

# News

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## STATE AND REGIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT, 2005 ANNUAL AVERAGES

Annual average unemployment rates declined from 2004 to 2005 in nearly four-fifths of the states and all four regions, while employment-population ratios rose in over two-thirds of the states and in all four regions, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. The U.S. jobless rate dropped by 0.4 percentage point to 5.1 percent in 2005, while the national employment-population ratio increased by 0.4 point to 62.7 percent.

### Regional Unemployment

Among the four regions, the Northeast and South reported the lowest jobless rates in 2005, 4.8 and 5.0 percent, respectively. The unemployment rate in the West was 5.2 percent in 2005, while the rate in the Midwest, 5.4 percent, was the highest among the regions for the first time in 20 years. The range between the highest and lowest regional unemployment rates (0.6 percentage point) did not change over the year; the only year the range was smaller was 1990. The West registered the largest unemployment rate decrease from 2004 to 2005 (-0.7 percentage point), followed by the Northeast (-0.5 point).

Eight of the nine geographic divisions posted over-the-year unemployment rate declines. The largest decreases were reported in the Pacific (-0.9 percentage point), Middle Atlantic (-0.6 point), and Mountain (-0.5 point) divisions. The East South Central was the only division with the same rate as in 2004. The divisions with the lowest jobless rates in 2005 were the South Atlantic, 4.5 percent, Mountain and West North Central, 4.6 percent each, and New England, 4.7 percent. The divisions recording the highest unemployment rates were the East North Central and East South Central, at 5.8 and 5.6 percent, respectively.

### State Unemployment

Annual average unemployment rates decreased from 2004 to 2005 in 39 states and the District of Columbia, rose in 9 states, and were unchanged in 2 states. The largest rate declines occurred in Alabama and Oregon (-1.2 percentage points each) and Florida and Idaho (-0.9 point each). Fifteen additional states reported over-the-year rate decreases of at least one-half percentage point. The District of Columbia's jobless rate decreased by 1.0 percentage point. The largest unemployment rate increases for 2005 were recorded by the two states most affected by Hurricane Katrina: Mississippi (+1.6 percentage points) and Louisiana (+1.4 points). The next largest rate increases were registered in Kentucky (+0.6 percentage point) and Georgia (+0.5 point). (See table 1 and chart 1.)

Hawaii again had the lowest unemployment rate among the states, 2.8 percent. North Dakota posted the next lowest rate, 3.4 percent, followed closely by Vermont and Virginia, 3.5 percent each, and New Hampshire and Wyoming, 3.6 percent each. Four additional states (Florida, Idaho, Nebraska, and South Dakota) reported annual average unemployment rates below 4.0 percent. Mississippi and Louisiana recorded the highest jobless rates in 2005, 7.9 and 7.1 percent, respectively. Three other states had rates above 6.5 percent—Alaska and South Carolina, 6.8 percent each, and Michigan, 6.7 percent. The District of Columbia's rate was 6.5 percent.

Overall, 31 states reported unemployment rates below the national average of 5.1 percent, 18 states and the District of Columbia registered rates above it, and 1 state had the same rate. All nine states in the Middle Atlantic and New England divisions, seven of the eight states in the Mountain, and six of the seven states in the West North Central posted rates equal to or below that of the U.S. In contrast, four of the five East North Central states, four of the five Pacific states, and three of the four East South Central states recorded rates above that of the nation. (See chart 2.)

### Regional Employment-Population Ratios

In 2005, all four regions registered over-the-year increases in their employment-population ratios—the proportion of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over that was employed. The Northeast and West posted the largest increases (+0.5 percentage point each). Relative to the 62.7-percent employment-population ratio for the U.S., the Midwest (64.5 percent) and West (63.1 percent) reported higher ratios, while the South (61.7 percent) and Northeast (61.9 percent) had lower ratios.

Of the nine geographic divisions, the Middle Atlantic and Pacific recorded the largest increases in their employment-population ratios (+0.7 percentage point each). The East South Central division registered the largest decline from 2004 (-0.4 percentage point). The West North Central again reported the highest proportion of employed persons (67.8 percent), while the East South Central continued to have the lowest proportion (58.5 percent).

