

News

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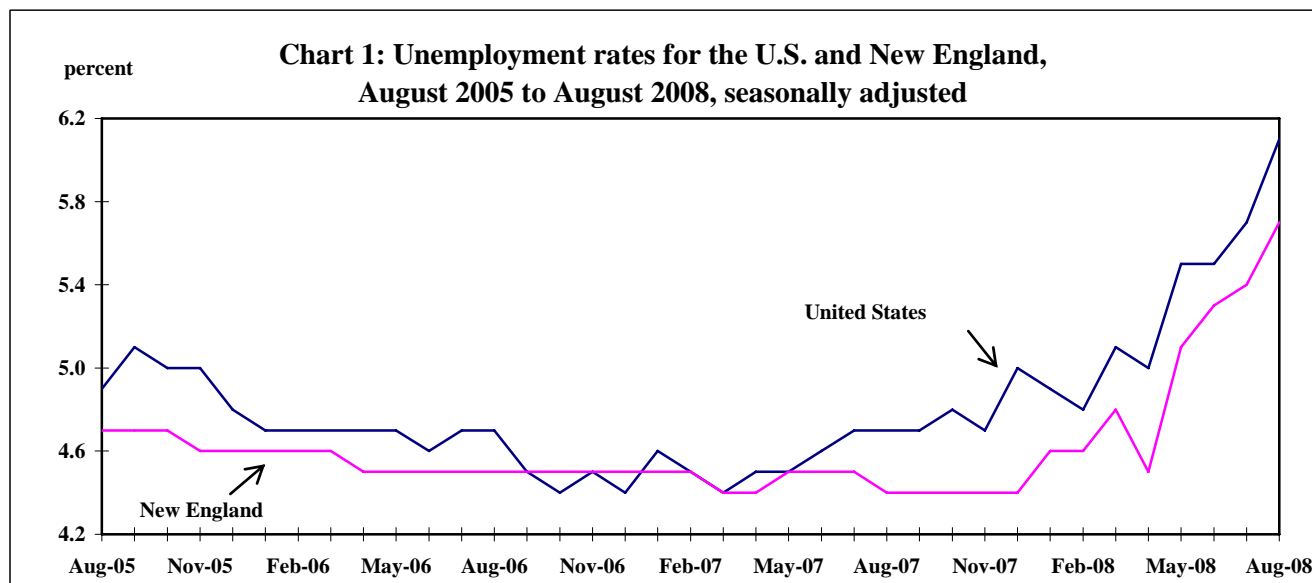
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NEW ENGLAND AND STATE UNEMPLOYMENT: AUGUST 2008

The New England unemployment rate increased 0.3 percentage point in August to 5.7 percent according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Over the year, the New England jobless rate also advanced, increasing 1.3 percentage points. Regional Commissioner Denis M. McSweeney noted that New England's rate was the highest it had been since November 1994. The national unemployment rate rose to 6.1 percent in August, up 0.4 percentage point over the month and 1.4 percentage points over the year. (See chart 1.)

New England is one of nine geographic divisions nationwide. Among the nine divisions, the East North Central and Pacific posted the highest unemployment rates in August, 7.2 percent each. The West South Central again recorded the lowest jobless rate, 4.9 percent. The Mountain division registered the next lowest rate, 5.2 percent, followed by the West North Central, at 5.4 percent. The remaining four divisions, including New England, had rates ranging from 5.7 to 6.4 percent. Six divisions reported statistically significant over-the-month unemployment rate changes, all increases: the Middle Atlantic (+0.6 percentage point) and Mountain, New England, Pacific, South Atlantic, and West South Central (+0.3 point each). Over the year, all nine divisions had significant rate increases: the Pacific and South Atlantic (+1.9 percentage points each), East South Central (+1.6 points), East North Central and Mountain (+1.5 points each), Middle Atlantic (+1.4 points), New England (+1.3 points), West North Central (+1.1 points), and West South Central (+0.6 point). (See table 2.)



In August, four states in New England posted jobless rates that were significantly different from that of the United States. The jobless rates in New Hampshire, Vermont, and Massachusetts at 4.2, 4.9, and 5.3 percent, respectively, were measurably lower than the 6.1-percent nationwide rate. These 3 states were among 25 states in the country to have an unemployment rate significantly below that for the nation in August. In contrast, the unemployment rate in Rhode Island, at 8.5 percent, was measurably higher than that for the United States. Rhode Island had the second-highest rate in the nation and was among 10 states with unemployment rates significantly higher than the national average. The remaining New England states of Maine and Connecticut posted jobless rates of 5.5 and 6.5 percent, respectively, in August. These 2 states joined 13 others and the District of Columbia as having unemployment rates that were not appreciably different from the U.S. average. (See table 1.)

It should be noted that the unemployment rates for both Rhode Island and Connecticut were at their highest points in more than 15 years, since January and June 1993, respectively.

In August, two New England states recorded a statistically significant change in their jobless rate over the month. Connecticut and Rhode Island posted a jobless rate increase of 0.7 percentage point each. These two states along with Louisiana, also up 0.7 percentage point, posted the largest unemployment rate increases over the month nationwide. Overall, 24 states experienced statistically significant rate increases from July. The remaining four New England states posted unemployment rates in August 2008 that were not measurably different from those of a month earlier.

