



## September 2018 Labor Market Report - Workforce Solutions Lower Rio

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) released the September 2018 Labor Market and Employment reports. The seasonally adjusted national unemployment rate decreased by .2% to 3.7%, and Texas decreased by .1% to 3.8%.

**Statewide Overview for September:** Texas had a net gain of 15,600 nonagricultural jobs in September, and has added 406,400 in the past year (seasonally adjusted). This represents a 3.3% annual employment growth rate.

Goods-Producing employment increased by 8,400 jobs in September, and a total of 123,800 jobs were added in the past twelve months. The Construction sector led this month, with a gain of 3,000 jobs. The Goods-Producing sector has seen a 6.9% growth rate over the past twelve months, and the growth rate is continuing to accelerate.

The Service sectors in total gained 7,200 jobs in September and a total of 282,600 jobs in the past year. This sector is growing at a 2.7% annual rate. The Financial Activities sector led in September, with an estimated 5,800 employees added.

**Regional Unemployment Recap:** The September data shows the unemployment rates decreasing across our region at the county and city levels. We continue to see significantly lower unemployment rates than reported one year ago.

### Counties:

- Hidalgo County decreased by .4%, to 6.2%
- Cameron County decreased by .5 %, to 5.7%
- Starr County decreased by .5%, to 8.6%
- Willacy County decreased by .1% to 9.5%
- Webb County decreased by .2% to 3.6%

### Cities:

The cities generally decreased in September as well:

- McAllen had the lowest unemployment rate in the RGV with 4.5%, a decrease of .4%
- Edinburg was second at 4.7%, a decrease of .3%.
- Harlingen was third at 5.5%, a decrease of .2%
- Brownsville was fourth at 5.6%, a decrease of .7%
- Laredo again had the lowest rate in our border region, at 3.8%, a decrease of .2%.

### Hidalgo, Cameron, and Webb County MSA Regional Employment Change Estimates for September 2018:

Employment Sectors	McAllen MSA	Brownsville MSA	Laredo MSA	Total Region
Healthcare & Private Education	400		-100	300
Leisure & Hospitality	-200	-100		-300
<b>Government (Public Ed, Law Enforcement)</b>	<b>1,800</b>	600	400	<b>2,800</b>
Business & Professional Services	500			500
Mining & Construction	-100		-100	-200
Trade, Transportation, Utilities				
Manufacturing	100			100
Information		-100		-100
Financial Activities	100			100
Other Services		-100		-100
<b>Total All Non-Agriculture Sectors:</b>	<b>2,600</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>3,100</b>
<b>Annual Job Growth Rate:</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

The primary contributor to the employment gains in our region was the Government sector, with an estimated 2,800 new jobs. This is primarily the return to work of the rest of the public education support staff who were laid off during the summer months. Historically, we see significant declines in the unemployment rates in September and October.

