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BLOGS & STORIES

20 Best Cities to Find Jobs

by *Richard Florida*

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Wondering where the jobs of the future are going to be? Richard Florida crunched the numbers to create a list of the American cities with the fastest-growing job markets, from New York to Durham to Bethesda.

The U.S. economy can't seem to catch a break, as the most recent employment numbers showed that the country lost an additional 131,000 jobs. "The job market just stinks," is how one leading economist summed it up for The New York Times.

Creating jobs is the No. 2 concern of the American people, according to a recent Gallup poll, behind only the economy in general. According to pundits and pollsters, November's midterm elections are likely to be a referendum on jobs and the economy.

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The U.S. has lost an estimated 7.4 million jobs since the onset of the economic crisis. But the economy is on track to create some 15.3 million new jobs looking out to 2018, according to projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics. More than 50 million total jobs will become open, as older workers retire and many switch jobs and careers. Total U.S. employment is projected to grow by 10.1 percent over the period, according to the BLS forecast, considerably better than the 7.4 percent growth rate for previous decade (1998-2008), and roughly in line with population growth of 10.7 percent.

But job growth will not be even across all sectors of the economy. Blue-collar jobs in construction, transportation, and factory work will show the slowest growth, adding just one million jobs, with most of these coming in construction and transportation as factory jobs continue to shrink. About half of total job creation will come from the growth of low-wage service jobs led by fields like home health-care aides, personal aides, food preparation, and retail sales. The other half will come from the growth of higher-skill, higher-wage jobs in knowledge, professional, and creative fields. These structural shifts in the U.S. economy are creating a labor force and society that is growing more unequal.

This economic inequality is increasingly overlaid by a worsening geography of work and class. The economic impact of the crisis has already been harshly uneven geographically, being felt most harshly in older industrial regions like Detroit and Sun Belt cities like Phoenix and Las Vegas. The impact has been easier on spots like Greater Washington, D.C. and in the old-producing regions of Texas and Oklahoma.

But which metro areas will have the most job growth? To get at this, my Martin Prosperity Institute team applied the detailed employment projections of the BLS to U.S. metro regions. The BLS forecasts job trends across 22 major occupational groups, which include more than 822 specific job categories for the decade 2008 through 2018. My MPI team used these BLS national forecasts to generate similar estimates for each of America's 392 metro regions. We used the BLS overall estimations to predict job growth in each region based on its current mix of jobs.

Click Below for a Gallery of the Top 20 Cities with Job Growth



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Rochester, Minnesota, is the biggest percentage gainer, with projected job growth of 12 percent or more. The major hub cities of the Northeast corridor do well, with Greater Washington in second place, Greater New York 15th, and Boston 19th. The D.C. suburb of Bethesda and Trenton-Ewing, a suburb of both New York and Philadelphia, also number among the top 10. College towns, like Charlottesville, Virginia, Gainesville, Florida, Ithaca, New York, Boulder, Colorado, and Corvallis, Oregon, which have performed well over the course of the economic crisis, number among the nation's top 20 projected job gainers.

Charlotta Mellander crunched the numbers, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics projections.

Richard Florida is director of the University of Toronto's Martin Prosperity Institute and author of The Great Reset, published this month by Harper Collins.

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