### State Employment-Population Ratios

In 2005, 35 states and the District of Columbia posted increases in their proportions of employed persons from 2004, 12 states reported declines, and 3 states had no change. The largest state employment-population ratio increases occurred in Arkansas (+1.9 percentage points), Rhode Island (+1.2 points), Idaho (+1.1 points), and Hawaii (+1.0 point). Twelve additional states recorded increases of at least one-half percentage point. The District of Columbia had an increase of 1.5 percentage points. Mississippi registered the largest decrease in its employment-population ratio in 2005 (-1.1 percentage points). Three other states had declines of at least 0.5 percentage point in 2005—Tennessee (-0.8 percentage point), Nebraska (-0.6 point), and Wisconsin (-0.5 point). (See table 2 and chart 3.)

Minnesota continued to record the highest proportion of employed persons in 2005, 71.0 percent, followed by two other West North Central states—Nebraska and South Dakota, at 70.6 and 70.1 percent, respectively. West Virginia again had the lowest employment-population ratio among all states, 52.3 percent. Mississippi had the next lowest ratio, 56.6 percent. Seven of the eight states with employment-population ratios below 60.0 percent were located in the South. Thirty-one states and the District of Columbia recorded employment-population ratios higher than the U.S. figure of 62.7 percent, while 18 states registered lower ratios. One state had a ratio equal to that of the U.S. All states in New England and the West North Central again reported employment-population ratios above the U.S. average, while all states in the East South Central division again had ratios below it.

Note

All subnational estimates presented in this release were derived from updated time-series models with monthly benchmarking to national Current Population Survey (CPS) estimates. Subnational data reflect revised population controls and model reestimation. Historical data were revised back to 2000. Data for regions, divisions, states, and the District of Columbia are available back to 1976. Error measures on annual average model-based estimates are not available. Data for Puerto Rico are derived from a monthly household survey similar to the Current Population Survey.

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

**Table 1. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over by region, division, and state, 2004-05 annual averages**

(Numbers in thousands)

