

NEW ENGLAND INFORMATION OFFICE
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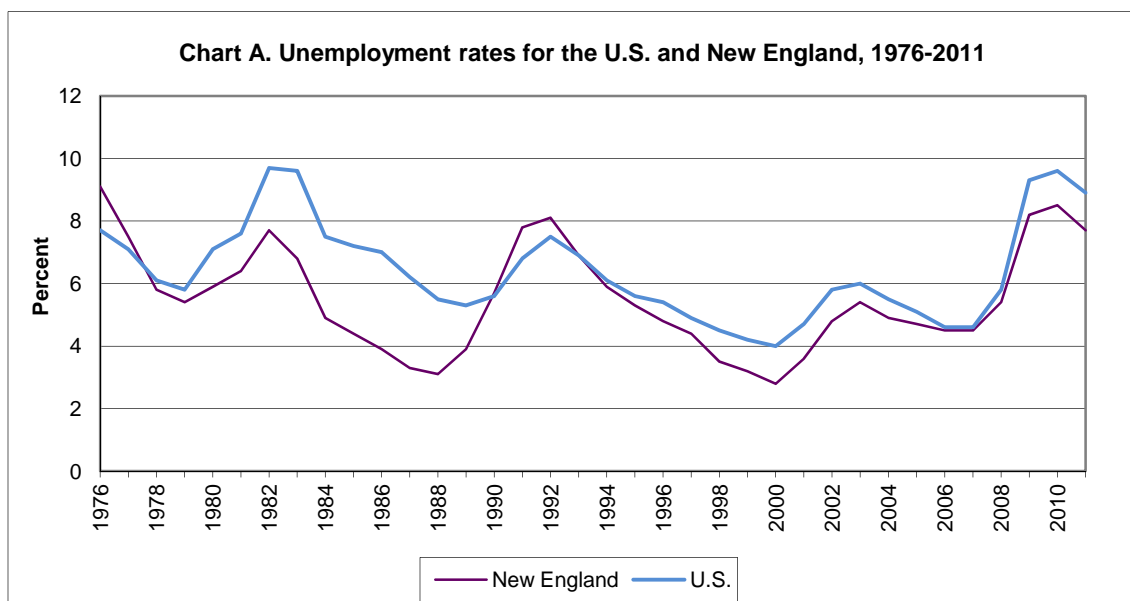
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NEW ENGLAND AND STATE UNEMPLOYMENT – 2011

The annual average unemployment rate in New England, at 7.7 percent in 2011, fell 0.8 percentage point over the year, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Nationally the unemployment rate fell 0.7 percentage point, to 8.9 percent in 2011. (See table 1.) Acting Regional Commissioner Joyce A. Sweeney noted that New England’s unemployment rate was measurably lower than the national average for the fourth consecutive year in 2011. The jobless rate in New England has rarely exceeded the U.S. average in the 36 years this data has been collected. (See chart A.)



New England is one of nine geographic divisions in the United States. Jobless rates in the divisions ranged from a low of 6.6 percent in the West North Central to a high of 11.0 percent in the Pacific in 2011. Four divisions, including New England, 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 South Central, and the South Atlantic. (See table 2.)

Eight of the nine geographic divisions reported statistically significant over-the-year unemployment rate changes in 2011, all of which were decreases. The largest of these occurred in the East North Central (-1.3 percentage points) followed by New England (-0.8 point).

Five of the six states that make up the New England division had jobless rates appreciably different from the U.S. average in 2011. New Hampshire (5.4 percent), Vermont (5.6 percent), Massachusetts (7.4 percent), and Maine (7.5 percent) had rates significantly lower than that for the nation. These 4 states were among 28 states in the country to report measurably lower rates. In contrast, Rhode Island (11.3 percent) posted the highest unemployment rate in New England and the third- highest jobless rate nationwide. Rhode Island was among 10 states and the District of Columbia to report a jobless rate significantly above that for the United States. Twelve states posted unemployment rates that were not measurably different than that for the nation in 2011. (See table 1.)

Four New England states posted statistically significant jobless rate changes over the year in 2011. The rates in Massachusetts fell 0.9 percentage point, Vermont was down 0.8 point and Maine and New Hampshire dropped 0.7 point, each. Nationally, 30 states posted statistically significant unemployment rate decreases over the year, the largest occurring in Michigan (-2.4 percentage points), while 4 additional states posted decreases greater than 1.0 percentage point: Ohio (-1.4 points), Utah (-1.3 points), Oregon (-1.2 points), and Indiana (-1.1 points).

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 2007. 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 (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.

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. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population for the U.S., New England, and the New England states, 2010-11 annual averages
(Numbers in thousands)

Area	Civilian labor force		Employed		Unemployed		Unemployment rate		Error range of rate, 2011 ¹
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	
United States¹	153,889	153,617	139,064	139,869	14,825	13,747	9.6	8.9	8.9 - 9.0
New England	7,756	7,740	7,097	7,140	659	599	8.5	7.7	7.4 - 8.1
Connecticut	1,917	1,918	1,738	1,749	178	169	9.3	8.8	8.3 - 9.3
Maine	701	704	643	651	57	53	8.2	7.5	7.0 - 8.1
Massachusetts	3,469	3,456	3,181	3,202	289	254	8.3	7.4	6.8 - 7.9
New Hampshire	739	738	694	698	45	40	6.1	5.4	5.1 - 5.8
Rhode Island	570	563	504	500	67	63	11.7	11.3	10.5 - 12.0
Vermont	360	359	337	339	23	20	6.4	5.6	5.1 - 6.0

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.

