



Press Release

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Unemployment rate at 6.6 percent for sixth straight month

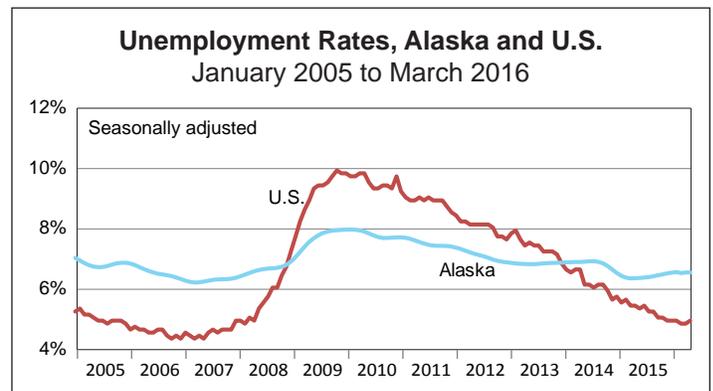
JUNEAU, Alaska— Alaska's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in March was 6.6 percent for the sixth month in a row. The comparable U.S. rate was 5.0 percent.

The seasonally adjusted rate can be slow to capture economic turning points because it is designed to dampen volatility. Other measures, such as the not-seasonally adjusted rate, show the labor market may be softening.

The unadjusted statewide rate was 7.3 percent in March, down from February's 7.7 percent, reflecting the typical seasonal shift. Alaska's dramatic seasonality makes it nearly impossible to detect underlying trends by comparing two consecutive months, but comparisons to the same period in the previous year show unadjusted rates for the first three months were higher in 2016.

Unadjusted rates fell in all but three boroughs and census areas from February to March. Rates increased slightly in the Nome and Dillingham census areas and Bristol Bay Borough. The highest rate was 23.6 percent in Kusilvak Census Area. Aleutians East Borough and Aleutians West Census Area, where the winter groundfish season was in full swing, tied for the lowest rate at 2.3 percent.

Preliminary employment estimates for March show



	3/16	2/16	3/15
Alaska	6.6%	6.6%	6.4%
U.S.	5.0%	4.9%	5.5%

Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

a job loss of about 1,000 from March 2015. Large losses in the oil and gas and construction industries along with consistent, over-the-year declines in state government pulled employment below last year's levels. Monthly employment estimates are subject to large revisions at the end of each year, particularly at the industry level.

For detailed employment estimates, see <http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/ces/>. The estimates are preliminary and subject to potentially large revisions. For more information on unemployment rates around the state, see live.laborstats.alaska.gov/labforce/.

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area, Not Seasonally Adjusted¹

	Civilian Labor Force			Unemployed					
	3/16 ^P	2/16	3/15	Number			Rate		
				3/16 ^P	2/16	3/15	3/16 ^P	2/16	3/15
Alaska	356,048	356,996	360,272	26,069	27,521	25,525	7.3	7.7	7.1
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	200,673	201,668	202,161	12,753	13,407	12,203	6.4	6.6	6.0
Anchorage, Municipality	156,046	156,738	157,282	8,637	9,100	8,296	5.5	5.8	5.3
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	44,627	44,930	44,879	4,116	4,307	3,907	9.2	9.6	8.7
Gulf Coast Region	37,534	37,333	37,755	3,360	3,536	3,256	9.0	9.5	8.6
Kenai Peninsula Borough	26,526	26,513	26,645	2,560	2,694	2,415	9.7	10.2	9.1
Kodiak Island Borough	6,684	6,597	6,734	303	334	318	4.5	5.1	4.7
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	4,324	4,223	4,376	497	508	523	11.5	12.0	12.0
Interior Region	51,081	50,952	51,762	3,786	3,994	3,626	7.4	7.8	7.0
Denali Borough	576	583	573	115	127	111	20.0	21.8	19.4
Fairbanks North Star Borough	45,098	44,958	45,794	2,826	2,964	2,651	6.3	6.6	5.8
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	2,964	2,946	2,953	366	392	372	12.3	13.3	12.6
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,443	2,465	2,442	479	511	492	19.6	20.7	20.1
Northern Region	11,079	11,340	11,830	1,237	1,268	1,257	11.2	11.2	10.6
Nome Census Area	3,952	4,036	4,212	517	521	524	13.1	12.9	12.4
North Slope Borough	4,370	4,462	4,668	250	260	241	5.7	5.8	5.2
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,757	2,842	2,950	470	487	492	17.0	17.1	16.7
Southeast Region	35,113	34,925	35,825	2,697	2,990	2,781	7.7	8.6	7.8
Haines Borough	964	936	980	144	160	140	14.9	17.1	14.3
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	980	1,005	1,023	187	213	214	19.1	21.2	20.9
Juneau, City and Borough	16,634	16,676	16,992	805	881	865	4.8	5.3	5.1
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	6,346	6,278	6,474	538	583	552	8.5	9.3	8.5
Petersburg Borough	1,438	1,442	1,475	153	170	162	10.6	11.8	11.0
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	2,650	2,673	2,707	394	448	403	14.9	16.8	14.9
Sitka, City and Borough	4,283	4,106	4,351	223	244	216	5.2	5.9	5.0
Skagway, Municipality	587	621	580	133	159	116	22.7	25.6	20.0
Wrangell, City and Borough	1,004	958	1,015	95	105	90	9.5	11.0	8.9
Yakutat, City and Borough	227	230	228	25	27	23	11.0	11.7	10.1
Southwest Region	20,566	20,777	20,938	2,235	2,324	2,401	10.9	11.2	11.5
Aleutians East Borough	3,092	3,132	3,130	72	79	76	2.3	2.5	2.4
Aleutians West Census Area	4,770	4,816	4,853	112	123	142	2.3	2.6	2.9
Bethel Census Area	7,149	7,204	7,273	1,056	1,080	1,114	14.8	15.0	15.3
Bristol Bay Borough	236	230	255	36	35	50	15.3	15.2	19.6
Dillingham Census Area	1,963	2,038	1,974	208	213	199	10.6	10.5	10.1
Kusilvak Census Area	2,799	2,832	2,887	661	706	727	23.6	24.9	25.2
Lake and Peninsula Borough	557	525	566	90	88	93	16.2	16.8	16.4

P = Preliminary. As more information becomes available, data are revised every month for the previous month and again at the end of every calendar year.

Note: The official definition of unemployment excludes anyone who has not made an active attempt to find work in the four-week period up to and including the week that includes the 12th of the reference month. Many in rural Alaska do not meet the definition because they have not conducted an active job search due to the scarcity of employment opportunities.

¹Unemployment rates that are not seasonally adjusted should not be compared with those that are.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics