

March 2013

# The Employment Situation of Veterans

Today the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that for March 2013, the national unemployment rate representative of all Americans (16 and over) is 7.6%. This compares to 7.7% for February 2013. The employment situation representative of all veterans has worsened slightly, increasing from 6.9% in February, to 7.1% in March 2013. For Gulf War era II veterans (post-9/11 generation), the unemployment rate decreased slightly from 9.4% in February, to 9.2% in March 2013. The employment situation of the youngest post-9/11 veterans (ages 20-24) improved by 3% in March 2013, however it remains high at 35%. Importantly, veterans ages 20-24 are experiencing unemployment at a rate that remains more than twice that of their age group, non-veteran peers. In terms of unemployment duration, approximately 73% of post-9/11 veterans ages 20-24 have been unemployed for more than five weeks. Of the 207,000 unemployed post-9/11 veterans ages 20 and over, 16% have been unemployed for less than 5 weeks, 28% for between 5 and 14 weeks and 56% for 15 weeks or more.

The unemployment situation of female post-9/11 veterans worsened slightly, increasing to 11.8% in March 2013, up from 11.6% in February. For comparison, currently female non-veterans are unemployed at a rate of 6.6%. The unemployment situation of male post-9/11 veterans improved from 9% in February, to 8.7% in March 2013. For comparison, currently male non-veterans are unemployed at a rate of 7.5%. The unemployment rate experienced by African-American and Hispanic veterans (6.1% and 7.6% respectively) compares more favorably than the unemployment situation facing their non-veteran counterparts (12.6% and 8.7% respectively).

## Demographics & Trends

The following tables summarize the employment situation of veterans in America, based on BLS data released on April 5, 2013. These are unpublished data from the Current Population Survey, not seasonally adjusted, and represent the period ending March 2013.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR:	February 2013	March 2013	Change (+/-)	March 2012
All Americans	7.8	7.4	-0.4	8.1
All Veterans	6.9	7.1	0.2	7.5
Gulf War era II (Post-9/11) Veterans	9.4	9.2	-0.2	10.3
Gulf War era I Veterans	6.0	6.5	0.5	5.6
WWII, Korean War and Vietnam Veterans	7.4	7.3	-0.1	7.3
All Nonveterans	7.9	7.4	-0.5	8.2

NOTE: Population is 18 and over; Gulf War era II (September 2001-present), Gulf War era I (August 1990-August 2001), Vietnam era (August 1964-April 1975), Korean War (July 1950-January 1955), World War II (December 1941-December 1946), and other service periods (all other time periods). Veterans who served in more than one wartime period are classified only in the most recent one. Veterans who served during one of the selected wartime periods and another period are classified only in the wartime period.

Tables below (Gulf War Era II and Nonveterans) are for population ages 20 and over. (1) Rates are not shown where base is less than 35,000.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR GULF WAR ERA II (POST-9/11) VETERANS				
Category	February 2013	March 2013	Change (+/-)	March 2012
20-24	38.0	35.0	-3.0	18.9
25-29	9.5	8.8	-0.7	17.0
30-34	7.4	10.6	3.2	9.3
35-39	13.8	9.5	-4.3	6.1
40-44	0.9	4.4	3.5	3.5
45-49	2.4	3.5	1.1	11.4
50-54	2.5	4.5	2.0	1.7
55-59	4.8	(1)	-	(1)
60-64	(1)	(1)	-	(1)
65 years and older	(1)	(1)	-	(1)
Male	9.0	8.7	-0.3	10.2
Female	11.6	11.8	0.2	10.9
White	8.9	9.2	0.3	11.1
Hispanic or Latino	9.5	7.6	-1.9	12.9
African-American	8.7	6.1	-2.6	8.2

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR NONVETERANS				
Category	February 2013	March 2013	Change (+/-)	March 2012
20-24	13.4	13.1	-0.3	13.0
25-29	9.1	8.2	-0.9	9.4
30-34	7.3	6.9	-0.4	8.4
35-39	7.2	6.7	-0.5	7.3
40-44	6.3	5.9	-0.4	6.3
45-49	6.3	6.1	-0.2	6.3
50-54	6.0	5.9	-0.1	6.9
55-59	5.9	5.0	-0.9	6.8
60-64	6.0	5.8	-0.2	6.0
65 years and older	5.8	5.8	0.0	5.7
Male	8.0	7.5	-0.5	8.5
Female	7.0	6.6	-0.4	7.2
White	6.7	6.3	-0.4	7.0
Hispanic or Latino	9.5	8.7	-0.8	9.9
African-American	13.3	12.6	-0.7	13.2

## Related Policy, Legislation and Initiatives

The following policies, programs and initiatives have been proposed or enacted within the past 30 days. This list is not all-inclusive, but instead is designed to offer a ‘snapshot’ of recently announced government, industry and community-based efforts positioned to positively impact the employment situation of veterans in America.

