



Construction Industry Round Table

Economic News

A force for positive change in the design / construction industry

05/10/2017 – Employment Numbers Continue to Show Improvement, But Construction Sector Slightly Off

The Department of Labor's employment figures for April 2017 slowed continued steady growth of 211,000 new jobs (approximate 113K more than the modest March figure, thus easily surpassing the generally accepted estimate that it takes approximately 130-150,000 new jobs per month just to absorb the expanding workforce). *Non-seasonally* adjusted unemployment figures for construction were slightly worse, with DOL reporting construction related unemployment at 6.3 percent [which was 0.3 tenth of a percent point worse than a year ago April 2016, when it stood at 6.0%].

Meanwhile, the overall unemployment improved dropping another one-tenth to 4.4 percent (most of the improvement seems to be due to the drop of "unemployed persons," down to 7.1 million as the government counts). The closely watched "labor force participation" rate actually slipped back to 62.9 percent. (This stat measures percentage of the eligible civilians in the labor force. Note: *at the end of the recession* [June '09] this rate stood at a healthier 65.7%). Meanwhile, the "employment to population ratio" continued to improve up one-tenth to 60.2 percent. An interesting development over the past 12 months, part-time employees have decreased almost 700,000; given the government counts part-timers as "employed" when coupled with the decreasing overall unemployment percentage, it seems fair to conclude people are moving into "full-time" positions.

*You can view the current and historical **Workforce Statistics** charts [here](#).*