Region, division, and state	Population		Civilian labor force		Employed		Unemployed		Unemployment rate	
	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
United States .....	223,357	226,082	147,401	149,320	139,252	141,730	8,149	7,591	5.5	5.1
Northeast .....	42,447	42,584	27,508	27,689	26,042	26,358	1,466	1,331	5.3	4.8
New England .....	11,135	11,180	7,517	7,551	7,149	7,198	368	353	4.9	4.7
Connecticut .....	2,697	2,714	1,803	1,817	1,714	1,728	89	89	4.9	4.9
Maine .....	1,052	1,063	700	712	667	677	32	34	4.6	4.8
Massachusetts .....	5,025	5,027	3,375	3,364	3,199	3,203	176	162	5.2	4.8
New Hampshire .....	1,017	1,030	724	732	696	706	28	26	3.9	3.6
Rhode Island .....	845	843	562	569	533	541	29	29	5.2	5.0
Vermont .....	499	503	353	356	340	344	13	12	3.7	3.5
Middle Atlantic .....	31,312	31,405	19,991	20,139	18,893	19,160	1,098	979	5.5	4.9
New Jersey .....	6,655	6,687	4,380	4,430	4,164	4,236	215	194	4.9	4.4
New York .....	14,964	14,971	9,362	9,416	8,820	8,944	542	472	5.8	5.0
Pennsylvania .....	9,693	9,747	6,249	6,292	5,909	5,980	341	312	5.4	5.0
Midwest .....	50,340	50,726	34,397	34,602	32,426	32,725	1,971	1,878	5.7	5.4
East North Central .....	35,186	35,406	23,567	23,718	22,129	22,338	1,438	1,380	6.1	5.8
Illinois .....	9,639	9,700	6,405	6,469	6,008	6,101	398	369	6.2	5.7
Indiana .....	4,715	4,760	3,172	3,209	3,004	3,035	168	174	5.3	5.4
Michigan .....	7,738	7,771	5,073	5,097	4,717	4,754	356	344	7.0	6.7
Ohio .....	8,820	8,859	5,875	5,900	5,512	5,550	363	350	6.2	5.9
Wisconsin .....	4,273	4,317	3,041	3,041	2,888	2,897	153	144	5.0	4.7
West North Central .....	15,155	15,321	10,830	10,885	10,296	10,387	534	498	4.9	4.6
Iowa .....	2,307	2,329	1,636	1,660	1,559	1,584	77	76	4.7	4.6
Kansas .....	2,068	2,089	1,469	1,476	1,387	1,401	82	75	5.6	5.1
Minnesota .....	3,939	3,985	2,942	2,947	2,807	2,829	134	119	4.6	4.0
Missouri .....	4,428	4,479	3,014	3,024	2,841	2,862	174	162	5.8	5.4
Nebraska .....	1,331	1,344	986	986	947	949	38	37	3.9	3.8
North Dakota .....	497	501	355	359	343	347	12	12	3.5	3.4
South Dakota .....	585	593	428	432	412	415	16	17	3.8	3.9
South .....	80,049	81,442	51,895	52,867	49,168	50,234	2,727	2,633	5.3	5.0
South Atlantic .....	42,141	42,966	27,398	28,058	26,075	26,788	1,324	1,270	4.8	4.5
Delaware .....	641	655	429	438	412	420	17	18	4.0	4.2
District of Columbia .....	442	437	296	296	274	277	22	19	7.5	6.5
Florida .....	13,512	13,868	8,407	8,654	8,016	8,329	391	325	4.7	3.8
Georgia .....	6,624	6,769	4,443	4,588	4,231	4,346	212	242	4.8	5.3
Maryland .....	4,222	4,261	2,888	2,935	2,764	2,814	124	121	4.3	4.1
North Carolina .....	6,441	6,567	4,251	4,333	4,017	4,106	234	227	5.5	5.2
South Carolina .....	3,192	3,251	2,039	2,081	1,900	1,939	139	142	6.8	6.8
Virginia .....	5,616	5,704	3,855	3,934	3,713	3,798	142	136	3.7	3.5
West Virginia .....	1,450	1,456	791	800	749	761	42	40	5.3	5.0
East South Central .....	13,395	13,559	8,353	8,407	7,889	7,932	464	475	5.6	5.6
Alabama .....	3,481	3,521	2,145	2,155	2,034	2,069	111	86	5.2	4.0
Kentucky .....	3,189	3,222	1,976	2,000	1,867	1,878	110	121	5.5	6.1
Mississippi .....	2,165	2,185	1,334	1,343	1,250	1,237	85	106	6.3	7.9
Tennessee .....	4,560	4,631	2,897	2,910	2,739	2,748	158	162	5.5	5.6
West South Central .....	24,513	24,916	16,144	16,401	15,205	15,514	939	887	5.8	5.4
Arkansas .....	2,100	2,132	1,309	1,362	1,236	1,295	73	67	5.6	4.9
Louisiana .....	3,375	3,344	2,062	2,071	1,944	1,923	118	148	5.7	7.1
Oklahoma .....	2,671	2,704	1,715	1,742	1,630	1,665	84	76	4.9	4.4
Texas .....	16,367	16,736	11,058	11,226	10,394	10,630	664	596	6.0	5.3
West .....	50,522	51,313	33,605	34,150	31,622	32,391	1,983	1,759	5.9	5.2
Mountain .....	14,821	15,236	10,077	10,328	9,568	9,855	510	473	5.1	4.6
Arizona .....	4,268	4,433	2,763	2,844	2,626	2,710	137	134	5.0	4.7
Colorado .....	3,472	3,526	2,510	2,548	2,371	2,419	140	129	5.6	5.0
Idaho .....	1,041	1,073	711	739	678	711	33	28	4.7	3.8
Montana .....	729	741	484	493	463	474	21	20	4.3	4.0
Nevada .....	1,757	1,826	1,179	1,216	1,125	1,167	54	49	4.6	4.1
New Mexico .....	1,433	1,463	915	936	862	887	52	49	5.7	5.3
Utah .....	1,728	1,774	1,236	1,268	1,173	1,214	62	54	5.0	4.3
Wyoming .....	394	400	279	285	274	274	11	10	3.9	3.6
Pacific .....	35,700	36,077	23,528	23,822	22,054	22,536	1,474	1,286	6.3	5.4
Alaska .....	466	473	336	339	311	316	25	23	7.4	6.8
California .....	26,715	26,935	17,500	17,696	16,408	16,747	1,092	949	6.2	5.4
Hawaii .....	945	958	619	635	599	617	20	18	3.3	2.8
Oregon .....	2,799	2,848	1,850	1,860	1,714	1,746	135	114	7.3	6.1
Washington .....	4,776	4,862	3,224	3,292	3,022	3,110	202	182	6.3	5.5
Puerto Rico .....	2,938	2,957	1,371	1,410	1,226	1,250	145	160	10.6	11.3

NOTE: Data refer to place of residence. Data for Puerto Rico are derived from a monthly household survey similar to the Current Population Survey. Data for subnational areas reflect revised population controls and model reestimation.

As a result, they will not add to U.S. totals. Unemployment rates are based on unrounded levels.

**Table 2. Employment-population ratios of persons 16 years of age and over by region, division, and state, 2004-05 annual averages**

(Percent)

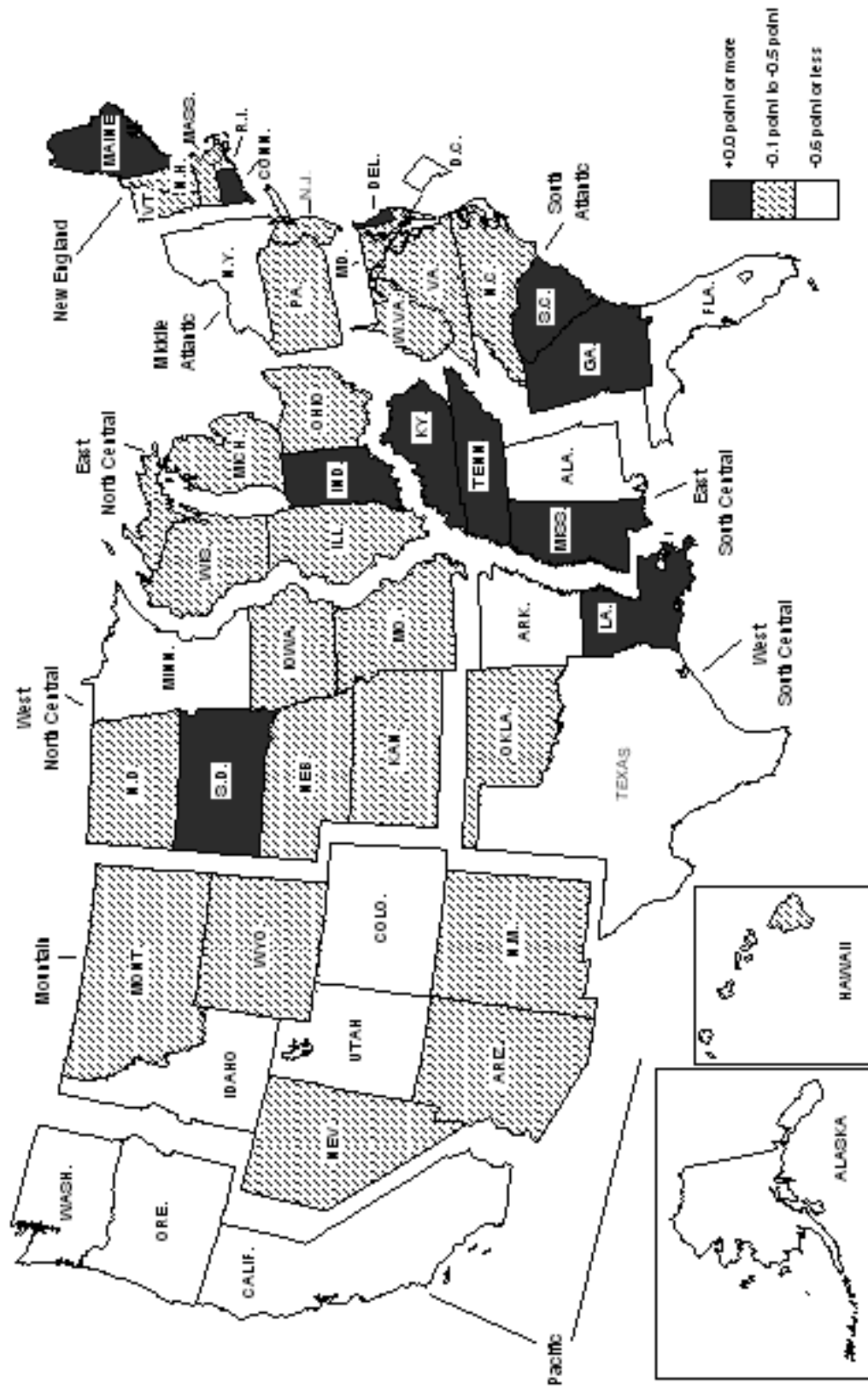
Region, division, and state	Employment-population ratio <sup>1</sup>		Over-the-year change
	2004	2005	
United States .....	62.3	62.7	0.4
Northeast .....	61.4	61.9	.5
New England .....	64.2	64.4	.2
Connecticut .....	63.6	63.7	.1
Maine .....	63.4	63.7	.3
Massachusetts .....	63.7	63.7	.0
New Hampshire .....	68.4	68.5	.1
Rhode Island .....	63.0	64.2	1.2
Vermont .....	68.2	68.3	.1
Middle Atlantic .....	60.3	61.0	.7
New Jersey .....	62.6	63.3	.7
New York .....	58.9	59.7	.8
Pennsylvania .....	61.0	61.4	.4
Midwest .....	64.4	64.5	.1
East North Central .....	62.9	63.1	.2
Illinois .....	62.3	62.9	.6
Indiana .....	63.7	63.8	.1
Michigan .....	61.0	61.2	.2
Ohio .....	62.5	62.7	.2
Wisconsin .....	67.6	67.1	-.5
West North Central .....	67.9	67.8	-.1
Iowa .....	67.6	68.0	.4
Kansas .....	67.1	67.1	.0
Minnesota .....	71.3	71.0	-.3
Missouri .....	64.2	63.9	-.3
Nebraska .....	71.2	70.6	-.6
North Dakota .....	68.9	69.1	.2
South Dakota .....	70.4	70.1	-.3
South .....	61.4	61.7	.3
