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From the Washington Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/washington/news/2018/03/13/the-jobs-numbers-are-in-the-news-is-not-good-for.html>

The final jobs numbers are in. The news is not good for suburban Maryland.

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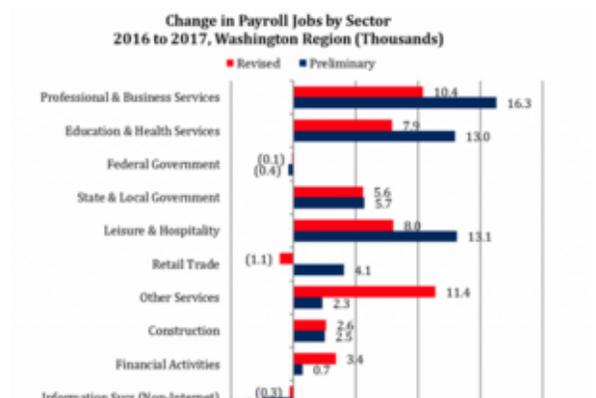
Suburban Maryland has a jobs problem — it added far fewer than previously thought, according to fresh jobs numbers.

Prince George's, Montgomery, Frederick, Calvert and Charles counties added just 12,800 jobs in 2017, according to an analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics data by the Stephen S. Fuller Institute at George Mason University. That is far fewer than the preliminary estimate of 22,400, and it comes as Northern Virginia saw its numbers grow over preliminary estimates.

Over the course of the year, larger job gains slowed and eventually led to a loss of 500 jobs in November and a loss of 3,900 jobs in December in the Maryland suburbs, according to the data. These were the first monthly declines since 2011.

"It seems as if the large professional business service sector that exists in D.C. and Northern Virginia isn't quite as robust in suburban Maryland," said Jeannette Chapman, deputy director and senior research associate at the Fuller Institute. "That has a ripple effect throughout the rest of the economy. It can quickly turn into a downward cycle instead of flattening out."

She said the weaker Maryland numbers are something to keep an eye on, adding that it seems the BLS overestimated Maryland job growth in its preliminary estimates.



Overall, Greater Washington added 50,900 jobs in 2017, about 5,600 fewer jobs than preliminary data had indicated. Between 1990 and 2010, Greater Washington averaged 36,000 new jobs per year. The final job number for 2016 was 59,800, while in 2015 the region added 60,500 jobs, according to previous data from the Fuller Institute.

The region added 10,400 jobs in the professional and business services jobs, about 5,900 fewer than previously estimated. And the region lost 1,100 retail jobs in 2017 instead of the 4,100-job gain the BLS has previously estimated for that sector.

The District saw a smaller downward revision, adding 2,000 fewer jobs than preliminary data, for 7,500 total in 2017. And Northern Virginia added 22,600 jobs in 2017, about 1,000 more than estimated. Chapman said that revisions are always expected with jobs data sets, although the loss of retail jobs was the first for the region as a whole since 2009.

The weaker Maryland numbers are just the latest data point in a larger set that shows suburban Maryland is in danger of falling behind its regional counterparts when it comes to job growth.

In a January report, the Fuller Institute projected job growth will slow over the coming years, dropping from 47,400 jobs in 2018 to just 32,100 jobs added in 2022. But the lion's share of those jobs will be coming from Northern Virginia. In 2018, Northern Virginia will add 22,300 jobs compared to 15,700 for suburban Maryland and 5,900 for the District, or about 54 percent of all new jobs. In 2017, suburban Maryland accounted for 41 percent of all new jobs in the region.

It's also worth noting that these jobs numbers do not include or factor in the departure of Discovery Communications Inc., which announced it intends to move its global headquarters from Silver Spring to New York City. The company employs about 1,300 people in Silver Spring.

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