

North Dakota Watchdog.org

Oil-rich North Dakota has more job openings than unemployed people

Posted By [Rob Port](#) On March 5, 2014 @ 11:45 am

By Rob Port | Watchdog.org North Dakota Bureau

BISMARCK, N.D. — As the nation struggles with a stagnant economy and slow job growth, one state has more job openings than people looking for jobs.

In North Dakota jobs are plentiful, and the state needs people to fill them.

According to [the February Online Job Openings Report](#) [2] issued by North Dakota's Job Service agency, "North Dakota's rate of unemployed persons per job opening was 0.6 in December 2013."

That rate is calculated by comparing the number of job openings listed in the state's largest jobs database with the number of people classified as unemployed. A 0.6 rate means less than one unemployed worker for every job opening.

The national ratio for unemployed workers to job openings was 2.9, according to the Job Service report.

"Twenty-one North Dakota counties reported unemployed-per-opening rates of less than 1.0 which indicates more job openings than resident labor supply," states the report. That's up from a year ago, when 13 counties reported a ratio of less than 1.0.

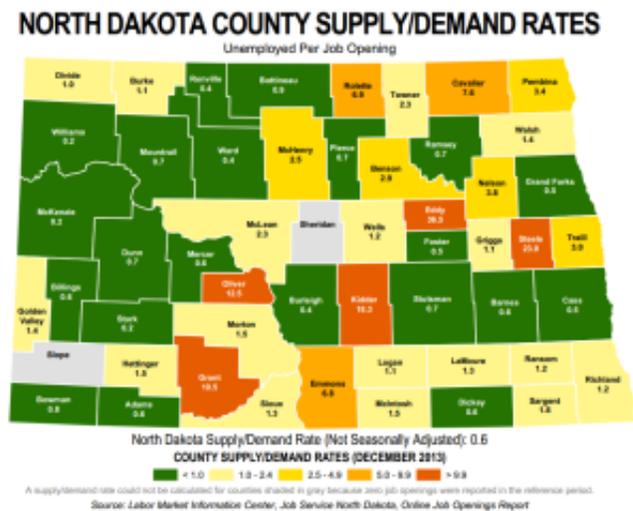
A map provided in the report shows three counties in the heart of the state's oil fields — Williams, McKenzie and Stark — have the lowest rates in the state, at 0.2 unemployed per job opening. But even counties outside the oil patch are dealing with a labor shortage. The state's two most populous counties, across the state from oil fields, each have a 0.5 rate of unemployed per job opening.

Two eastern, rural counties, Eddy and Steele, had the highest rates — 36.5 and 23.0 unemployed per job, respectively.

Having more jobs available than unemployed isn't new for North Dakota. The 0.6 unemployed-to-jobs ratio is actually up from a 0.4 ratio recorded throughout the holiday season.

North Dakota's ratio peaked at nearly 2.5 unemployed per job opening in January 2010, but it has been below a one-employed-per-job opening since the middle of 2011.

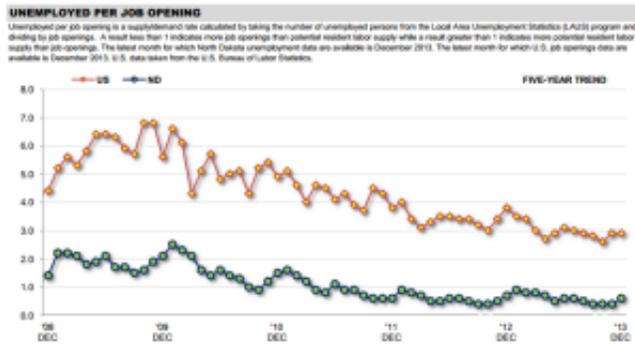
The Job Openings Report is "a monthly recap of online job openings and resumés activity from Job Service North Dakota's labor exchange system," according to a news release from the agency.



[1]

WORKERS WANTED: This map indicates ratios of job openings to unemployed workers county-by-county throughout North Dakota. Image pulled from February 2014 Job Openings Report produced by North Dakota Job Service.

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[3]

LABOR SHORTAGE: North Dakota's unemployed per job opening rate peaked in early 2010, but has been below one unemployed per job opening since the middle of 2011. Graph from the February 2014 Job Openings Report compiled by North Dakota Job Service.

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[2] the February Online Job Openings Report: http://watchdog.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/1/files/2014/03/lmi_ojornd.pdf

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