South Atlantic .....	61.9	62.3	.4
Delaware .....	64.2	64.1	-.1
District of Columbia .....	61.9	63.4	1.5
Florida .....	59.3	60.1	.8
Georgia .....	63.9	64.2	.3
Maryland .....	65.5	66.0	.5
North Carolina .....	62.4	62.5	.1
South Carolina .....	59.5	59.6	.1
Virginia .....	66.1	66.6	.5
West Virginia .....	51.7	52.3	.6
East South Central .....	58.9	58.5	-.4
Alabama .....	58.4	58.8	.4
Kentucky .....	58.5	58.3	-.2
Mississippi .....	57.7	56.6	-1.1
Tennessee .....	60.1	59.3	-.8
West South Central .....	62.0	62.3	.3
Arkansas .....	58.9	60.8	1.9
Louisiana .....	57.6	57.5	-.1
Oklahoma .....	61.0	61.6	.6
Texas .....	63.5	63.5	.0
West .....	62.6	63.1	.5
Mountain .....	64.6	64.7	.1
Arizona .....	61.5	61.1	-.4
Colorado .....	68.3	68.6	.3
Idaho .....	65.1	66.2	1.1
Montana .....	63.5	63.9	.4
Nevada .....	64.0	63.9	-.1
New Mexico .....	60.2	60.6	.4
Utah .....	67.9	68.4	.5
Wyoming .....	68.1	68.6	.5
Pacific .....	61.8	62.5	.7
Alaska .....	66.7	66.8	.1
California .....	61.4	62.2	.8
Hawaii .....	63.4	64.4	1.0
Oregon .....	61.2	61.3	.1
Washington .....	63.3	64.0	.7
Puerto Rico .....	41.7	42.3	.6

<sup>1</sup> Employment as a percent of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over.

NOTE: Data refer to place of residence. Data for Puerto Rico are derived from a monthly household survey similar to the Current Population Survey. Data for subnational areas reflect revised population controls and model reestimation. Employment-population ratios are based on unrounded levels.