- **Wells Fargo** made a two year, \$1 million sponsorship of **Got Your 6**, the entertainment industry-backed campaign devoted to changing the conversation around military veterans in America so that veterans and military families are seen as civic assets and leaders who will reinvigorate our community. This two-year commitment to the Got Your 6 campaign kicked off with the first ever “**Veteran Hiring Week**,” which took place March 25 – 29 and is presented by Wells Fargo. The series of initiatives are based in Los Angeles and New York City and include two job fairs for veterans and their family members. These events will highlight the benefits of hiring veterans and their family members into the American workforce. For more information, visit <http://www.loansafe.org/wells-fargo-presents-6-highlights-during-veteran-hiring-week-to-help-veterans-seek-employment>.
- Google will host the **Google Student Veterans Summit** to help student veterans transition into the workforce. Up to 30 participants will be selected to attend an all-expenses-paid summit at Google’s Mountain View office from July 15 - July 16. The Google Student Veterans Summit will include a professional development curriculum geared towards transitioning student veterans into the workplace. Through networking opportunities with Google’s veteran community and exposure to the business side of a technology company, student veterans will gain access to Google’s culture of impact and collaboration. The deadline for the 2013 Summit is April 26, 2013. For more information, visit <http://www.google.com/intl/en/jobs/students/proscho/programs/uscanada/veteran-summit/>.
- Our partners at the George W. Bush Institute’s **Military Service Initiative** have started a pilot program, “**Circles of Excellence**,” to explore courses of action designed to put veterans on the path to professional success. The program is led by a former Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, and recruits Leadership Fellows from the ranks of retired four-star generals to work with the military, non-profit organizations, academia and business to research, develop and implement solutions to critical problems. The program will hold an annual conference and will initially focus on jobs and the economic security of service members. The IVMF is an academic partner of “Circles of Excellence.” For more information, visit <http://www.bushcenter.org/military-service/circles-excellence>.
- **Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick** signed an executive order to increase access to public projects for **disabled veterans who own small businesses**, directing the Executive Office of Administration and Finance to write program requirements and guidelines to support the effort. The office will also create a business enterprise program to oversee the inclusion of disabled veterans in all areas of state procurement contracting, according to a statement by the governor’s office. Patrick’s executive order marks the implementation of the Veterans Access Livelihood, Opportunity and Resources (VALOR) Act law which was passed last year. For more information, visit [http://www.mabbett.com/assets/0000/1393/Official\\_Press\\_Release\\_and\\_Executive\\_Order.pdf](http://www.mabbett.com/assets/0000/1393/Official_Press_Release_and_Executive_Order.pdf).

NOTE: The above is provided for information only. The listing of a given policy initiative or program does not imply an endorsement from the IVMF, or Syracuse University.

## Outlook

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) estimates that 20% of veterans are looking to start, purchase or partner in a small business start-up. Considering the fact that veterans tend to hire veterans and that 1 million service men and women will transition into civilian life over the next five years, both the public and private sectors need to implement more programs and policies that will increase access to contracts for veteran-owned businesses.

Some states, such as Massachusetts, are implementing new policies and procedures that change procurement requirements and guidelines to allow veteran and service-disabled, veteran-owned businesses to gain access to contracts for public projects in the areas of construction, design and goods and services procurement. Massachusetts is also working on establishing a service-disabled veteran-owned business enterprise program to oversee the inclusion of business enterprises owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans in all areas of state procurement contracting. While the potential impact of job creation for veterans as a function of leveraging supplier networks is understood by government contractors, this opportunity is less salient to those firms not engaged in the federal contracting arena. The private sector’s supplier-diversity programming represents a significant component of employment practice that may be utilized as a mechanism to increase the employment of veterans, particularly through working with veteran-owned small businesses and businesses owned by service-disabled veterans.

To fully leverage the entrepreneurial skills of veterans and veteran-owned businesses, and at the same time overcome the challenge of veterans’ unemployment, more states and municipalities need to implement policies and procedures that will enable veterans to more effectively procure contracts. Concurrently, companies, in addition to providing effective procurement opportunities, should develop mentoring programs that will help veteran-owned businesses become sustainable and expand.