3	50	👉	2.3	5	👉	8.3
California	43	👉	24.8	47	👉	4.6	45	👎	3.3	27	👉	6.6
Kentucky	44	👉	24.5	31	👎	5.6	43	👉	3.4	37	👉	5.9
Ohio	45	👉	23.2	28	👉	5.7	27	👉	4.2	47	👉	4.9
New York	46	👉	22.6	33	👉	5.5	47	👎	3.3	41	👉	5.6
Louisiana	47	👉	21.7	40	👎	5.1	48	👉	2.8	35	👉	6.0
Rhode Island	48	👉	21.5	29	👉	5.7	42	👉	3.6	46	👉	4.9
Arkansas	49	👉	20.3	10	👉	7.6	46	👉	3.3	48	👉	4.2
Delaware	50	👉	12.7	22	👎	6.0	39	👎	3.8	50	👉	2.8