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Press Release

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Unemployment rate at 6.8 percent in May

JUNEAU, Alaska—Alaska's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 6.8 percent in May, essentially unchanged from April's 6.7 percent. The comparable national rate was 5.5 percent.

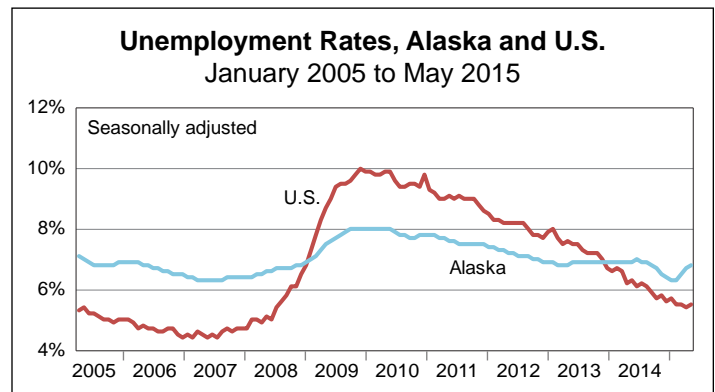
In fall 2014, the adjusted rate started to decline temporarily after a policy change in unemployment insurance eligibility, but it has since returned to typical levels.

The not-seasonally adjusted rate was 6.6 percent in May, down four-tenths of a percentage point from April's level. Alaska's unadjusted rate has large swings in the spring and fall, reflecting the highly seasonal economy that kicks into high gear around most of the state in May. Unadjusted rates fell in 25 out of 29 boroughs and census areas. The most dramatic drop was in the Denali Borough, where it fell 11.9 percentage points from April.

Areas that bucked the statewide trend included the North Slope Borough, Kodiak Island Borough, Aleutians East Borough and Aleutians West Census Area. The North Slope's rate is fairly stable throughout the year, with a slight bump in the summer because of its unusual winter construction season. Kodiak and the Aleutians also have an atypical seasonal pattern, with fishing seasons in winter and summer combined with economic lulls in the spring and fall.

For detailed employment estimates, see <http://live.laborstats.alaska.gov/ces/>. The estimates are preliminary and subject to potentially large revisions.

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Unemployment Rates, Seasonally Adjusted

	5/15	4/15	5/14
Alaska	6.8%	6.7%	6.9%
U.S.	5.5%	5.4%	6.3%

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

Labor Force by Borough and Census Area, Not Seasonally Adjusted¹

	Civilian Labor Force			Unemployed					
	5/15 ^P	4/15	5/14	Number			Rate		
				5/15 ^P	4/15	5/14	5/15 ^P	4/15	5/14
Alaska	366,327	362,298	369,053	24,098	25,280	25,095	6.6	7.0	6.8
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	203,759	203,083	204,427	11,583	12,176	11,856	5.7	6.0	5.8
Anchorage, Municipality	159,650	159,050	160,249	8,099	8,451	8,353	5.1	5.3	5.2
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	44,109	44,033	44,178	3,484	3,725	3,503	7.9	8.5	7.9
Gulf Coast Region	39,599	38,233	40,135	2,893	3,097	2,902	7.3	8.1	7.2
Kenai Peninsula Borough	28,229	27,002	28,549	2,136	2,296	2,105	7.6	8.5	7.4
Kodiak Island Borough	6,348	6,593	6,477	347	314	368	5.5	4.8	5.7
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	5,022	4,638	5,109	410	487	429	8.2	10.5	8.4
Interior Region	54,913	52,619	55,198	3,419	3,572	3,743	6.2	6.8	6.8
Denali Borough	1,477	631	1,502	75	107	90	5.1	17.0	6.0
Fairbanks North Star Borough	47,838	46,532	47,959	2,547	2,625	2,746	5.3	5.6	5.7
Southeast Fairbanks Census Area	2,910	2,802	2,981	331	344	390	11.4	12.3	13.1
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	2,688	2,654	2,756	466	496	517	17.3	18.7	18.8
Northern Region	11,367	11,514	11,456	1,318	1,331	1,349	11.6	11.6	11.8
Nome Census Area	4,127	4,142	4,130	542	566	527	13.1	13.7	12.8
North Slope Borough	4,247	4,418	4,290	264	253	283	6.2	5.7	6.6
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,993	2,954	3,036	512	512	539	17.1	17.3	17.8
Southeast Region	38,600	36,285	39,199	2,361	2,601	2,532	6.1	7.2	6.5
Haines Borough	1,064	992	1,089	91	108	113	8.6	10.9	10.4
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	1,246	1,059	1,239	167	190	148	13.4	17.9	11.9
Juneau, City and Borough	17,710	17,080	17,990	792	858	847	4.5	5.0	4.7
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,151	6,594	7,308	446	516	520	6.2	7.8	7.1
Petersburg Census Area	1,512	1,515	1,534	140	153	153	9.3	10.1	10.0
Prince of Wales-Hyder Census Area	2,755	2,758	2,768	346	369	347	12.6	13.4	12.5
Sitka, City and Borough	4,770	4,357	4,851	216	211	236	4.5	4.8	4.9
Skagway, Municipality	990	611	997	59	88	56	6.0	14.4	5.6
Wrangell, City and Borough	1,111	1,053	1,121	82	84	82	7.4	8.0	7.3
Yakutat, City and Borough	291	266	302	22	24	30	7.6	9.0	9.9
Southwest Region	18,087	20,563	18,639	2,523	2,504	2,713	13.9	12.2	14.6
Aleutians East Borough	1,535	2,888	1,593	89	81	113	5.8	2.8	7.1
Aleutians West Census Area	3,258	4,969	3,440	212	191	325	6.5	3.8	9.4
Bethel Census Area	7,058	6,956	7,232	1,154	1,151	1,193	16.4	16.5	16.5
Bristol Bay Borough	515	366	527	34	45	38	6.6	12.3	7.2
Dillingham Census Area	2,184	2,009	2,240	212	208	223	9.7	10.4	10.0
Lake and Peninsula Borough	667	549	693	85	87	99	12.7	15.8	14.3
Wade Hampton Census Area	2,870	2,826	2,914	737	741	722	25.7	26.2	24.8

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