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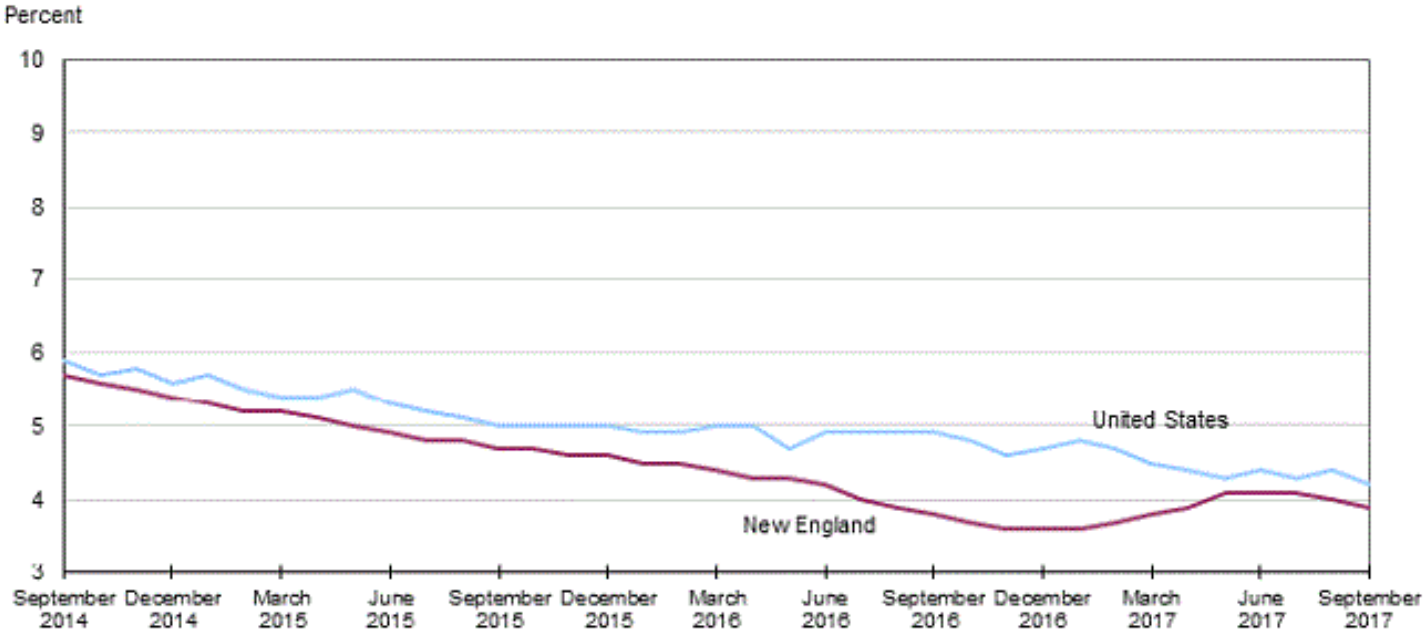
New England and State Unemployment — September 2017

The New England unemployment rate was little changed at 3.9 percent in September, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Regional Commissioner Deborah A. Brown noted that New England's jobless rate was essentially unchanged from a year ago when it was 3.8 percent. The national jobless rate declined from August to 4.2 percent and was 0.7 percentage point lower than in September 2016. (See chart 1.)

New England is one of nine geographic divisions nationwide. Jobless rates among the nine divisions ranged from 4.9 percent in the Pacific to 3.4 percent in the West North Central in September 2017. Unemployment rates in all divisions except for New England were down significantly over the year. The largest over-the-year declines were in the East South Central (-1.3 percentage points) and the South Atlantic (-0.8 point). (See table 2).

Chart 1. Unemployment rates for the United States and New England, September 2014 to September 2017, seasonally adjusted



In September, two New England states had jobless rates that were significantly different from that of the nation. Vermont (2.9 percent) and New Hampshire (2.7 percent) had significantly lower unemployment rates and were among 15 states in the country to do so. The remaining New England states were among the 22 states that had unemployment rates not appreciably different from that of the nation. Thirteen states and the District of Columbia had unemployment rates measurably higher than the national average.

Over the month, Massachusetts (-0.3 percentage point), Connecticut (-0.2 point), and Vermont (-0.1 point) were the only New England states that had significant over-the-month jobless rate changes. Nationwide, four states had unemployment rate increases, the largest of which were in Michigan (+0.4 percentage point) and Indiana (+0.3 point).The remaining New England states were among the 35 states and the District of Columbia that had unemployment rates that were not measurably different from those of a month earlier, though some had changes that were at least as large numerically as the significant changes.

Over the year, Rhode Island was the only New England state with a statistically significant unemployment rate change. Rhode Island (-1.1 percentage points) was among the 22 states with unemployment rate decreases from September 2016. South Dakota (+0.5 percentage point) had the only significant rate increase. The remaining New England states were among the 27 states and the District of Columbia that had jobless rates not appreciably different from those of a year earlier.

