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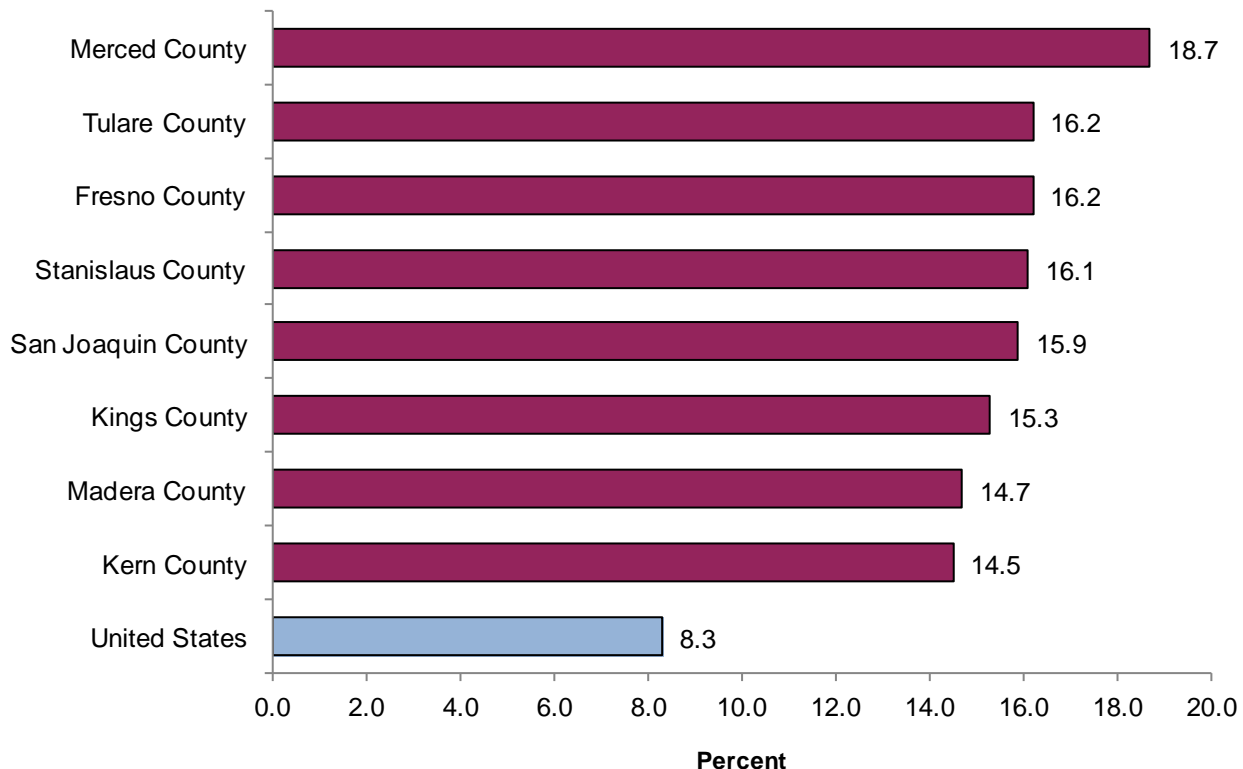
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UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY BY COUNTY – DECEMBER 2011

All Counties Posted Lower Unemployment Rates than the Previous Two Years

In December, Kern County reported the lowest unemployment rate in the San Joaquin Valley, 14.5 percent, followed by Madera County, at 14.7 percent, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Richard J. Holden, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that Merced County registered the highest jobless rate in the area, 18.7 percent. All eight counties in the San Joaquin Valley posted unemployment rates that were above the U.S. rate of 8.3 percent. (See chart 1. The Technical Note at the end of this release contains the San Joaquin Valley definition. All data in this release are not seasonally adjusted; accordingly, over-the-year analysis is used throughout.)

Chart 1. Unemployment rates for the United States, and counties in the San Joaquin Valley, December 2011, not seasonally adjusted



All eight counties in the San Joaquin Valley had unemployment rates that were lower in December 2011 than a year earlier. (See table A.) The declines in unemployment rates ranged from -2.2 percentage points in San Joaquin County to -1.2 percentage points in both Fresno and Merced counties, respectively. Each county reported an unemployment rate decline that was larger than the national decrease of 0.8 percentage points.

Table A. Unemployment rates for the United States, California, and counties in the San Joaquin Valley, not seasonally adjusted

	Unemployment rate			Net change from	
	December 2009	December 2010	December 2011	December 2009 to December 2011 ¹	December 2010 to December 2011 ¹
United States	9.7	9.1	8.3	-1.4	-0.8
California	12.0	12.3	10.9	-1.1	-1.4
Fresno County	16.7	17.4	16.2	-0.5	-1.2
Kern County	16.1	16.4	14.5	-1.6	-1.9
Kings County	16.5	17.0	15.3	-1.2	-1.7
Madera County	15.3	16.2	14.7	-0.6	-1.5
Merced County	19.2	19.9	18.7	-0.5	-1.2
San Joaquin County	16.8	18.1	15.9	-0.9	-2.2
Stanislaus County	17.1	17.5	16.1	-1.0	-1.4
Tulare County	17.3	17.5	16.2	-1.1	-1.3

¹Data for California, the San Joaquin Valley, and its components are preliminary for the most recent month.

December unemployment rates in all eight San Joaquin Valley counties increased from 2009 to 2010, before falling in 2011 to rates lower than in each of the previous two years. By December 2011, unemployment rates ranged from 14.5 percent in Kern County to 18.7 percent in Merced County. During these three years, Merced County had the area's highest jobless rate while Madera County had the lowest rate in two of the three years.

Technical Note

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 West Information Office at 415-625-2270 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. PT. Information on the Local Area Unemployment Statistics program and other surveys and programs is available on our Web site at www.bls.gov/ro9/.

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 December 1, 2009. A detailed list of the geographic definitions is available at <http://www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm>.

The San Joaquin Valley includes Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare County.