

REVISIONS BY LABOR DEPARTMENT SHOW CLEVELAND GAINED JOBS IN 2013



An annual revision of the jobs report from the Labor Department, which was released in March, shows that the Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor region is still struggling with jobs. The revised report shows that the struggles are not as bad as originally reported, according to the Cleveland Plain Dealer. The metro area includes Median, Cuyahoga, Lorain, Lake and Geauga counties.

The region finished next-to-last in the revised report instead of dead last out of the 38 metro areas. Last place on the list is Pittsburgh, which dropped on the list from 22nd place.

"When people hear that kind of thing they say, 'Well, we're going backwards,'" said Thomas Waltermire, CEO of Team NEO. "When the headlines say we're on a losing streak, it tells people that you're losers."

In its original report, the Labor Department said that the Greater Cleveland area lost 7,200 jobs from September of 2012 to September of 2013. The revised report from the Labor Report shows that the Greater Cleveland area gained 7,400 jobs during that same period.

"People take on investments and take risks when they are confident," Waltermire said. "When the chatter around them is one that says that things are going in reverse, people are less confident. They are less willing to take on risk, and it ultimately shows up in growth."

Waltermire said that it is hard to measure how the initial report of job loss affected the area since it did not occur over multiple years. He did say that the monthly jobs reports, citing job losses, were depressing for the region.

"Economics is a combination of hard numbers and psychology," Waltermire said. "When the psychology is not good, it can have an effect."

An economic research analyst, George Zeller, did not agree with Waltermire's sentiment.

"What causes us to grow is not psychology," he said. "It is job growth."

Zeller said that of 16 counties, just Carroll County recovered jobs it lost during the Great Recession.

"The current metro Cleveland figures are that metro Cleveland gained 8,519 jobs during the past year, a very good thing," Zeller said. "But, metro Cleveland still has 58,266 fewer jobs than it had in 2007, a 5.6 percent loss."

No one seems to be able to figure out why the discrepancy in reports occurred, but Edward Hill said that the sample size should be larger. Hill is the dean of the Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University.

"The sample size is very small," he said. "It is designed to be accurate for the nation, so a sampling error that would affect a metro, wouldn't affect the national numbers."

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