The State Employment and Unemployment news release for October 2017 is scheduled to be released on Friday, November 17, 2017, at 10:00 a.m. (EST).

Technical Note

This release presents civilian 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 subnational areas, including the nine geographic divisions (New England, Middle Atlantic, South Atlantic, East South Central, West South Central, East North Central, West North Central, Mountain, and Pacific) and the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The LAUS data for geographic divisions and states are model-based. The models for geographic divisions use inputs from the CPS only, while the models for the states and the District of Columbia use inputs from the CPS in conjunction with estimates of nonfarm payroll employment from the Current Employment Statistics survey and counts of unemployment insurance claimants from the state workforce agencies. Each month, not-seasonally-adjusted estimates for geographic divisions are controlled to the national totals from the CPS, and state estimates are then controlled to the estimates for their divisions. Data for all states and the District of Columbia, are available in the State Employment and Unemployment release https://www.bls.gov/lau/news.htm issued monthly by BLS, while national statistics are highlighted in the Employment Situation https://www.bls.gov/cps/news.htm.

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 re-estimation. 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.

Model-based error measures for seasonally adjusted data and for over-the-month and over-the-year changes are available online at https://www.bls.gov/lau/lastderr.htm. BLS uses a 90-percent confidence level in determining whether changes in LAUS unemployment rates are statistically significant. The average magnitude of the current year over-the-month change in a state unemployment rate that is required for statistical significance at the 90-percent confidence level is just over 0.2 percentage point; the average amount of the current over-the-year change in a state rate for significance is about 0.9 point. More details can be found on the website. Measures of nonsampling error are not available.

This information will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200, Federal Relay Services: (800)-877-8339.

Table 1. Labor force status for the United States, New England, and New England states, seasonally adjusted (Numbers in thousands)

Area	Sept 2016	Oct 2016	Nov 2016	Dec 2016	Jan 2017	Feb 2017	Mar 2017	Apr 2017	May 2017	June 2017	July 2017	Aug 2017	Sept 2017
Connecticut													
Civilian labor force	1,890.1	1,888.8	1,887.5	1,886.2	1,892.2	1,901.4	1,911.7	1,922.5	1,929.1	1,933.1	1,933.1	1,923.2	(p)1,913.8
Employed	1,800.2	1,801.9	1,803.2	1,804.1	1,807.2	1,812.0	1,819.9	1,828.9	1,834.0	1,836.1	1,836.6	1,831.0	(p)1,826.7
Unemployed	89.9	86.9	84.3	82.1	85.0	89.4	91.7	93.6	95.1	97.0	96.5	92.2	(p)87.2
Unemployment rate	4.8	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.9	5.0	5.0	4.8	(p)4.6
Maine													
Civilian labor force	694.7	695.1	695.2	695.0	696.2	698.1	700.6	702.8	703.3	703.6	704.7	705.2	(p)705.2
Employed	667.2	667.9	668.5	668.9	671.8	675.7	679.7	681.9	680.8	678.9	678.4	678.4	(p)679.1
Unemployed	27.6	27.2	26.6	26.1	24.4	22.4	20.9	20.9	22.6	24.7	26.2	26.8	(p)26.1
Unemployment rate	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.5	3.2	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.5	3.7	3.8	(p)3.7
Massachusetts													
Civilian labor force	3,586.1	3,585.4	3,584.5	3,583.5	3,599.3	3,626.8	3,661.2	3,694.2	3,711.1	3,708.8	3,697.7	3,680.5	(p)3,669.7
Employed	3,467.4	3,470.2	3,472.2	3,473.4	3,485.5	3,503.3	3,529.9	3,551.1	3,555.8	3,548.4	3,537.0	3,526.3	(p)3,527.2
Unemployed	118.8	115.2	112.3	110.1	113.8	123.4	131.3	143.2	155.3	160.4	160.7	154.2	(p)142.5
Unemployment rate	3.3	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.9	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.2	(p)3.9
New Hampshire													
Civilian labor force	750.6	751.0	751.2	751.3	751.9	752.0	752.2	753.0	753.3	753.5	752.9	752.0	(p)750.2
Employed	729.4	730.1	730.5	730.8	731.6	731.4	731.2	731.5	731.4	731.8	732.1	731.9	(p)730.1
Unemployed	21.2	20.9	20.7	20.5	20.2	20.6	21.0	21.4	21.9	21.7	20.8	20.0	(p)20.1
Unemployment rate	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.7	(p)2.7
Rhode Island													
Civilian labor force	552.2	551.7	551.1	550.6	551.0	552.3	554.1	555.5	555.8	556.5	557.0	556.3	(p)555.0
Employed	523.2	523.3	523.4	523.3	524.9	527.3	530.1	531.6	532.9	533.2	532.8	532.5	(p)531.8
Unemployed	29.0	28.4	27.8	27.3	26.2	25.1	24.0	23.9	22.9	23.3	24.2	23.7	(p)23.2
Unemployment rate	5.3	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.8	4.5	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.3	(p)4.2
Vermont													
Civilian labor force	345.2	345.2	345.2	345.1	346.1	346.8	347.5	347.3	346.4	344.8	343.8	344.3	(p)344.7
Employed	334.1	334.2	334.2	334.2	335.4	336.3	336.9	336.6	335.5	333.9	333.2	333.9	(p)334.6
Unemployed	11.1	11.0	11.0	10.9	10.6	10.5	10.6	10.7	11.0	10.9	10.6	10.4	(p)10.1
Unemployment rate	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.0	(p)2.9
New England													
Civilian labor force	7,812.9	7,812.8	7,812.6	7,812.1	7,837.2	7,874.6	7,921.1	7,967.3	7,994.5	8,001.6	7,998.6	7,973.8	7,949.6
Employed	7,514.6	7,522.5	7,529.2	7,534.6	7,555.5	7,581.2	7,619.7	7,652.7	7,668.1	7,669.6	7,667.6	7,652.5	7,642.1
Unemployed	298.3	290.3	283.3	277.5	281.7	293.4	301.3	314.5	326.4	332.0	331.0	321.3	307.4
Unemployment rate	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.0	3.9
United States(1)													
Civilian labor force	159,830	159,643	159,456	159,640	(2)159,716	160,056	160,201	160,213	159,784	160,145	160,494	160,571	161,146
Employed	151,926	151,902	152,048	152,111	(2)152,081	152,528	153,000	153,156	152,923	153,168	153,513	153,439	154,345
Unemployed	7,904	7,740	7,409	7,529	7,635	7,528	7,202	7,056	6,861	6,977	6,981	7,132	6,801
Unemployment rate	4.9	4.8	4.6	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.4	4.2