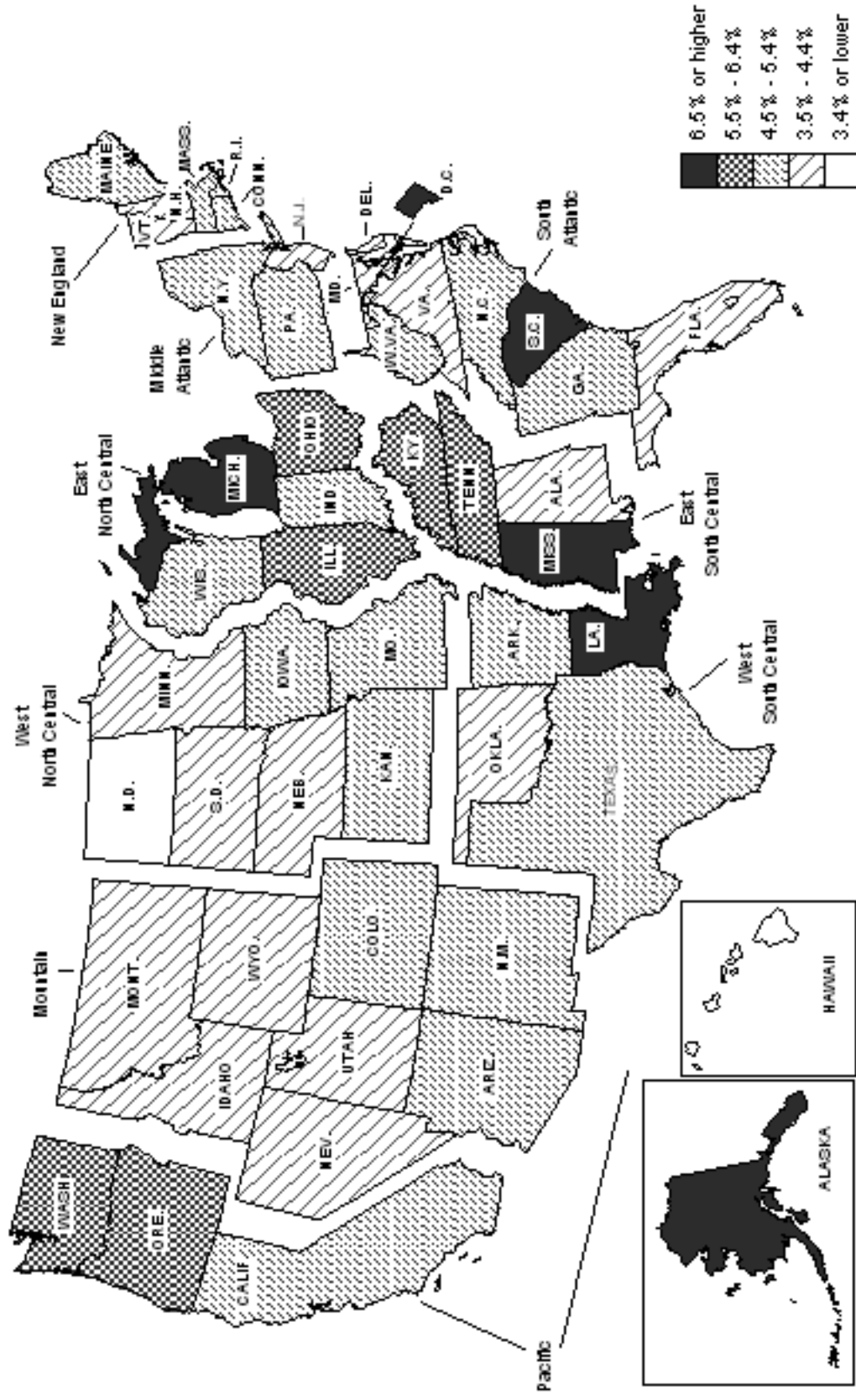
# Chart 1. Over-the-year change in unemployment rates by state, 2005 annual averages

(U.S. change = -0.4 percentage point)



# Chart 2. Unemployment rates by state, 2005 annual averages

(U.S. rate = 5.1 percent)



# Chart 3. Employment-population ratios by state, 2005 annual averages

(U.S. average = 62.7 percent)

