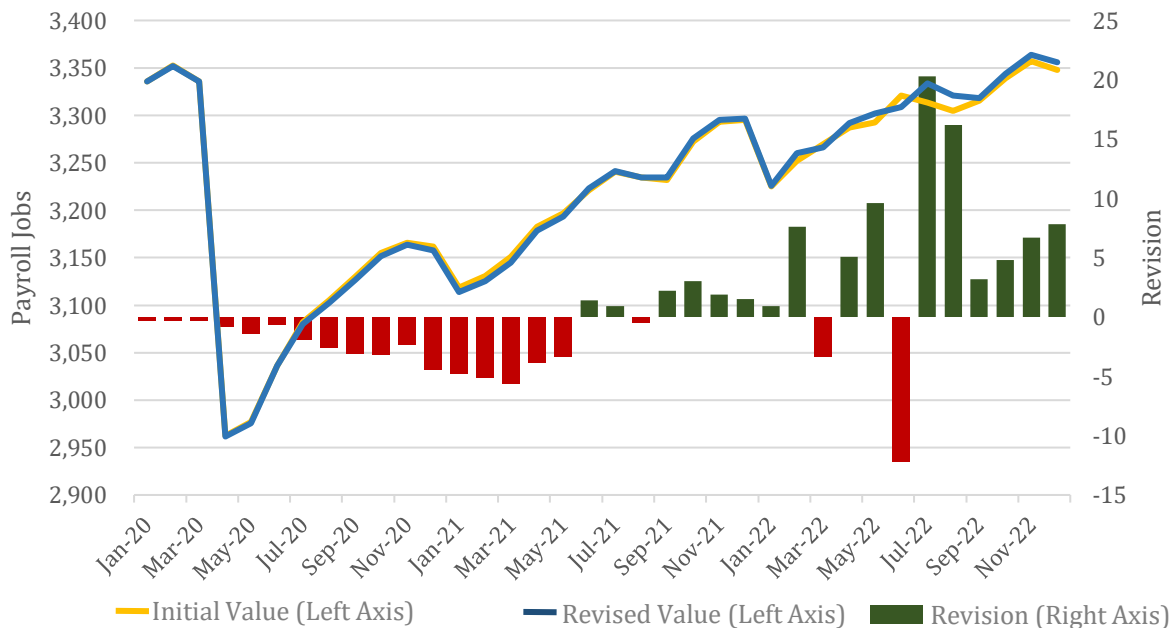


SFI Technical Note: Washington Region Jobs Revisions

April 17th, 2023
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The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) recently released revised payroll jobs numbers for the Washington region. March revisions to data from January reveal that the Washington region created fewer payroll jobs from January 2020 through May 2021 compared to preliminary reported estimates. The largest downward revision was a 5,600 jobs adjustment for March, 2021. For the period June 2021 through December 2022, the number of payroll jobs was revised up in 16 of the 19 months by an average of 4,060 jobs per month. In December 2022, the Washington region was estimated to have 7,800 more jobs than initially reported. As shown in the figure below, initial estimates of regional employment have been particularly challenging as the region recovered from the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

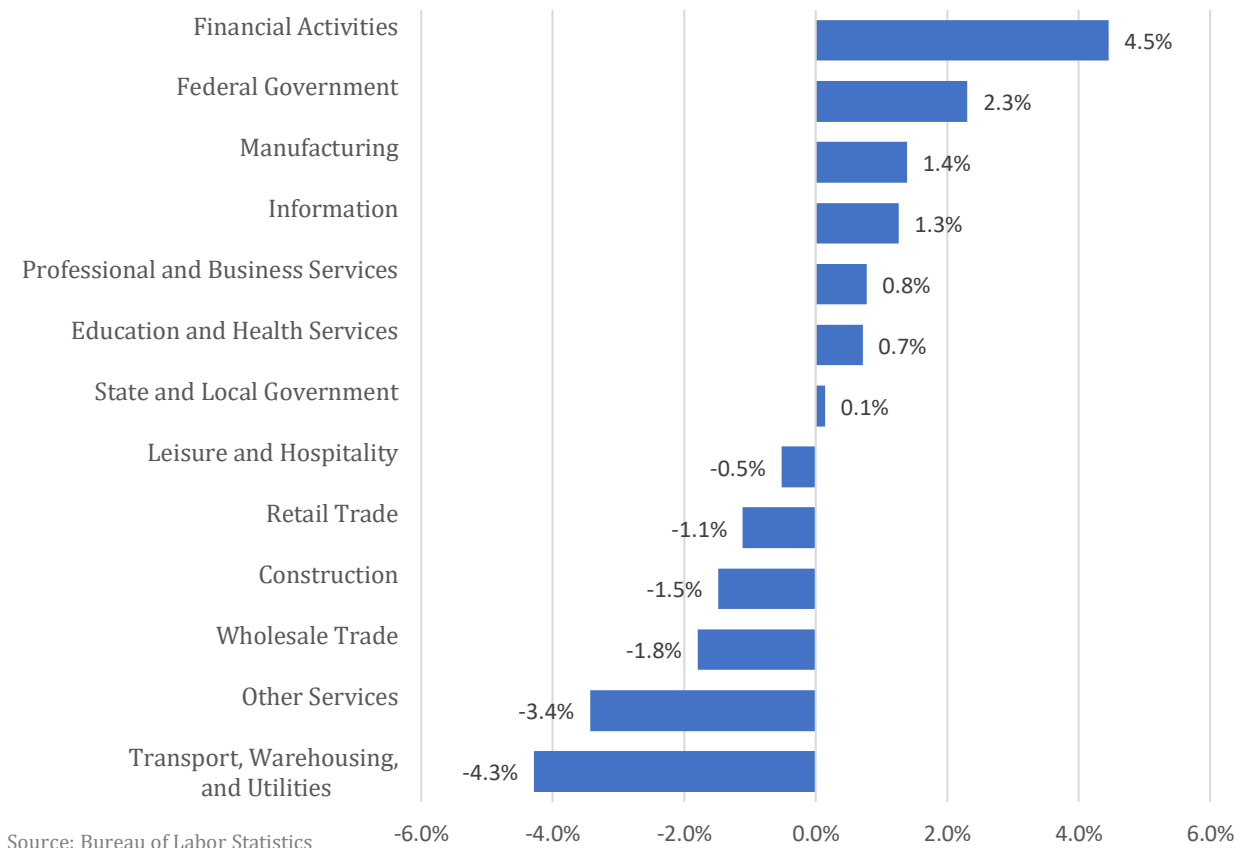
Payroll Jobs Revisions by Month in the Washington Region
January 2020 to December 2022