Over the year, all six New England states recorded measurable unemployment rate increases. Rhode Island reported the largest rate increase in New England and in the nation, up 3.4 percentage points., followed by Connecticut, up 1.9 points and Vermont, up 1.1 points. These 3 states in New England joined 30 others and the District of Columbia nationwide to post over-the-year rate increases of 1.0 percentage point or more from August 2007. In the remaining New England states, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Maine reported jobless rate advances of 0.9, 0.8, and 0.7 percentage points, respectively. These 3 states were among 13 states nationwide to record smaller, but also statistically significant, rate increases over the year.

Technical Note

This release presents labor force and unemployment data from the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program. Estimates for the U.S. are obtained directly from the CPS, which is a sample survey of approximately 60,000 households nationwide that is conducted for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the Census Bureau. The LAUS program produces data for the nine geographic divisions in the United States: New England, Middle Atlantic, South Atlantic, East South Central, West South Central, East North Central, West North Central, Mountain, and Pacific. Data for all divisions, as well as the 50 states, are available in the Regional and State Employment and Unemployment release <http://www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm#newsissued> monthly by BLS, while national statistics are highlighted in the Employment Situation <http://www.bls.gov/cps/home.htm#news>.

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.

This information will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (617) 565-2072, Federal Relay Services: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Labor force status for the U.S., New England, and New England states, seasonally adjusted

(Numbers in thousands)

Area	Aug. 2007	Sep. 2007	Oct. 2007	Nov. 2007	Dec. 2007	Jan. 2008	Feb 2008	Mar 2008	Apr. 2008	May 2008	June 2008	Jul. 2008	Aug. 2008 ^p
Connecticut													
Civilian labor force	1,869.8	1,872.1	1,876.7	1,881.1	1,882.2	1,885.7	1,885.3	1,885.2	1,878.2	1,886.5	1,886.8	1,889.9	1,890.1
Employed	1,783.3	1,785.3	1,787.3	1,789.4	1,791.5	1,795.7	1,791.4	1,784.5	1,790.1	1,784.7	1,784.0	1,780.1	1,768.1
Unemployed	86.6	86.8	89.4	91.7	90.7	90.0	93.9	100.7	88.1	101.8	102.9	109.8	122.1
Unemployment rate	4.6	4.6	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.8	5.0	5.3	4.7	5.4	5.5	5.8	6.5
Maine													
Civilian labor force	704.2	704.5	705.4	705.5	706.5	709.6	706.4	707.9	708.8	708.9	710.2	712.0	711.1
Employed	670.3	670.2	671.0	671.3	671.9	674.5	672.8	672.3	675.2	670.7	672.6	673.1	671.6
Unemployed	33.9	34.3	34.4	34.2	34.6	35.1	33.6	35.7	33.6	38.3	37.6	38.9	39.4
Unemployment rate	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.8	5.0	4.7	5.4	5.3	5.5	5.5
Massachusetts													
Civilian labor force	3,406.9	3,405.7	3,404.6	3,403.6	3,402.8	3,422.2	3,408.9	3,410.8	3,404.1	3,391.9	3,409.6	3,417.8	3,413.7
Employed	3,257.3	3,257.2	3,257.1	3,256.9	3,256.7	3,266.9	3,257.3	3,261.0	3,263.5	3,226.1	3,232.3	3,246.0	3,234.3
Unemployed	149.6	148.5	147.5	146.7	146.1	155.4	151.6	149.8	140.7	165.8	177.3	171.8	179.4
Unemployment rate	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.1	4.9	5.2	5.0	5.3
New Hampshire													
Civilian labor force	738.3	738.5	738.8	739.8	740.6	742.8	741.6	743.5	746.0	745.4	746.1	743.2	743.4
Employed	712.9	713.5	714.1	714.7	715.3	716.9	713.9	714.6	717.6	715.7	716.5	714.2	712.4
Unemployed	25.4	24.9	24.7	25.1	25.3	25.9	27.6	28.9	28.4	29.6	29.7	29.0	31.0
Unemployment rate	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.7	3.9	3.8	4.0	4.0	3.9	4.2
Rhode Island													
Civilian labor force	575.0	577.2	577.3	576.6	576.7	574.6	571.2	572.8	573.2	571.6	572.1	573.5	571.0
Employed	545.8	547.8	547.6	546.6	546.4	541.8	537.7	537.7	538.4	530.4	529.5	529.0	522.2
Unemployed	29.2	29.4	29.7	30.0	30.2	32.9	33.5	35.1	34.9	41.2	42.7	44.5	48.8
Unemployment rate	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.2	5.2	5.7	5.9	6.1	6.1	7.2	7.5	7.8	8.5
Vermont													
Civilian labor force	352.8	352.6	352.9	352.6	352.9	354.5	352.6	352.0	352.2	352.2	353.4	352.7	351.2
Employed	339.3	339.0	339.3	339.4	339.3	339.5	337.5	335.9	336.5	335.2	336.8	335.8	333.8
Unemployed	13.5	13.6	13.7	13.3	13.6	15.0	15.1	16.1	15.7	17.1	16.6	16.9	17.3
Unemployment rate	3.8	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.9	4.2	4.3	4.6	4.4	4.9	4.7	4.8	4.9
New England													
Civilian labor force	7,648.4	7,650.1	7,653.5	7,657.7	7,659.8	7,693.5	7,671.7	7,678.5	7,664.8	7,659.0	7,674.4	7,686.7	7,674.1
Employed	7,310.8	7,313.0	7,315.3	7,317.7	7,320.1	7,339.6	7,315.1	7,308.7	7,321.7	c 7,264.7	7,268.2	7,271.6	7,233.4
Unemployed	337.6	337.1	338.2	340.0	339.7	354.0	356.6	369.8	343.1	394.3	406.2	415.1	440.7
Unemployment rate	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.6	4.6	4.8	4.5	5.1	5.3	5.4	5.7
United States 1/													
Civilian labor force	152,886	153,506	153,306	153,828	153,866	153,824	153,374	153,784	153,957	154,534	154,390	154,603	154,853
Employed	145,753	146,260	146,016	146,647	146,211	146,248	145,993	145,969	146,331	146,046	145,891	145,819	145,477
Unemployed	7,133	7,246	7,291	7,181	7,655	7,576	7,381	7,815	7,626	8,487	8,499	8,784	9,376
Unemployment rate	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.7	5.0	4.9	4.8	5.1	5.0	5.5	5.5	5.7	6.1