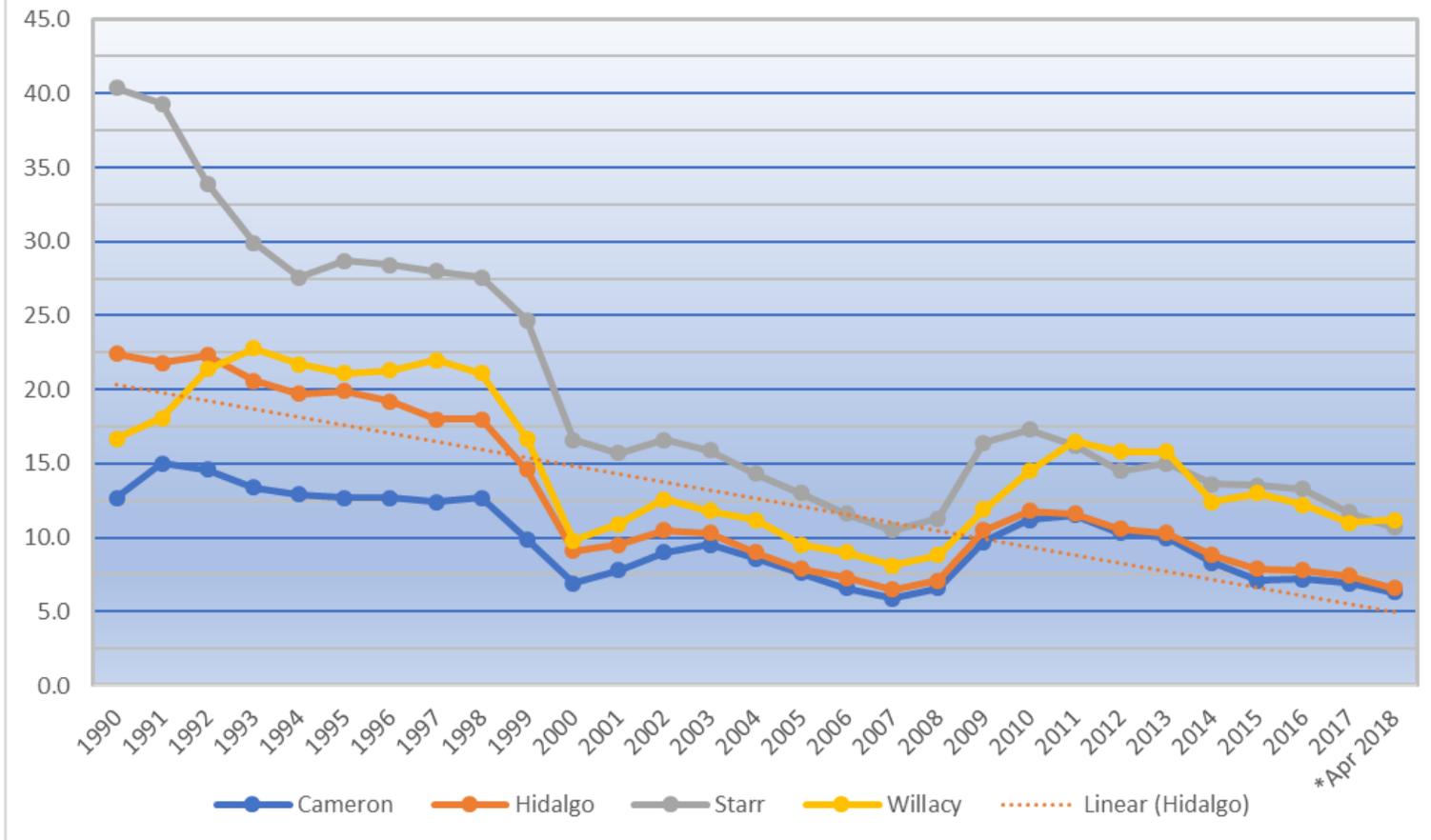
We often see the lowest unemployment rates of the year in the month of October. If the current and normal seasonal trends continue, we may well approach the lowest recorded unemployment rates for some of our cities and counties when the October reports are released.

#### **We've Come a Long Way:**

The graph below shows the average annual unemployment rates for the 4-county Rio Grande Valley from 1990 through 2017. We also added the April 2018 unemployment rate as the last data point. April appears to be the month that most closely correlates to the average annual unemployment rates each year. A trendline was inserted for Hidalgo County to illustrate the overall downward trend.

This chart shows the tremendous progress that has been made in the Rio Grande Valley as a result of a concerted effort over many years by our city, county, state, and federal representatives, economic development organizations, educational institutions, regional workforce development boards (Workforce Solutions), and the support of countless businesses, individuals and organizations that have worked to improve the standard of living for our residents. Our high population growth rate and the strong growth in cross-border trade have been major contributors to the job creation that has taken place and made this possible.

## Average Annual Unemployment Rates: RGV Counties 1990-2017



Source: [www.TWC.State.TX.us](http://www.TWC.State.TX.us) > <https://tracer2.com> – Unemployment (LAUS)

As always, thanks again for your support and participation!

**Texas Labor Market Review from TWC:**

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