

Virgin Islands Annual Labor Economic Analysis 2015

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Overview

During 2015 the Virgin Islands labor economy employed approximately 37,732 individuals. Compared to prior year estimates 37,947, the counts were slightly down by 215. Local unemployment data during the period averaged 11.9% with an approximate labor force count of 48,547 during the cycle. Employment estimates were at 42,417 on average with unemployment numbers hovering at 5,773.

Overall wages for workers in the Territory averaged \$16.85 per hour, with an annualized or a mean salary at \$35,050. Entry level worker rates were around \$8.27 and annual salary at \$17,200. Middle of the road wages for occupations were \$13.34 and \$27,750 respectively. Results from the 2015 survey have retail sales occupations as the highest concentration, and supervisory and protective services occupations succeeding based on employment counts.

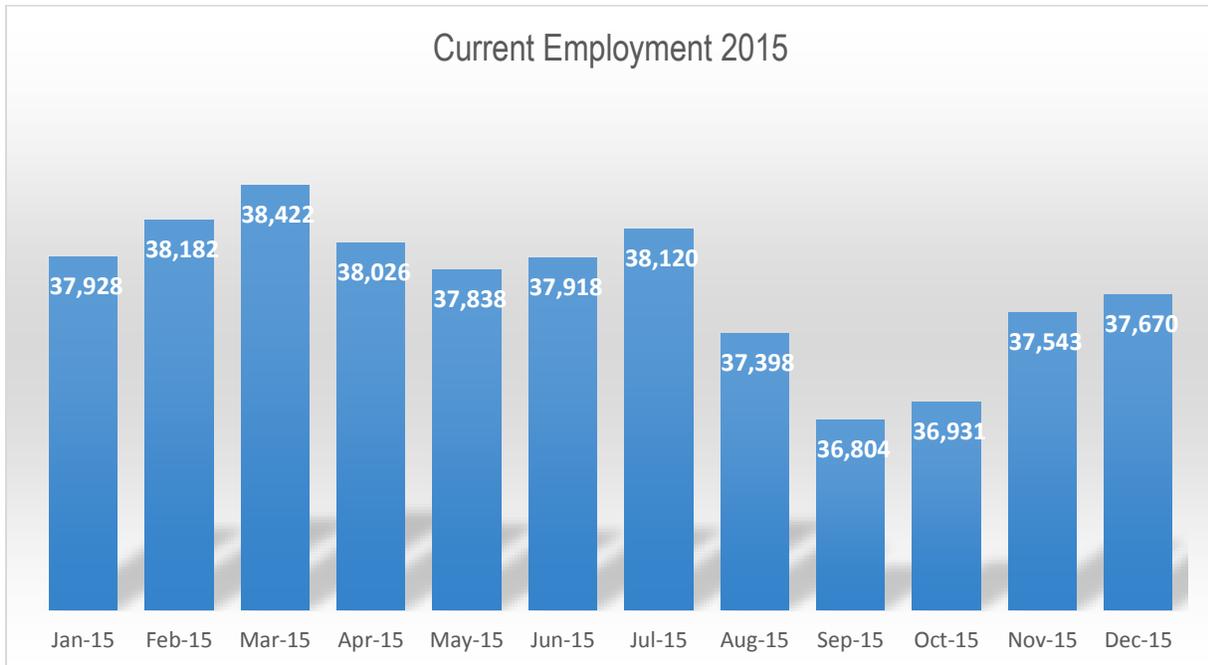
In program year 2015, the Virgin Islands performed analysis and projections for the short-term period out to 2017, and the long term 2024 in accordance with guidance and rules for State areas under the workforce information system. Based on the model in the short term food services, construction, and healthcare services sector are expected to see growth. In the long term these industries are also expected to continue to have growth. Projections for occupations present a -2.41% decline in the short term with administrative, social service, and protective service occupations, having the largest decline out to 2017. However, data for the projections out 2024 have many occupations recovering and overall growth at 5.62%, barring any economic events that can impact employment or shifts in demand of industry in the Virgin Islands related to external impact from the National economy or global implications.

