

MOUNTAIN-PLAINS INFORMATION OFFICE
Kansas City, Mo.

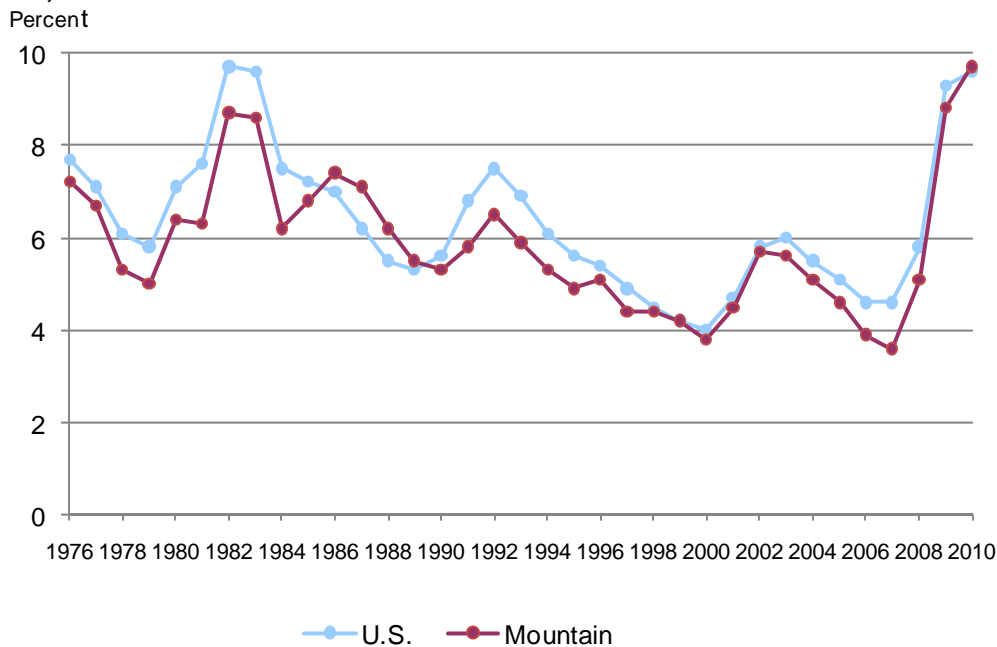
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MOUNTAIN DIVISION AND STATE UNEMPLOYMENT - 2010
Mountain jobless rate highest on record, but similar to that of nation

The unemployment rate in the Mountain division rose 0.9 percentage point over the year to 9.7 percent in 2010, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Nationally, the U.S. jobless rate was up 0.3 percentage point from the prior year and reached 9.6 percent. (See table 1.) Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that the Mountain’s unemployment rate was not significantly different than the national rate, but was the highest recorded in the 35 years that this data has been collected. (See chart 1. All division and state series begin in 1976.)

Chart 1. Unemployment rates for the U.S. and Mountain census division, 1976 - 2010



The Mountain is one of nine geographic divisions in the United States. Jobless rates in the divisions ranged from a low of 7.3 percent in the West North Central to a high of 11.7 percent in the Pacific in 2010. Four divisions recorded annual average unemployment rates that were significantly lower than that for the nation. Three divisions had rates appreciably above the U.S. average—the Pacific, the East North Central, and the South Atlantic. (See table 2.)

Five of the nine geographic divisions reported statistically significant over-the-year unemployment rate increases in 2010. The increases ranged from 0.4 percentage point in the Middle Atlantic to 0.9 percentage point in the Mountain.

Of the eight states that make up the Mountain division, three had the highest jobless rates ever recorded in their annual series—Nevada (14.9 percent), Colorado (8.9 percent), and Idaho (9.3 percent). Nevada recorded the highest rate in the nation, exceeding the national average by 5.3 percentage points. Five states in the division had jobless rates that were significantly lower than that for the nation with three of these recording rates under 8.0 percent: Wyoming (7.0 percent), Montana (7.2 percent), and Utah (7.7 percent). New Mexico and Colorado also recorded rates measurably below average while the rates in Idaho and Arizona were not appreciably different from the U.S. rate.

In 2010, 15 states in the U.S. reported unemployment rates of 10.0 percent or more. Nevada recorded the highest rate, 14.9 percent, followed by Michigan (12.5 percent), and California (12.4 percent). This was the first time since 2005 that Michigan did not post the highest unemployment rate among the states. North Dakota again registered the lowest jobless rate among the states, 3.9 percent. Overall, 27 states reported unemployment rates measurably lower than the national average in 2010 and 10 states reported rates that were significantly higher.

