



Web site: www.bls.gov/ro3/

Information: Gerald Perrins
(215) 597-3282
Media contact: Sheila Watkins
(215) 861-5600

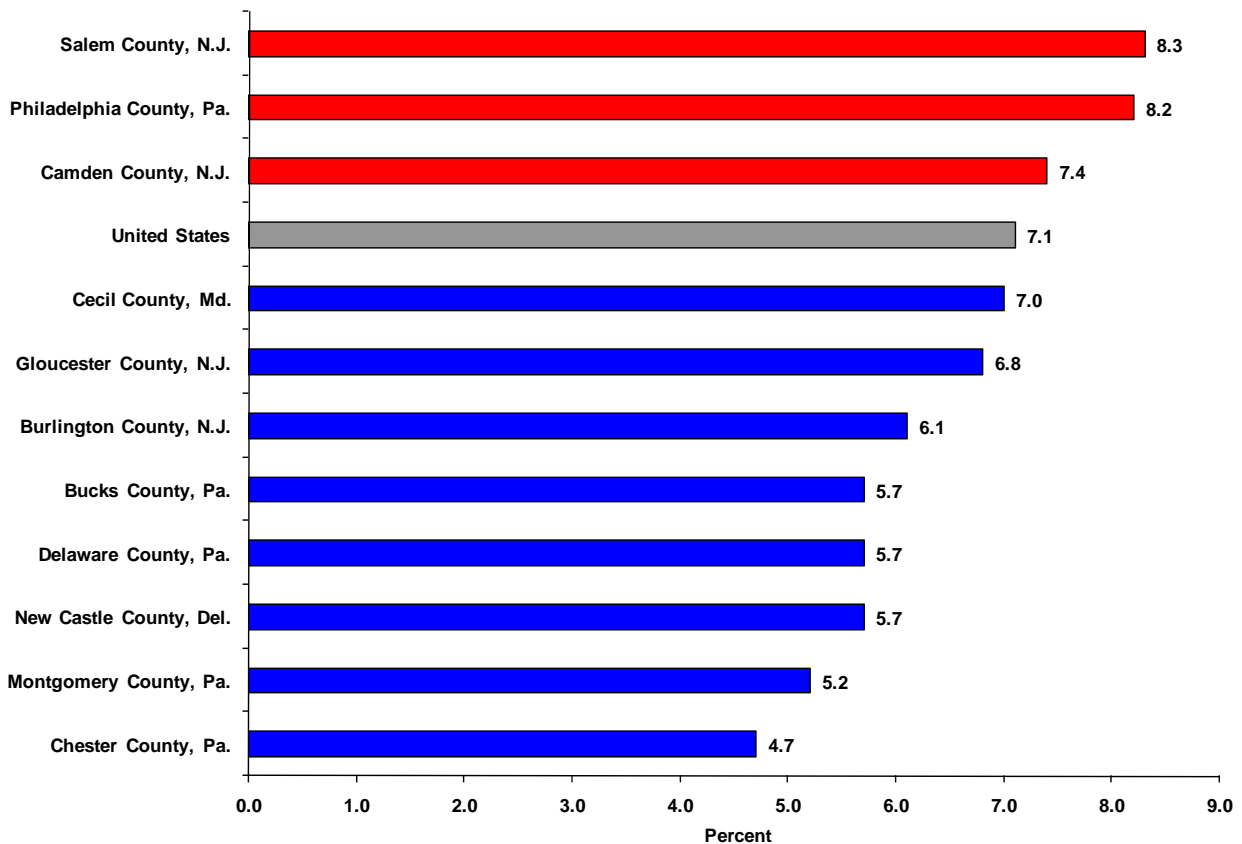
PLS -4502
For Release:
Tuesday, March 3, 2009

UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE PHILADELPHIA AREA BY COUNTY: DECEMBER 2008

All 11 Counties Posted Unemployment Rates Higher than a Year Earlier

In December, Chester County, Pa., reported the lowest unemployment rate in the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), at 4.7 percent, followed by Montgomery County, Pa., at 5.2 percent and Bucks County, Pa., Delaware County, Pa., and New Castle County, Del., each at 5.7 percent, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that Salem County, N.J., at 8.3 percent and Philadelphia County, Pa., at 8.2 percent registered the highest unemployment rates among the 11 counties that made up the metropolitan area. Overall, only 3 of the 11 counties located in the metropolitan area recorded unemployment rates that exceeded the U.S. rate of 7.1 percent, while the remaining 8 counties registered jobless rates lower than that of the nation. (See chart A. The Technical Note at the end of this release contains metropolitan area definitions. All data in this release are not seasonally adjusted; accordingly, over-the-year analysis is used throughout.)

Chart A. Unemployment rates for the United States and counties in the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md. Metropolitan Statistical Area, December 2008, not seasonally adjusted



All 11 counties located in the Philadelphia metropolitan area had unemployment rates that were higher in December 2008 than a year earlier. Six of the counties recorded increases larger than the 2.3-percentage points national increase, led by Salem County, N.J. (+3.0 points), Camden County, N.J. (+2.9 points), and Cecil County, Md. (+2.8 points). (See table A.) None of the five southeastern Pennsylvania counties registered an increase larger than that of the United States.