The labor market in the Virgin Islands continues to be impacted by past economic occurrences that have slowed growth in both the private and public sector. The gross domestic product has been slow in recovering or reaching levels prior to its decline. This broader aspect has also impacted the labor market, and demand for jobs has been slow, and or affected by seasonality in the economy, specifically surrounding a service industry catering to tourist related jobs and activity. Other public projects and capital investments which have commenced have impacted and contributed to job openings, however, based on the labor pool, the demand is currently lower than the supply or potential labor force that has been outside the market for over two cycles.

Current Employment

Employment in the Virgin Islands averaged 37,732 during the 2015 cycle (*data represents covered employers data, and excludes self-employed counts*). The month of March recorded the highest point of 38,422 and the low point was in September at 36,804 (see table 1).

Table 1



Current employment output is divided by economic units in the goods and service producing sectors at the broadest level. The service producing sector averaged 35,619, or 94.4% of the labor economy and the goods producing area averaged 2,113 or 5.6%. This signifies the Virgin Islands economy as a primary service oriented economy in both the private and public sectors.

Sectors that represented the highest count of employment during the year were government, trade and transportation, leisure and hospitality, and professional and business services (see entire chart by sector and month in Appendix, Figure 1). The share of employment in the private versus public sector in 2015 reflected 72% of employment attributed to private sector and 28% at the government level which includes both federal and local counts.

Looking at the top five aforementioned sectors representing the higher concentration of employment tourism related jobs continues to be the central source of employment. At the top is trade, which averaged 8,110 with leisure and hospitality averaging 7,330 respectively.

On a trend basis, to include seasonal employment changes based on tourist season (See Figure 2 Appendix), employment counts were slightly down.

Unemployment

Unemployment in the Territory averaged 11.9% during 2015, with an approximate labor force of 48,547 throughout the Virgin Islands. Employment (number of persons employed) peaked at 43,245 in the month of December and was the lowest in August at 42,417 based on the seasonality factor or slow period of the service based economy (see table 2).

Table 2



Employment by district continued to reflect overall contraction in each area, however, the district of St. Croix unemployment rates, and labor force still remained lower in the past five cycles based on slow economic activity and minor recovery in industry employment. St. Croix's employment highest point was the month of December at 19,601 related to service industry, and temporary holiday season employment. The unemployment rate for the district averaged 12.8%, and unemployment counts averaged 2,837 during the year.

In contrast, the St. Thomas-St. John district Employment counts were slightly higher than St. Croix, however, overall rates continued to reflect double digit unemployment. Average employment for the district was 23,386 during 2015, with a mean unemployment rate of 11.2%.

Occupational Wages

During 2015 occupational wages median hourly rate in the Territory was \$13.34, and the annual median salary was \$27,750 per year. Based on data collected from the Occupational Employment Statistics program hourly average wages were \$16.85, and average annual salaries were \$35,050

Of the occupations present within the economy during the time period, the highest concentration were in sales, office administrative support, production, food preparation, education, and management occupations.

At the aggregate level and based on the over 150 occupations surveyed the interquartile range from entry level to what represents senior or experienced workers were as follows:

	Hourly Rate	Annual
Entry Level	\$8.27	\$17,200
2-4 year experience	\$9.55	\$19,860
5 year experience	\$13.34	\$27,750
5 + years' experience	\$20.22	\$42,060
10 + years' experience (manager)	\$29.30	\$60,940

Based on results from the 2015 survey panels, the highest concentration or counts of employment were in the following occupations.

Occupation	Employment	Average Annual Salary
Retail Sales Person	1,990	\$19,950
General and Operations Managers	1,790	\$45,220
Security Guards	1,210	\$19,090
Waiter and Waitresses	1,010	\$18,510
Cashiers	1,000	\$18,260
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	970	\$28,190
Janitors and Cleaners	890	\$20,490
Office Clerks	850	\$26,060
Stock Clerks	830	\$18,560
Maintenance and Repair Workers	750	\$30,660

Projections Industry

The estimated changes in industry employment for the short term out to 2017 for the Virgin Islands is illustrated below (see table3). Projections show the tourism and construction industries having the highest net change, and some minor gains in employment during the period compared to the accommodation, management companies, and educational services sectors estimated to see declines during the period.

