

Polling News & Notes

Overlooked Recent Polling and Insights • January 15, 2015

Unemployment Yet To Recover In 19 Out Of 20 Counties: Last Friday, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) released its December jobs report with good news: nationally there were 252,000 more jobs added to the payrolls and the unemployment rate decreased to 5.6%. However, the picture is more complicated than it would have Americans believe. The labor force participation rate dropped again to 62.7% because 273,000 were so discouraged, they gave up looking for work. Then there is the recent National Association of Counties (NACo) [report](#) that reveals that the majority of U.S. counties have not yet seen improvement in their jobs picture.

According to NACo's findings, around 6% of small-sized counties (those with less than 50,000 residents); 2% of medium-sized counties (between 50,000 – 500,000 residents); and only 1% percent of large-sized counties (more than 500,000 residents) have unemployment rates at or below pre-recession levels. A shocking 95% of the 3,069 counties in the country (2,196 counties) have not yet recovered to pre-recession unemployment rates.

Although the NACo report does show improvement for almost 50% of counties in economic output and median home prices, the reality is most Americans live in areas still experiencing a slow and uneven recovery, with work opportunities not yet back to pre-recession levels. Only when these metrics improve with more jobs and people returning to the labor force will Americans be inclined to agree with the President's claim that "America's resurgence is real."

