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Facts & Figures

16,000

Decline in the number of Mainers working since December 2007

28,183

Decline in Maine's labor force from January 2008-January 2016

164

Percent of jobs recovered in New England since end of the Great Recession

80

Percent of jobs recovered in Maine since the end of the Great Recession

29,400

Number of Maine people working part-time but wanting full-time work

source: US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics

39,405

MECEP Matters e-newsletter May 2016

Dear MECEP Friend,

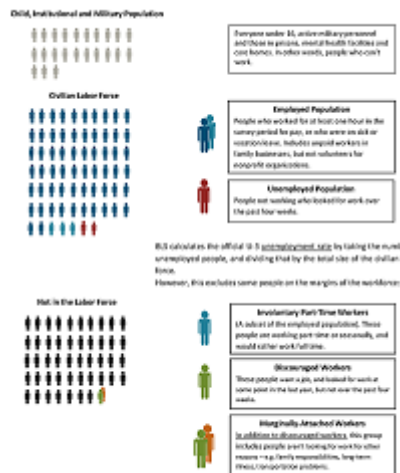
The legislature may have adjourned, but MECEP is already gearing up for the next biennium. Our priorities remain providing insightful, reliable data and analysis on the issues that matter most to Maine families: good jobs and living wages, tax fairness, funding for education, health care, and other priorities to ensure all Mainers the opportunity to share in a more prosperous Maine economy.



Sincerely,
Mark Sullivan
Communications Director

New MECEP Policy Basic Explains Unemployment Rate Calculation

How the Department of Labor Calculates Unemployment



On the first Friday of every month, the US Department of Labor (DoL) releases its official calculation of the nation's unemployment rate. Later each month, DoL issues state-by-state unemployment calculations. Both announcements receive extensive media coverage and policymakers often cite them. But how does DoL measure employment nationally and by state? How does it reach its conclusions?

In a new policy basic, ***Maine's Unemployment Rate: More than Meets the Eye***, MECEP answers these questions as well as

an even more important one: are there alternative calculations that are more useful and instructive for informing our public policy decisions?

The new publication is available on our website, [click here](#).

Ben Chin Joins MECEP Board of Directors

Ben Chin graduated from Bates College in 2007 and has been political engagement director at the Maine People's Alliance since 2010. He has worked closely with MECEP over the last three state budget cycles. Ben served as field director for the Protect Maine Votes and ran for mayor of Lewiston in 2015. Ben, his wife Nicola, and their six-month old daughter, Anjali, live in Lewiston.



Ben Chin

Number of working poor Maine families (defined as families with at least one member working with family income below 200% of the poverty level)

source: Working Poor Families Project using the American Community Survey (ACS), the Current Population Survey (CPS)

Quote

"... despite an apparently-low official unemployment rate, there are still thousands of Mainers in jobs that don't offer the hours they need and thousands more who have stopped looking for work due in part to limited job availability."

"Maine's Unemployment Rate: More than Meets the Eye" MECEP policy basic

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In the Legislature



The second session of the 127th Maine Legislature is history, and its legacy may well be what it did not accomplish than what it did.

Once again, [despite efforts by MECEP and our partners](#), the legislature failed to overcome Gov. LePage's opposition and accept federal funds to extend Medicaid coverage

to tens of thousands of uninsured Mainers. It also failed to override the governor's veto of legislation to provide [incentives for the state's solar power industry](#). And it is sending only a small, short-sighted bond package to voters this fall when the state can and should be investing more.

MECEP did succeed in protecting the fairness of Maine's tax code and helped secure modest additional funding for education and mental health services. We have already begun to prepare for the 128th Legislature with special emphasis on crafting policy solutions for a new biennial budget that will make our taxes fairer and adequately fund education, health care, and other investments important to middle- and low-income Maine families.

In the News



"If we're serious about honoring mothers - and all parents - this Mother's Day, let's give them a gift that's long overdue: guaranteed paid family and medical leave." James Myall in his [May 8, 2016 Maine Sunday Telegram op ed](#).

[Study Finds Wide Disparity in Maine Health Care Costs](#)

April 20, 2016 | Maine Public Broadcasting Network

[Democracy Forum: Moochers and Freeloaders: Welfare for the Rich, Welfare for the Poor](#)

April 15, 2016 | WERU 89.9 FM

[WZON Interview on MaineCare Expansion](#)

April 7, 2016 | WZON Radio

[What's the true cost of Medicaid expansion?](#)

April 5, 2016 | **Bangor Daily News**

[Health Leaders Tell Legislature Benefits of Increasing Access to Health Care Outpace Estimated Costs](#)

April 4, 2016 | Cover Maine Now

From our Blog

Read some of MECEP's recent blog posts or [click here](#) to visit our blog.

[LePage administration's crusade against food stamps hurts the economy; does nothing to help the poor](#)

May 4, 2016 by James Myall

[Will Congress leave poor Maine kids hungrier and less ready to learn?](#)

April 28, 2016 by Jody Harris

[Congress must stop taxing workers without children into poverty](#)

April 26, 2016 by Megan Michaud

[Maine solar legislation is nothing like Chinese energy policy - which is a pity](#)

April 25, 2016 by James Myall

[Payday loans continue to injure consumers](#)

April 22, 2016 by Jody Harris

[Income inequality and provision of public services a matter of life and death](#)

April 20, 2016 by James Myall

[Maine continues to lag behind in job creation](#)

April 15, 2016 by James Myall

[Child care in Maine is getting more expensive; while the governor jeopardizes its safety and federal funds that help parents pay for it](#)

April 14, 2016 by Jody Harris

[New report affirms education and infrastructure as foundations of a strong state economy](#)

April 13, 2016 by Sarah Austin



MECEP is a proud member of the MaineShare social action fund, which has supported progressive nonprofits for 20 years. [Contact us](#) about how to offer employees a way to make MaineShare charitable contributions through payroll deductions at your workplace.