Table A. Unemployment rates for the United States, the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md. Metropolitan Statistical Area, and its components, not seasonally adjusted

Area	Dec 2002	Dec 2007	Dec 2008 ¹	Net change from	
				Dec 2002 to Dec 2008 ¹	Dec 2007 to Dec 2008 ¹
United States	5.7	4.8	7.1	1.4	2.3
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md.	5.0	4.1	6.4	1.4	2.3
Philadelphia, Pa. Metropolitan Division	5.1	4.2	6.3	1.2	2.1
Bucks County, Pa.	4.3	3.7	5.7	1.4	2.0
Chester County, Pa.	3.8	3.0	4.7	0.9	1.7
Delaware County, Pa.	4.6	3.9	5.7	1.1	1.8
Montgomery County, Pa.	4.2	3.3	5.2	1.0	1.9
Philadelphia County, Pa.	7.0	5.9	8.2	1.2	2.3
Camden, N.J. Metropolitan Division	5.2	4.1	6.8	1.6	2.7
Burlington County, N.J.	4.6	3.7	6.1	1.5	2.4
Camden County, N.J.	5.8	4.5	7.4	1.6	2.9
Gloucester County, N.J.	5.1	4.2	6.8	1.7	2.6
Wilmington, Del.-Md.-N.J. Metropolitan Division	3.9	3.5	6.1	2.2	2.6
New Castle County, Del.	3.6	3.2	5.7	2.1	2.5
Cecil County, Md.	4.1	4.2	7.0	2.9	2.8
Salem County, N.J.	6.3	5.3	8.3	2.0	3.0

¹Data for the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md. Metropolitan Statistical Area and its components are preliminary for the most recent month.

Just as the December 2008 unemployment rates for the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington area were higher across the board than those of December 2007, a similar pattern was exhibited when comparing these areas from December 2002 (13 months after the last recession) to December 2008. All of these 11 counties surpassed the levels reached 6 years earlier. The counties with the largest net jobless rate increases over this six-year span were located in the Wilmington portion: Cecil, Md. (+2.9 percentage points), New Castle, Del. (+2.1 percentage points), and Salem County, N.J. (+2.0 percentage points). In December 2002, jobless rates ranged from 3.6 percent in New Castle County, Del., to 7.0 percent in Philadelphia County, Pa.

December 2008 unemployment rates for the three metropolitan divisions in the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington MSA were 6.1 percent in Wilmington, Del.-Md.-N.J., 6.3 percent in Philadelphia, Pa., and 6.8 percent in Camden, N.J. In the Philadelphia metropolitan division, the unemployment rates in four of the five counties were below the overall division's rate. However, in the Camden and Wilmington divisions, each only had one of their three counties below the overall division's rate.

Technical Notes

This release presents unemployment rate data for states and counties from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program, a federal-state cooperative endeavor.

Definitions. The labor force and unemployment data are based on the same concepts and definitions as those used for the official national estimates obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a sample survey of households that is conducted for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau. The LAUS program measures employment and unemployment on a place-of-residence basis. The universe for each is the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over. Employed persons are those who did any work at all for pay or profit in the reference week (the week including the 12th of the month) or worked 15 hours or more without pay in a family business or farm, plus those not working who had a job from which they were temporarily absent, whether or not paid, for such reasons as labor-management dispute, illness, or vacation. Unemployed persons are those who were not employed during the reference week (based on the definition above), had actively looked for a job sometime in the 4-week period ending with the reference week, and were currently available for work; persons on layoff expecting recall need not be looking for work to be counted as unemployed. The labor force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

Method of estimation. Estimates for the substate areas in this release are prepared through indirect estimation procedures using a building-block approach. Employment estimates, which are based largely on "place of work" estimates from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program, are adjusted to refer to place of residence as used in the CPS. Unemployment estimates are aggregates of persons previously employed in industries covered by state unemployment insurance (UI) laws and entrants to the labor force data from the CPS. The substate estimates of employment and unemployment, which geographically exhaust the entire state, are adjusted proportionally to ensure that they add to the independently estimated state or balance-of-state totals. A detailed description of the estimation procedures is available from BLS upon request.

Annual revisions. Labor force and unemployment data for prior years reflect adjustments made at the end of each year. The adjusted estimates reflect updated population data from the U.S. Census Bureau, any revisions in the other data sources, and model reestimation. In most years, historical data for the most recent five years (both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted) are revised near the beginning of each calendar year, prior to or coincident with the release of January estimates.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; TDD message referral phone: 1-800-877-8339.

For personal assistance or further information on the Local Area Unemployment Statistics data, as well as other Bureau data, contact the Mid-Atlantic Information Office at 215-597-3282 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. ET. Information on the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program and other surveys and programs is available on our Web site at www.bls.gov/ro3/.

Area definitions. The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget, dated November 20, 2007. A detailed list of the geographic definitions is published annually in the May issue of Employment and Earnings, available on our Web site at www.bls.gov/opub/ee/home.htm.

The Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania; Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem Counties in New Jersey; New Castle County in Delaware; and Cecil County in Maryland.

The Camden, N.J. Metropolitan Division (MD) includes Burlington, Camden, and Gloucester Counties in New Jersey.

The Philadelphia, Pa. Metropolitan Division (MD) includes Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties in Pennsylvania.

The Wilmington, Del.-Md.-N.J. Metropolitan Division (MD) includes New Castle County in Delaware; Cecil County in Maryland; and Salem County in New Jersey.

Chart 1. Unemployment rates for counties in the Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, Pa.-N.J.-Del.-Md. Metropolitan Statistical Area, not seasonally adjusted, December 2008

