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State and Local Government Jobs Among Utah's Counties

Public education, a local government activity, accounts for a significant number of jobs in each county.

When we look at economic activity around the state, we see a great deal of diversity among Utah's 29 counties. One way to gain insight into a local county's economy is to scrutinize the concentration of a particular industry compared to other areas around the state. An interesting example of quite stark differences in jobs is illustrated by the importance of state and local government employment, by county, in Utah.

Over the past 15 years the overall percentage of nonfarm wage and salary jobs accounted for by state and local government has declined somewhat. In 1993, state government accounted for 6.4 percent of jobs, and local government made up 9.4 percent. From 1993 through 2008, private sector employment grew a little more rapidly than state and local government. So that by 2008, 5.1 percent of total jobs were in state government and 8.9 percent were in local government.

Together state and local government comprised 15.8 percent of payroll jobs

in 1993, dropping to 14.1 percent in 2008.

With that background in mind, there is a great deal of difference in the relative importance of state and local government jobs among counties. For example, Summit County has the lowest with just 11.3 percent of their jobs in state and local government, and Piute has the highest percentage at 48.0 percent.

It is instructive to divide government jobs between education and non-education activities. Public education—kindergarten through 12th grade (a local government activity)—accounts for a significant number of jobs in each county. In percentage terms, relative to total nonfarm jobs, public education only makes up 3.8 percent of jobs in Salt Lake County, but accounts for 28.1 percent in Piute County. Other local government employment—administration, fire, police, public utilities, etc. range from a low of 3.2 percent in Salt Lake County to a high of 25.8 percent in Daggett County.

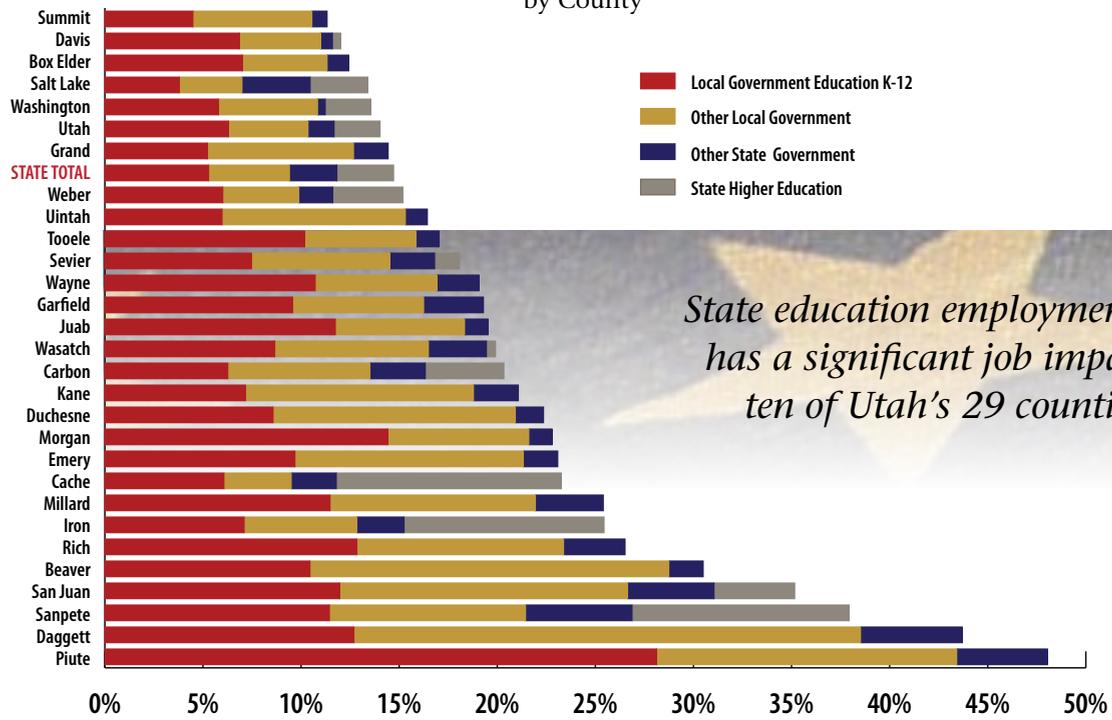
State government also has a significant education component—state institutions of higher education—colleges, universities and applied technology colleges. State education employment only has a significant job impact in ten of Utah's 29 counties corresponding to the location of major state educational institutions.