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Among 13 industry sectors regularly tracked by the Fuller Institute, about half (6) have seen the December 2022 jobs numbers revised downward, with the largest revision in the Transportation, and Warehousing sector (see figure below). The largest upward revisions occurred in the Financial Activities sector (4.5%) and the Federal Government (+2.3%). While the Professional and Business Services sector was revised up a comparatively modest 0.8%, in level terms it was the third largest upward revision (+6,200 jobs).

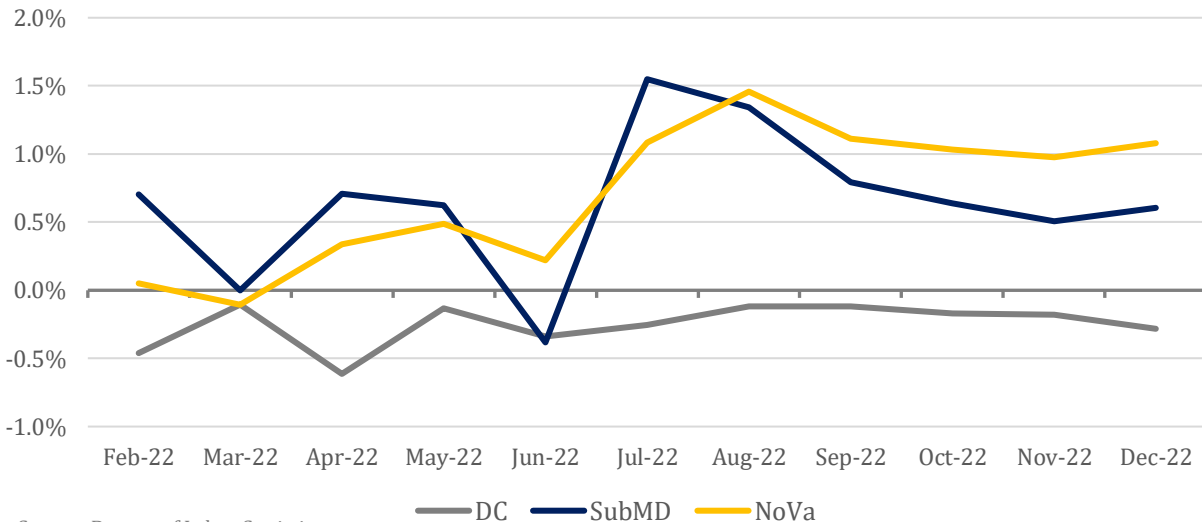
Revisions by Industry – Percent Difference from Initial Value December 2022



Among the Washington region's sub-state areas, the number of payroll jobs in Northern Virginia and Suburban Maryland were both revised upwards while payroll jobs in DC were revised downward. The number of payroll jobs in the District were revised down every month of 2022 by an average of 0.3%. Northern Virginia and Suburban Maryland each had one month's estimated payroll jobs revised downward in 2022. The largest upward revisions for both suburban areas came in the second half of 2022. The largest upward revision in Suburban Maryland occurred in July 2022 when the number of payroll jobs were revised up by 1.5 percent (+15,400). The largest upward revision in Northern Virginia occurred in August 2022 when the number of payroll jobs were revised up by 1.5 percent (+22,300).

Revisions by Sub-State Region – Percent Difference from Initial Value

January 2022 to December 2022



Conclusion

The recently released revisions to payroll jobs in the Washington region shows the local economy recovered from pandemic-driven job losses slightly faster than shown in the original data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Incorporating these revisions into our economic performance models allows us to track regional economy performance more accurately. The adjustments reflect the difficulty of providing timely and accurate jobs data during unusual events. While we now better understand the loss-recovery cycle of a pandemic, we can still hope that COVID-19 proves to be a one-off event in the long run.

About These Data

These data are from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (Current Employment Statistics). These data are released monthly and re-benchmarked in March. The preliminary data shown was the data released in January 2023 and included data through December 2022. The revised or re-benchmarked data were released in March 2023.