Table 3

Industry	2015 Estimated Employment	2017 Projected Employment	Change
Food Services and Drinking Places	3,084	3,305	221
Construction of Buildings	829	971	142
Ambulatory Health Care Services	978	1,085	107
Food and Beverage Stores	1,342	1,420	78
Administrative and Support Services	1,763	1,804	41
General Merchandise Stores	1,163	1,197	34
Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	720	751	31
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,199	1,230	31
Real Estate	760	784	24
Support Activities for Transportation	393	415	22
Repair and Maintenance	241	256	15
Water Transportation	320	330	10
Social Assistance	366	373	7
Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	648	654	6
Truck Transportation	234	236	2
Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	254	256	2
Total Federal Government Employment	720	720	-
Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	479	478	(1)
Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers	555	552	(3)
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	300	296	(4)
Health and Personal Care Stores	348	341	(7)
Air Transportation	218	210	(8)
Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	221	207	(14)
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	310	284	(26)
Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction	183	156	(27)
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	1,448	1,419	(29)
Telecommunications	526	495	(31)
Self Employed Workers, All Jobs	1,950	1,916	(34)
Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	675	635	(40)
Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers	385	330	(55)
Educational Services	717	656	(61)
Specialty Trade Contractors	535	430	(105)
Management of Companies and Enterprises	182	75	(107)
Accommodation, including Hotels and Motels	3,694	3,520	(174)

In the long run out to 2024 industry projected results estimate the service sector related to tourism activity to see growth with accommodations, food services, administrative support, and professional services sectors experiencing growth. On the lower end, although with minor change, telecommunications, repair and maintenance, and health care stores, are estimated to see minimal growth.

Occupational Projections

A -2.41% decline is expected in total occupations out to 2017 (see table 4). The majority are service related, and in support and administrative services occupations. Occupations estimated to see growth are protective services, construction, and material moving occupations during the period.

Table 4

Occupational Titles	2015 Estimate	2017 Projected	Change	Factor
Total, All Occupations	33,736	32,922	(814)	-2.41%
Management Occupations	2,161	2,100	(61)	-2.82%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	1,343	1,268	(75)	-5.58%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	297	272	(25)	-8.42%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	145	134	(11)	-7.59%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	1,011	907	(104)	-10.29%
Community and Social Service Occupations	350	326	(24)	-6.86%
Legal Occupations	491	472	(19)	-3.87%
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	715	660	(55)	-7.69%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	134	122	(12)	-8.96%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	875	875	-	0.00%
Healthcare Support Occupations	422	429	7	1.66%
Protective Service Occupations	2,804	2,661	(143)	-5.10%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	4,067	4,169	102	2.51%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	2,014	1,975	(39)	-1.94%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	984	945	(39)	-3.96%
Sales and Related Occupations	3,593	3,543	(50)	-1.39%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	7,343	7,091	(252)	-3.43%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	51	52	1	1.96%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	1,324	1,363	39	2.95%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	1,376	1,333	(43)	-3.13%
Production Occupations	500	478	(22)	-4.40%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	1,736	1,747	11	0.63%

Estimates of occupations further out to 2024 are expected to see 5.62 % growth from a base in 2015 of 33, 401 to approximately 35,277 in 2024. Some of the occupational groups expected to see increase are food preparation, protective services, management/supervisory, construction/extraction, and maintenance repair related occupations.

Table 5

Occupational Titles	2015 Estimate	2024 Projection	Change	Factor
Total, All Occupations	33,401	35,277	1,876	5.62%
Management Occupations	2,159	2,326	167	7.74%
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	1,371	1,484	113	8.24%
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	298	337	39	13.09%
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	142	151	9	6.34%
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	1,015	1,091	76	7.49%
Community and Social Service Occupations	354	391	37	10.45%
Legal Occupations	491	527	36	7.33%
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	728	786	58	7.97%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	134	143	9	6.72%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	878	938	60	6.83%
Healthcare Support Occupations	419	457	38	9.07%
Protective Service Occupations	2,815	2,998	183	6.50%
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	3,835	4,053	218	5.68%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	1,974	2,130	156	7.90%
Personal Care and Service Occupations	972	1,067	95	9.77%
Sales and Related Occupations	3,526	3,642	116	3.29%
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	7,398	7,490	92	1.24%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	50	49	(1)	-2.00%
Construction and Extraction Occupations	1,235	1,376	141	11.42%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	1,427	1,539	112	7.85%
Production Occupations	485	524	39	8.04%
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	1,695	1,778	83	4.90%