Cache County with Utah State University has the largest state government education concentration of jobs, accounting for 11.5 percent of total payroll employment.

Other (non-education) state government jobs are found among all counties. Other state activities include transportation, workforce services, public safety, state parks, etc. These jobs vary by the location of state facilities with a very small impact of less than 2 percent of total employment in 13 of Utah's 29 counties.

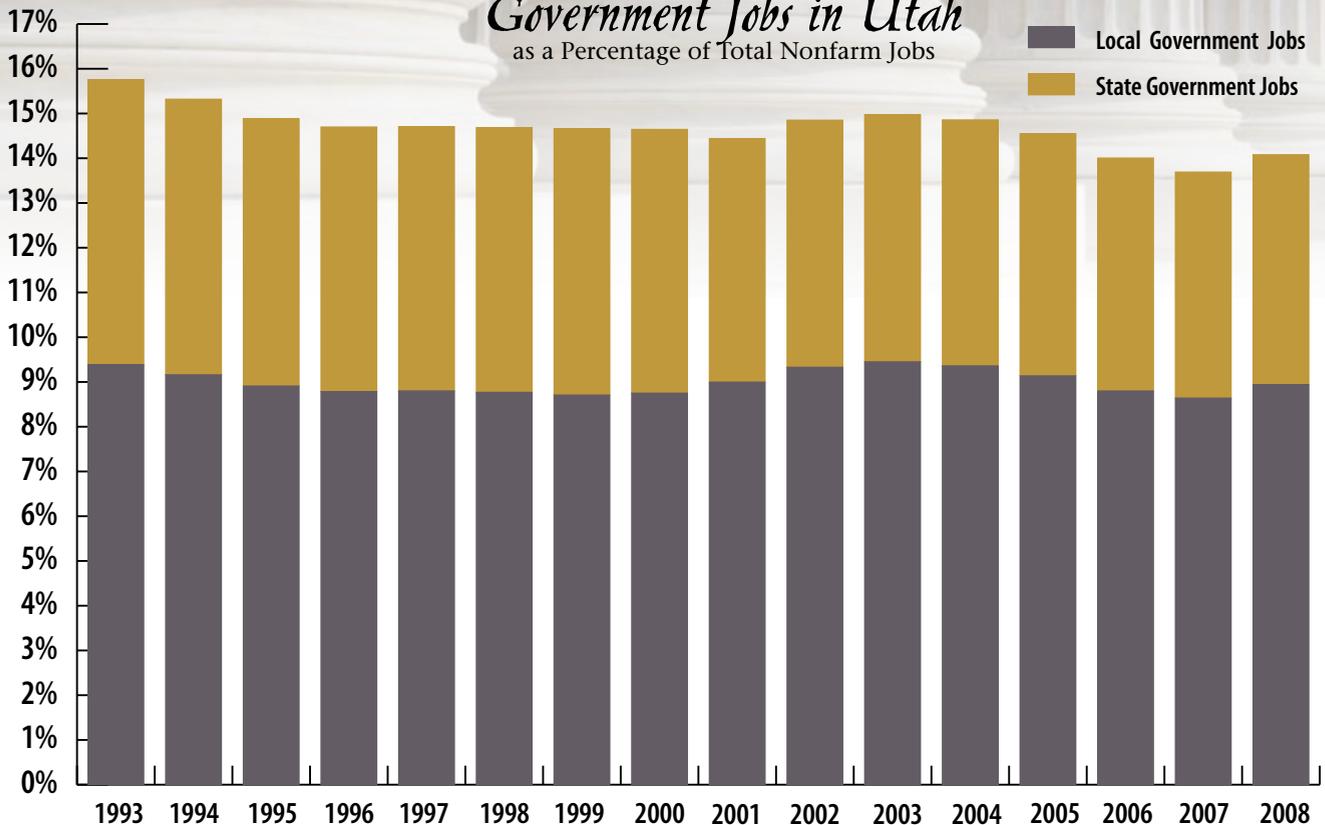
Sanpete County has the highest percentage of other state government jobs, at 5.4 percent, as a result of the prison facilities in Gunnison. ●

Percentage of Jobs in
State and Local Government
by County



State education employment only has a significant job impact in ten of Utah's 29 counties.

State and Local Government Jobs in Utah
as a Percentage of Total Nonfarm Jobs



Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services.