

Research Notes



Prime Working Age Employment-Population Ratio
Dionny McDonnell, Economist

Note: 2018:35
March 15, 2018

Prime Working Age Employment-Population Ratio in Nevada Trending Up



- The monthly Current Population Survey (CPS), sponsored by the Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, provides information about the employment-population ratio for the 25 to 54 year old age group. This measure indicates what proportion of the prime working age population is employed.
- In August 2007 the employment-population ratio for Nevadans' prime working age reached a high of 82.5 percent, with a year-over-year average employment growth of 5.2 percent, while population growth averaged one percent. During the same period the nation's prime working age employment-population ratio averaged 80 percent. In fact, Nevada's ratio exceeded the Nation's from late 2006 to mid-2009.
- In late 2008, average employment started declining. On the other hand, average population did not start to decline until early 2010. However, the relatively stronger decrease in employment compared to the decline in population caused the employment-population ratio to drop.
- By early 2011 the ratio reached bottom at 70.6 percent. Nationwide the ratio bottomed at 75.1 percent in mid-2010. Since then the employment-population ratio has been trending up.
- For the year ending in February 2018 Nevadans' prime working age employment ratio stands at 77.2 percent. This compares to a 78.8 percent employment ratio for the nation as a whole, just 1.6 percentage points higher than the Silver State. In early 2011, the nation's ratio was 75.1 percent, 4.5 percentage points higher than Nevada's rate.