Appendix

Figure 1

INDUSTRY	Jan-15	Feb-15	Mar-15	Apr-15	May-15	Jun-15	Jul-15	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	AVERAGE
Total Nonfarm	37,928	38,182	38,422	38,026	37,838	37,918	38,120	37,398	36,804	36,931	37,543	37,670	37,732
Total Private	27,367	27,451	27,629	27,243	27,145	27,280	27,051	26,616	26,050	26,202	26,705	26,903	26,970
Goods Producing	2,176	2,174	2,192	2,064	2,075	2,117	2,225	2,119	2,036	2,035	2,054	2,083	2,113
Service-Providing	35,752	36,008	36,230	35,962	35,763	35,801	35,895	35,279	34,768	34,896	35,489	35,587	35,619
Private Service Providing	25,191	25,277	25,437	25,179	25,070	25,163	24,826	24,497	24,014	24,167	24,651	24,820	24,858
Mining, Logging and Construction	1,554	1,558	1,570	1,433	1,442	1,488	1,622	1,526	1,437	1,428	1,451	1,470	1,498
Manufacturing	622	616	622	631	633	629	603	593	599	607	603	613	614
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	8,310	8,310	8,375	8,195	8,112	8,122	7,956	7,855	7,927	7,986	8,051	8,115	8,110
Wholesale Trade	786	797	819	699	695	708	695	692	695	691	691	691	722
Retail Trade	6,051	6,041	6,081	6,035	5,969	5,986	5,859	5,781	5,809	5,857	5,910	5,958	5,945
Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores	1,457	1,441	1,459	1,410	1,348	1,317	1,243	1,209	1,223	1,248	1,300	1,307	1,330
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	1,473	1,472	1,475	1,461	1,448	1,428	1,402	1,382	1,423	1,438	1,450	1,466	1,443
Transportation and Warehousing	1,425	1,423	1,427	1,411	1,396	1,376	1,352	1,330	1,371	1,386	1,398	1,413	1,392
Information	747	738	732	689	675	674	665	662	670	660	649	640	683
Financial Activities	2,171	2,185	2,185	2,208	2,220	2,220	2,192	2,156	2,133	2,141	2,137	2,156	2,175
Finance and Insurance	1,035	1,040	1,045	1,047	1,049	1,064	1,057	1,058	1,039	1,029	1,034	1,036	1,044
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,136	1,145	1,140	1,161	1,171	1,156	1,135	1,098	1,094	1,112	1,103	1,120	1,131
Professional and Business Services	3,216	3,225	3,258	3,263	3,321	3,359	3,340	3,304	3,277	3,274	3,267	3,272	3,281
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	1,108	1,121	1,151	1,167	1,226	1,234	1,239	1,233	1,194	1,181	1,174	1,174	1,184
Management of Companies and Enterprises	195	179	178	180	181	186	178	179	177	181	183	188	182
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	1,913	1,925	1,929	1,916	1,914	1,939	1,923	1,892	1,906	1,912	1,910	1,910	1,916
Education and Health Services	2,338	2,347	2,404	2,375	2,406	2,416	2,333	2,322	2,357	2,376	2,373	2,394	2,370
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,624	1,631	1,672	1,650	1,677	1,693	1,668	1,655	1,676	1,670	1,666	1,670	1,663
Ambulatory Health Care Services	967	963	999	980	998	1,027	1,032	1,029	1,024	1,026	1,026	1,028	1,008
Leisure and Hospitality	7,540	7,572	7,585	7,551	7,439	7,458	7,421	7,281	6,730	6,814	7,254	7,312	7,330
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	862	845	840	821	812	816	783	779	782	787	789	782	808
Accommodation and Food Services	6,678	6,727	6,745	6,730	6,627	6,642	6,638	6,502	5,948	6,027	6,465	6,530	6,522
Accommodation	3,655	3,716	3,737	3,726	3,704	3,708	3,639	3,600	3,260	3,326	3,708	3,765	3,629
Traveler Accommodation	3,624	3,685	3,707	3,695	3,673	3,682	3,612	3,576	3,240	3,303	3,678	3,729	3,600
Food Services and Drinking Places	3,023	3,011	3,008	3,004	2,923	2,934	2,999	2,902	2,688	2,701	2,757	2,765	2,893
Other Services	869	900	898	898	897	914	919	917	920	916	920	931	908
Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	480	479	478	472	465	474	486	478	476	479	476	476	477
Government	10,561	10,731	10,793	10,783	10,693	10,638	11,069	10,782	10,754	10,729	10,838	10,767	10,762
Federal Government	955	961	959	964	962	957	961	956	959	962	967	967	961
State Government	9,606	9,770	9,834	9,819	9,731	9,681	10,108	9,826	9,795	9,767	9,871	9,800	9,801