Footnotes

(1) Data for the U.S. are obtained directly from the national Current Population Survey (CPS) and are not preliminary. Seasonally adjusted CPS data have been revised as a result of routine seasonal updates processed at the end of each calendar year.

(2) Data affected by changes in population controls.

(p) Preliminary

NOTE: Data refer to place of residence. Area definitions are based on Office of Management and Budget Bulletin No. 10-02, dated December 1, 2009, and are available at www.bls.gov/lau.lausmsa.htm. Estimates for the latest month are subject to revision the following month.

NOTE: Data in this series reflect revised population controls, model reestimation, and new seasonal factors from January 2005 through December 2009.

Table 2. Civilian labor force and unemployment by census region and division, seasonally adjusted (Numbers in thousands)

Census region and division	Civilian labor force				Unemployed							
					Number				Percent of the labor force			
	Sept 2016	July 2017	Aug 2017	Sept 2017	Sept 2016	July 2017	Aug 2017	Sept 2017	Sept 2016	July 2017	Aug 2017	Sept 2017
Northeast	28,344.6	28,667.6	28,618.9	28,624.6	1,349.2	1,281.5	1,292.2	1,295.1	4.8	4.5	4.5	4.5
New England	7,812.9	7,998.6	7,973.8	7,949.6	298.3	331.0	321.3	307.4	3.8	4.1	4.0	3.9
Middle Atlantic	20,531.7	20,668.9	20,645.1	20,675.0	1,050.9	950.5	970.9	987.7	5.1	4.6	4.7	4.8
South	58,289.2	59,051.2	59,022.7	59,168.9	2,853.1	2,498.4	2,464.6	2,392.6	4.9	4.2	4.2	4.0
South Atlantic	31,084.2	31,638.0	31,646.7	31,732.4	1,494.6	1,308.6	1,297.4	1,263.5	4.8	4.1	4.1	4.0
East South Central	8,607.8	8,701.6	8,696.5	8,718.5	462.0	381.9	377.8	356.5	5.4	4.4	4.3	4.1
West South Central	18,597.2	18,711.6	18,679.5	18,718.0	896.4	807.8	789.4	772.5	4.8	4.3	4.2	4.1
Midwest	34,698.0	34,731.7	34,757.3	34,835.9	1,627.6	1,353.9	1,425.0	1,465.2	4.7	3.9	4.1	4.2
East North Central	23,520.2	23,580.4	23,583.5	23,624.3	1,173.4	973.1	1,035.8	1,078.7	5.0	4.1	4.4	4.6
West North Central	11,177.9	11,151.4	11,173.8	11,211.6	454.1	380.8	389.2	386.6	4.1	3.4	3.5	3.4
West	37,589.4	37,944.6	38,005.2	38,181.2	1,886.3	1,680.3	1,728.7	1,754.0	5.0	4.4	4.5	4.6
Mountain	11,678.8	11,894.0	11,899.8	11,934.4	519.6	472.9	470.3	470.8	4.4	4.0	4.0	3.9
Pacific	25,910.6	26,050.6	26,105.4	26,246.8	1,366.8	1,207.4	1,258.4	1,283.1	5.3	4.6	4.8	4.9

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 - 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 Pacific Division- Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, and Washington. Estimates for the current year are subject to revision early in the following calendar year. Data in this series reflect revised population controls, model reestimation, and new seasonal factors from January 2012 through December 2016