Six states in the Mountain division posted statistically significant jobless rate increases from 2009. The over-the-year rate increases in Nevada (+2.4 points), Idaho (+1.6 points), and New Mexico (+1.4 points) were the highest in the nation. (West Virginia, part of the South Atlantic division, also had an increase of 1.4 percentage points). Colorado, Montana, and Utah had statistically significant increases while rates in Arizona and Wyoming were not appreciably different from those of the prior year.

Nationally, 18 states experienced statistically significant jobless rate increases from 2009 to 2010, six of which were greater than 1.0 percentage point. Measureable rate decreases were recorded in four states with Michigan and Minnesota (-0.8 percentage point each) registering the largest declines.

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 monthly sample survey of approximately 60,000 households nationwide that is conducted for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the Census Bureau. 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 2006. Data for regions, divisions, states, and the District of Columbia are available back to 1976.

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 Unemployment release at www.bls.gov/lau/home.htm#news.

Analysis in this news release reflects the use of model-based error measures when making comparisons with the U.S. and the prior year. BLS uses a 90-percent confidence level in determining whether changes or differences in subnational unemployment rates are statistically significant. Model-based error measures are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/lau/lastderr.htm.

Additional information

For personal assistance or further information on the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program, as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Mountain-Plains Information Office at 816-285-7000 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 617-565-2072; Federal Relay Services: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population for the U.S., Mountain, and Mountain states, 2009-10 annual averages (Numbers in thousands)

Area	Civilian labor force		Employed		Unemployed		Unemployment rate		Error range of rate, 2010[2]
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	
United States [1]	154,142	153,889	139,877	139,064	14,265	14,825	9.3	9.6	9.5 - 9.7
Mountain	11,108	11,084	10,135	10,014	973	1,070	8.8	9.7	9.3 - 10.0
Arizona	3,157	3,176	2,851	2,860	306	316	9.7	10.0	9.2 - 10.7
Colorado	2,728	2,687	2,502	2,448	226	240	8.3	8.9	8.4 - 9.5
Idaho	751	758	693	687	58	71	7.7	9.3	8.5 - 10.2
Montana	496	497	465	461	31	36	6.3	7.2	6.5 - 8.0
Nevada	1,354	1,350	1,184	1,150	170	201	12.5	14.9	14.0 - 15.7
New Mexico	942	953	876	873	66	80	7.0	8.4	7.6 - 9.2
Utah	1,383	1,368	1,285	1,262	98	106	7.1	7.7	7.1 - 8.3
Wyoming	297	294	278	273	19	20	6.5	7.0	6.4 - 7.5

[1] Data for the U.S. are obtained directly from the national Current Population Survey.

[2] Error ranges are shown at the 90-percent confidence level and are based on unrounded data.

Note: Data refer to place of residence. Unemployment rates are in percent and are based on unrounded levels. Data for subnational areas reflect revised population controls and model reestimation.

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population by region and division, 2009-10 annual averages
(Numbers in thousands)

Census region and division	Civilian labor force		Employed		Unemployed		Unemployment rate		Error range of rate, 2010[1]
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010	
Northeast	28,321	28,243	25,950	25,784	2,370	2,459	8.4	8.7	8.5 - 8.9
New England	7,733	7,770	7,100	7,109	633	660	8.2	8.5	8.2 - 8.8
Middle Atlantic	20,587	20,473	18,850	18,675	1,737	1,799	8.4	8.8	8.5 - 9.1
South	55,051	55,210	50,166	50,060	4,885	5,150	8.9	9.3	9.2 - 9.5
South Atlantic	29,378	29,303	26,621	26,388	2,758	2,915	9.4	9.9	9.7 - 10.2
East South Central	8,597	8,581	7,722	7,727	875	855	10.2	10.0	9.5 - 10.4
West South Central	17,076	17,326	15,823	15,946	1,253	1,380	7.3	8.0	7.7 - 8.3
Midwest	34,637	34,480	31,317	31,237	3,319	3,243	9.6	9.4	9.2 - 9.6
East North Central	23,667	23,538	21,155	21,091	2,513	2,448	10.6	10.4	10.1 - 10.7
West North Central	10,969	10,942	10,163	10,146	806	796	7.4	7.3	7.0 - 7.5
West	35,817	35,767	32,161	31,812	3,656	3,955	10.2	11.1	10.8 - 11.3
Mountain	11,108	11,084	10,135	10,014	973	1,070	8.8	9.7	9.3 - 10.0
Pacific	24,709	24,683	22,026	21,798	2,683	2,885	10.9	11.7	11.4 - 12.0

[1] Error ranges are shown at the 90-percent confidence level and are based on unrounded data.