Appendix

Figure 2

Occupational Titles	OCC_GROUP	Employment	Hourly Average	Annual Mean	Hourly 10 Percentile	Hourly 25 Percentile	Hourly Median	Hourly 75 Percentile	Hourly 90 percentile	Annual 10 Percentile	Annual 25 Percentile	Annual Median	Annual 75 Percentile	Annual 90 Percentile
All Occupations	total	37,370	16.85	35,050	8.27	9.55	13.34	20.22	29.30	17,200	19,860	27,750	42,060	60,940
Management Occupations	major	2,810	30.33	63,090	11.11	16.45	26.24	37.86	51.98	23,100	34,210	54,590	78,740	108,120
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	major	1,360	24.83	51,640	13.72	16.83	22.91	29.98	37.73	28,540	35,020	47,650	62,360	78,480
Computer and Mathematical Occupations	major	370	26.19	54,480	13.52	17.07	23.01	31.10	43.69	28,120	35,510	47,860	64,690	90,870
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	major	230	27.20	56,570	12.99	17.73	26.49	33.14	42.76	27,020	36,880	55,100	68,930	88,950
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	major	400	19.24	40,010	8.08	9.20	17.91	25.11	35.18	16,820	19,140	37,250	52,220	73,170
Community and Social Service Occupations	major	340	19.05	39,620	11.24	14.94	18.17	22.85	28.56	23,390	31,080	37,800	47,530	59,400
Legal Occupations	major	440	42.60	88,610	19.02	26.08	35.67	54.17	73.56	39,560	54,240	74,190	112,680	153,010
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	major	2,600	18.06	37,550	8.81	11.93	17.39	22.86	28.69	18,330	24,810	36,160	47,550	59,670
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	major	240	20.31	42,250	11.09	14.46	19.50	24.77	29.39	23,060	30,080	40,560	51,520	61,130
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	major	940	29.97	62,340	12.58	15.28	23.80	36.62	54.79	26,170	31,770	49,510	76,170	113,950
Healthcare Support Occupations	major	440	13.31	27,680	9.25	10.47	12.49	14.50	19.55	19,240	21,780	25,980	30,150	40,660
Protective Service Occupations	major	2,500	15.98	33,240	8.08	9.15	13.95	20.67	26.50	16,800	19,020	29,020	43,000	55,110
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	major	4,160	11.92	24,790	7.82	8.43	9.47	12.30	17.18	16,270	17,530	19,690	25,580	35,730
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	major	2,200	11.31	23,530	8.00	8.89	10.70	13.23	15.91	16,650	18,490	22,250	27,530	33,090
Personal Care and Service Occupations	major	1,000	11.02	22,920	7.75	8.36	9.48	12.26	16.43	16,120	17,400	19,720	25,510	34,170
Sales and Related Occupations	major	4,000	12.20	25,370	7.91	8.59	9.97	13.54	18.86	16,450	17,870	20,740	28,160	39,220
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	major	7,480	14.92	31,040	8.51	10.08	13.01	18.11	24.28	17,690	20,970	27,050	37,660	50,510
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	major	40	11.84	24,620	8.10	8.87	10.89	14.04	18.60	16,840	18,440	22,650	29,190	38,690
Construction and Extraction Occupations	major	1,220	18.92	39,360	10.53	13.32	17.63	22.89	29.01	21,890	27,710	36,670	47,610	60,330
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	major	1,540	17.19	35,750	9.49	11.86	16.42	21.06	26.86	19,740	24,670	34,150	43,810	55,860
Production Occupations	major	670	13.53	28,140	8.42	9.80	12.25	15.47	21.63	17,510	20,390	25,480	32,180	44,980
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	major	2,360	12.87	26,770	8.11	9.05	11.33	15.23	20.04	16,860	18,820	23,560	31,680	41,670