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population by region and division, 2010-11 annual averages
(Numbers in thousands)

Census region and division	Civilian labor force		Employed		Unemployed		Unemployment rate		Error range of rate, 2011 ¹
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	
Northeast	28,287	28,186	25,824	25,880	2,462	2,305	8.7	8.2	8.0 - 8.4
New England	7,756	7,740	7,097	7,140	659	599	8.5	7.7	7.4 - 8.1
Middle Atlantic	20,531	20,446	18,728	18,740	1,803	1,706	8.8	8.3	8.1 - 8.6
South	55,598	56,134	50,421	51,192	5,176	4,942	9.3	8.8	8.6 - 9.0
South Atlantic	29,489	29,747	26,560	26,986	2,929	2,760	9.9	9.3	9.0 - 9.5
East South Central	8,641	8,735	7,784	7,910	857	824	9.9	9.4	9.0 - 9.9
West South Central	17,468	17,653	16,078	16,296	1,390	1,357	8.0	7.7	7.4 - 8.0
Midwest	34,467	34,308	31,210	31,442	3,257	2,866	9.5	8.4	8.1 - 8.6
East North Central	23,473	23,281	21,014	21,143	2,459	2,137	10.5	9.2	8.9 - 9.5
West North Central	10,994	11,028	10,196	10,299	798	729	7.3	6.6	6.4 - 6.9
West	35,902	35,878	31,938	32,160	3,965	3,718	11.0	10.4	10.1 - 10.6
Mountain	11,073	10,989	10,007	10,009	1,066	980	9.6	8.9	8.6 - 9.2
Pacific	24,830	24,889	21,931	22,151	2,899	2,738	11.7	11.0	10.7 - 11.3

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.

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

Note: 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 in percent and are based on unrounded levels.

Chart 1. Over-the-year change in unemployment rates by state, 2011 annual averages

(U.S. change = -0.7 percentage point)

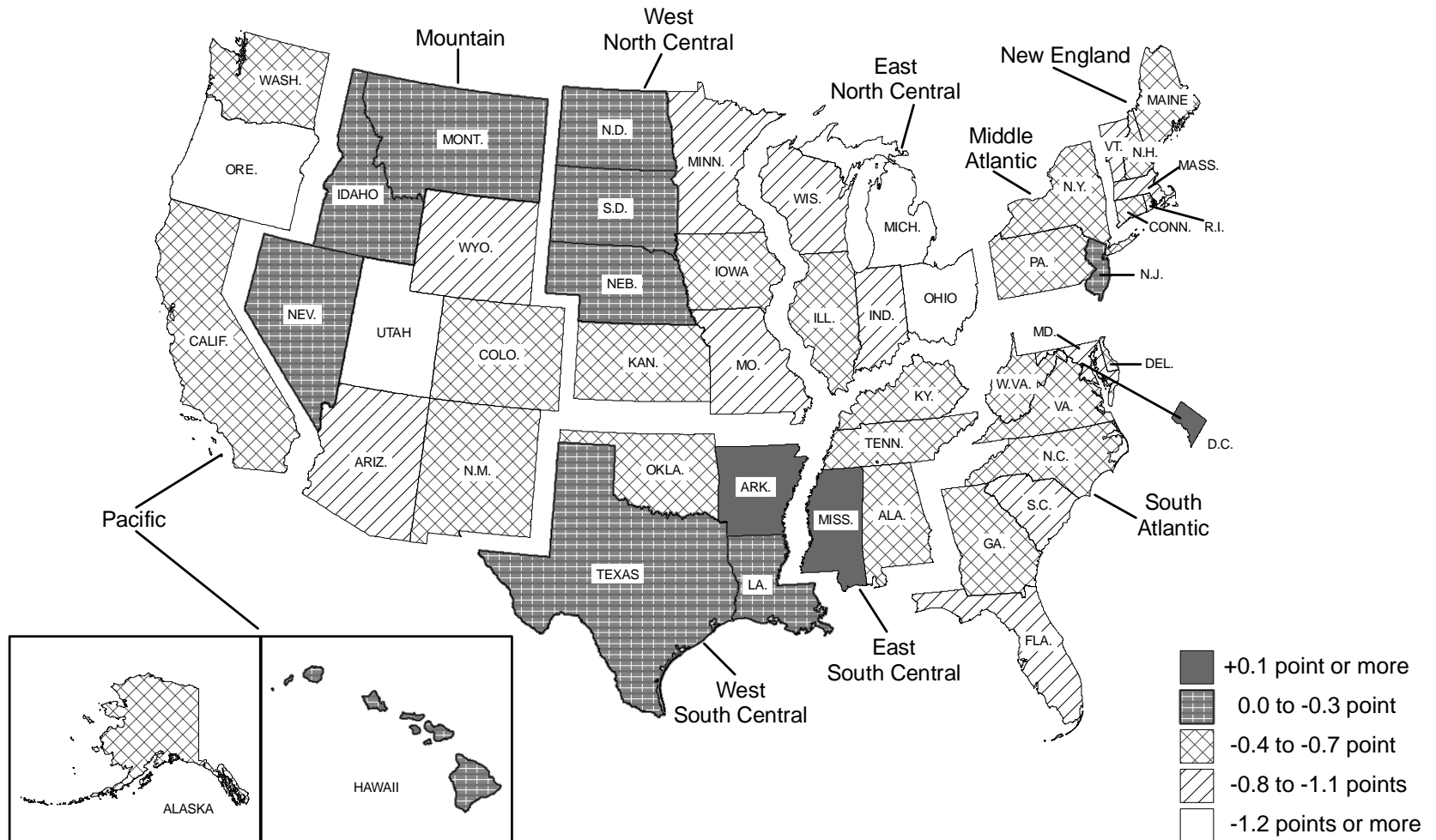


Chart 2. Unemployment rates by state, 2011 annual averages

(U.S. rate = 8.9 percent)