NOTE: Data refer to place of residence. Unemployment rates are in percent and are based on unrounded levels. Data for subnational areas reflect revised population controls and model reestimation. As a result, they will not add to U.S. totals.

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.

Chart 2. Over-the-year change in unemployment rates by state, 2010 annual averages

(U.S. change = +0.3 percentage point)

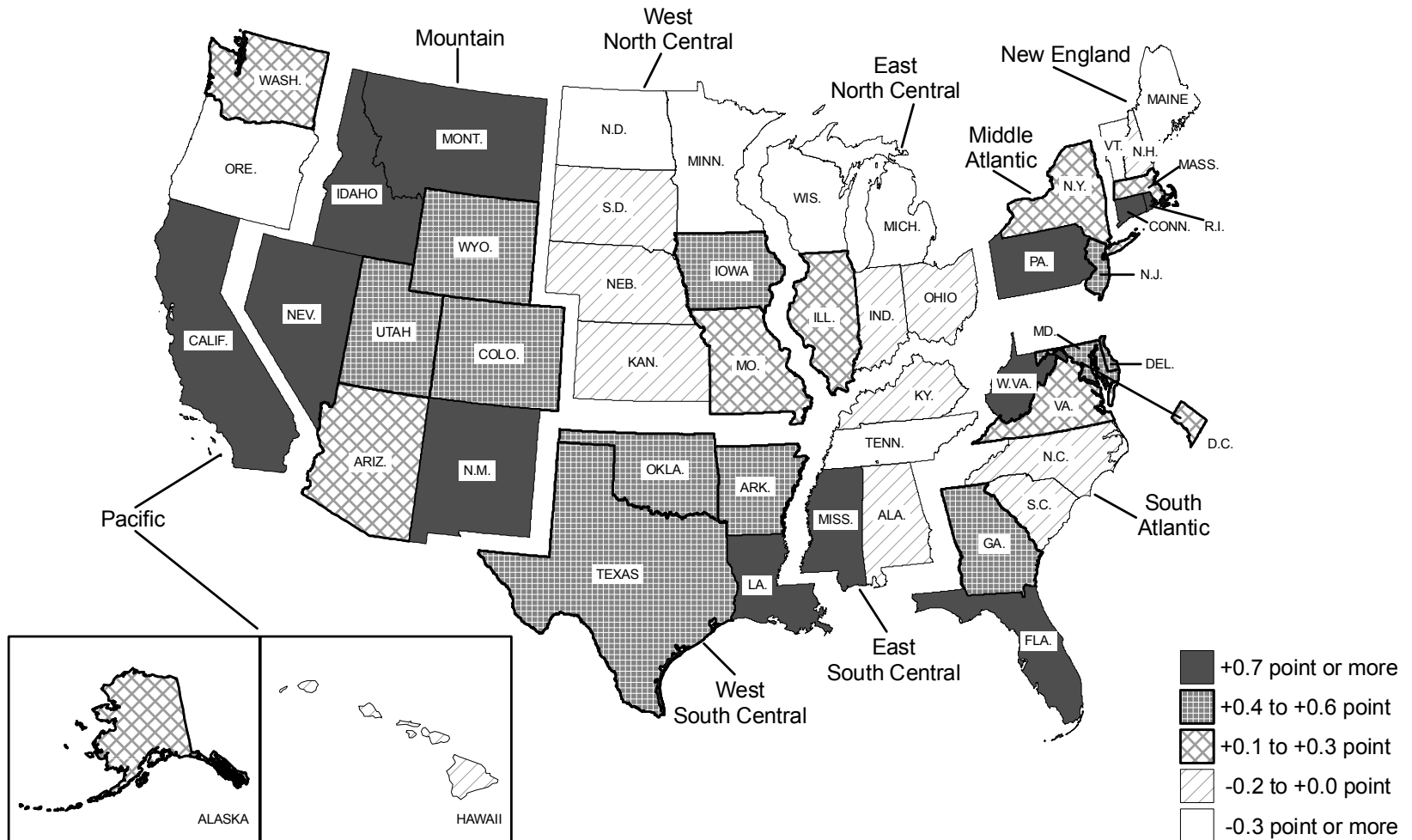


Chart 3. Unemployment rates by state, 2010 annual averages

(U.S. rate = 9.6 percent)