^p = preliminary

1/ Data for the U.S. are obtained directly from the national Current Population Survey and are not preliminary.

NOTE: Data refer to place of residence. Area definitions are based on Office of Management and Budget Bulletin No. 08-01, dated November 20, 2007, and are available at <http://www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm>. Estimates for the latest month are subject to revision the following month.

c = corrected

Table 2. Civilian labor force and unemployment by census region and division, seasonally adjusted¹

(Numbers in thousands)

Census region and division	Civilian labor force				Unemployed							
					Number				Percent of the labor force			
	Aug. 2007	June 2008	July 2008	Aug. 2008	Aug. 2007	June 2008	July 2008	Aug. 2008	Aug. 2007	June 2008	July 2008	Aug. 2008
Northeast	27,938.5	28,186.2	28,127.6	28,202.0	1,254.3	1,486.2	1,501.2	1,648.7	4.5	5.3	5.3	5.8
New England	7,648.4	7,674.4	7,686.7	7,674.1	337.6	406.2	415.1	440.7	4.4	5.3	5.4	5.7
Middle Atlantic	20,290.1	20,511.9	20,440.9	20,528.0	916.7	1,080.0	1,086.1	1,208.0	4.5	5.3	5.3	5.9
South	54,459.1	54,986.6	55,187.3	55,233.4	2,356.8	2,814.9	3,055.0	3,175.8	4.3	5.1	5.5	5.7
South Atlantic	29,273.2	29,574.1	29,774.4	29,730.0	1,232.1	1,564.2	1,721.9	1,801.0	4.2	5.3	5.8	6.1
East South Central	8,581.8	8,610.0	8,584.7	8,578.6	409.7	525.3	564.1	550.6	4.8	6.1	6.6	6.4
West South Central	16,604.1	16,802.5	16,828.2	16,924.8	715.0	725.4	769.0	824.2	4.3	4.3	4.6	4.9
Midwest	34,919.0	34,973.4	34,929.6	34,918.9	1,834.2	2,125.8	2,258.8	2,323.7	5.3	6.1	6.5	6.7
East North Central	24,015.3	24,049.6	24,001.6	23,987.5	1,360.8	1,612.9	1,695.2	1,736.9	5.7	6.7	7.1	7.2
West North Central	10,903.7	10,923.8	10,928.0	10,931.4	473.4	512.9	563.6	586.7	4.3	4.7	5.2	5.4
West	35,524.8	35,947.7	35,972.7	36,007.2	1,697.0	2,136.6	2,263.9	2,384.4	4.8	5.9	6.3	6.6
Mountain	10,945.8	11,105.6	11,137.3	11,139.9	399.9	516.9	545.9	582.8	3.7	4.7	4.9	5.2
Pacific	24,579.0	24,842.1	24,835.4	24,867.3	1,297.1	1,619.7	1,718.0	1,801.6	5.3	6.5	6.9	7.2

¹ Census region estimates are derived by summing the Census division model-based estimates^c = corrected

NOTE: Data refer to place of residence. Regions are defined as the four Census regions, comprised as follows:

Northeast Region includes the New England Division - Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont; and the Middle Atlantic Division - New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.

South Region includes the South Atlantic Division - Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia; East South Central Division - Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Tennessee; and West South Central Division - Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Midwest Region includes the East North Central Division - Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin; and the West North Central Division - Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota.

West Region includes the Mountain Division - Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming; and the Pacific Division - Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington.

Estimates for the current year are subject to revision early in the following calendar year.