

During the same period, the state will add 1.4 million job vacancies both from new job opportunities and from those arising from retirement. Of these vacancies, 942,700 will favor candidates with postsecondary qualifications, while 447,100 will be appropriate for high school graduates and high school dropouts.

Virginia ranks 2nd in the South in the proportion of its 2020 jobs requiring a bachelor's degree, 3rd in jobs that will require a graduate degree, and 15th in jobs that will be available for high school dropouts.

West Virginia > Strong mining > Population loss

West Virginia's unemployment rate remained below the national average throughout the recession, though it climbed slightly in December 2010. Furthermore, the state experienced only a minor decline in real GDP between 2007 and 2008. Between 2009 and 2010 its growth was 4 percent, well above the national average of 2.6 percent. Despite its resilience, the state's per capita real GDP was the second-lowest in the southern states region, at \$30,217 in 2010.

Industry in West Virginia

West Virginia has been historically linked to the natural resources sector, especially to coal production, for which it ranks 10th in the nation.⁴⁶ In 2010, West Virginia coal mines produced in excess of 165 million tons of coal, generating an estimated \$3.5 billion in state revenues, which directly and indirectly accounted for more than 40,000 jobs.⁴⁷ In addition, natural gas production has accelerated. Although natural resources employed only 5.7 percent of the state's workforce in 2010, it contributed 9.5 percent of the state's real GDP. Industrial output grew by a remarkable 29.1 percent between 2007 and 2010, while total state real GDP rose by only 6.9 percent. Manufacturing continues to make significant efficiency gains, so that sector is more a source of economic than employment growth.

The healthcare services sector, which employs 14 percent of West Virginians, is projected to remain an employment leader through 2020. Top employers include West Virginia University Hospitals and the Charleston Area Medical Center. The state is also trying to expand its biotechnology, chemical and pharmaceutical industries using grants, incentives, and state universities to harness growing demand for healthcare products and services.⁴⁸

West Virginia's government and public education services sector comprised 19.1 percent of employment in 2010, and contributed over 17.3 percent of the state's real GDP. Not surprisingly, six of the state's top ten employers fall into this sector: IRS Data Center, Department of Veterans Affairs, the West Virginia Department of Highways, U.S. Postal Service, West Virginia University, and Kanawha County Board of Education.

46. This is if we include petroleum and petrochemicals in natural resources and mining.

47. Labor Market Information by West Virginia 2011

48. <http://wvcommerce.org/business/industries/biotech.aspx>

Other large contributors to the state's real GDP include financial services (14.8%) and wholesale and retail trade services (13.2%). Wholesale and retail trade services employed 15.4 percent of the 2010 labor force, and not surprisingly, includes two of the state's top employers: Wal-Mart and Kroger. Other major employers include leisure and hospitality services (9.8%), professional and business services (8.7%), and manufacturing (7.4%).

West Virginia is home to only eight of Inc.com's 500|5000 fastest-growing companies, as rated in 2010. Most of these companies are in high-growth, postsecondary-intensive industries and represent opportunities in the recovery and beyond. Four growing companies are in the information services industry (HMS Technologies, The McEvoy Administration, Performance Results, and Advanced Technical Solutions), one is in professional and business services (KeyLogic Systems), and one is in financial services (McKinley Carter Wealth Services). The remaining two are in natural resources (Cenergy) and transportation and utilities services (Reliable Environmental Transport).

Occupations in West Virginia

Blue-collar jobs, closely tied to the fate of natural resources and manufacturing industries, are predicted to grow by a mere 5 percent between 2010 and 2020. In contrast, healthcare occupations, STEM occupations and food and personal services jobs are expected to grow by 19 percent, 12 percent, and 12 percent, respectively.

51% OF JOBS IN WEST VIRGINIA WILL REQUIRE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN 2020 (UP FROM 48% IN 2010)

Table 9: Snapshot of Education Demand for Total Jobs in West Virginia (2010 And 2020)

	2010	2020	% in 2020
High school or less	382,900	397,200	49%
Some college	157,500	189,600	23%
Associate's	56,000	69,700	9%
Bachelor's	91,500	100,700	12%
Graduate	47,700	52,500	6%
Total	735,600	809,700	100%

By 2020, 51 percent of all jobs in West Virginia will require some postsecondary training.

During the same time period, the state will add 245,400 job vacancies both from new job opportunities and from vacancies due to retirement. Of these vacancies, 125,000 will favor candidates with postsecondary qualifications; 120,400, high school graduates and high school dropouts.

West Virginia ranks 17th in the South in the proportion of its 2020 jobs requiring a bachelor's degree, 13th in the proportion requiring a graduate degree, and 13th in jobs for high school dropouts.