NEWS RELEASE

BLS
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

REGIONAL AND STATE UNEMPLOYMENT — 2014 ANNUAL AVERAGES

In 2014, annual average unemployment rates declined in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Employment-population ratios increased in 35 states and the District of Columbia, decreased in 12 states, and were unchanged in 3 states. The U.S. jobless rate decreased by 1.2 percentage points to 6.2 percent in 2014, while the national employment-population ratio increased by 0.4 point to 59.0 percent.

Regional Unemployment

All four regions had annual average unemployment rate declines from 2013, with the Midwest and Northeast having the largest decreases (-1.4 percentage points each). The Midwest, at 5.8 percent, had the lowest regional unemployment rate in 2014, while the West, at 6.8 percent, had the highest rate. (See table 1.)

Among the nine geographic divisions, the West North Central had the lowest annual average unemployment rate, 4.6 percent in 2014. The Pacific had the highest jobless rate, 7.2 percent. All nine divisions had over-the-year unemployment rate declines, the largest of which occurred in the East North Central (-1.7 percentage points) and Middle Atlantic (-1.5 points).

Changes to Local Area Unemployment Statistics Data

All subnational estimates presented in this news release, except those for Puerto Rico, were produced using a new generation of time-series models. Information is available in the "Report on Revision to State and Area Time-Series Models" on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/lau/lauschanges2015.htm.

Effective with this news release, data have been re-estimated back to 1976 for regions, divisions, states, and the District of Columbia. The annual average data shown in tables 1 and 2 were affected, as were monthly seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted data.

State Unemployment

Annual average unemployment rates decreased from 2013 to 2014 in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. This was the first year since 1984 in which all states and the District had over-the-year rate declines. The largest rate decline occurred in Illinois (-2.0 percentage points), followed by Colorado, North Carolina, and Ohio (-1.8 points each). Twenty additional states had over-the-year jobless rate decreases of at least 1.0 percentage point. (See chart 1.)

North Dakota had the lowest annual average unemployment rate (2.8 percent) in 2014. Nebraska (3.3 percent) and South Dakota (3.4 percent) had the next lowest jobless rates. Eleven additional states had annual average unemployment rates under 5.0 percent. Mississippi and Nevada had the highest jobless rates (7.8 percent each) among the states, followed by Rhode Island (7.7 percent). The District of Columbia also had a jobless rate of 7.8 percent. (See chart 2.)

Regional Employment-Population Ratios

In 2014, all four regions had over-the-year increases in their employment-population ratios—the proportion of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and older who are employed. The Midwest had the largest increase (+0.8 percentage point). The Midwest also had the highest employment-population ratio, 61.3 percent, while the South had the lowest, 57.9 percent. (See table 2.)

Eight of the 9 geographic divisions had over-the-year increases in their employment-population ratios, with the largest of these occurring in the East North Central (+1.0 percentage point). The East South Central had the only ratio decline over the year (-0.9 percentage point). The West North Central had the highest proportion of employed persons, 65.3 percent in 2014, while the East South Central had the lowest proportion, 53.6 percent.

State Employment-Population Ratios

In 2014, Hawaii and Indiana had the largest over-the-year increases in their employment-population ratios (+1.4 percentage points each), followed by Louisiana (+1.2 points) and Connecticut (+1.1 points). Sixteen additional states had increases of at least 0.5 percentage point. Mississippi and Tennessee had the largest decreases in their employment-population ratios (-1.2 percentage points each). Four other states had declines of at least 0.5 percentage point.

North Dakota had the highest proportion of employed persons, 70.8 percent in 2014. Four other states in the West North Central division had the next highest ratios: Nebraska, 68.9 percent; Iowa, 67.3 percent; Minnesota, 67.0 percent; and South Dakota, 66.9 percent. West Virginia had the lowest employment-population ratio among the states, 49.7 percent. West Virginia has had the lowest employment-population ratio each year since the series began in 1976. Three states had the lowest employment-population ratios in their series in 2014: Kentucky, 54.8 percent; Mississippi, 50.1 percent; and New Mexico, 53.6 percent. (See chart 3.)

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The Regional and State Employment and Unemployment news release for January 2015 is scheduled to be released on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. (EDT). The Metropolitan Area Employment and Unemployment news release for January 2015 is scheduled to be released on Friday, March 20, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. (EDT).

Technical Note

This release presents labor force and unemployment data for census regions and divisions and states from the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) program. The LAUS program is a federal-state cooperative endeavor.

Concepts

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 older. *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 expressed as a percent of the labor force. The e*mployment-population ratio* is the proportion of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and older that is employed.

Method of estimation. Estimates for 48 of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale metropolitan division, New York City, and the balances of California and New York State are produced using estimating equations based on regression techniques. This method utilizes data from several sources, including the CPS, the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey of nonfarm payroll employment, and state unemployment insurance (UI) programs. Estimates for the State of California are derived by summing the estimates for the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale metropolitan division and the balance of California. Similarly, estimates for New York State are derived by summing the estimates for New York City and the balance of New York State. Estimates for all nine census divisions are based on a similar regression approach that does not incorporate CES or UI data. Estimates for census regions are obtained by summing the model-based estimates for the component

divisions and then calculating the unemployment rate. Each month, census division estimates are controlled to national totals; state estimates are then controlled to their respective division totals. Estimates for Puerto Rico are derived from a monthly household survey similar to the CPS. 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 incorporate updated population controls from the U.S. Census Bureau, any revisions in the other data sources, and model re-estimation. The population controls (except for Puerto Rico) reflect extrapolation from the 2010 Census. In most years, historical data for the most recent 5 years (both seasonally adjusted and not seasonally adjusted) are revised near the beginning of each calendar year, prior to the release of January estimates. Though the labor force estimates typically are updated for 5 years, the population estimates are adjusted back to the decennial estimates base (April 2010). With the introduction of a new generation of times-series models in 2015, historical data were re-estimated back to January 1976 for regions, divisions, states, the District of Columbia, the Los Angeles-Long Beach-Glendale metropolitan division, New York City, and the balances of California and New York states.

Reliability of the estimates

The estimates presented in this release are based on sample surveys, administrative data, and modeling and, thus, are subject to sampling and other types of errors. *Sampling error* is a measure of sampling variability—that is, variation that occurs by chance because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. Survey data also are subject to *nonsampling errors*, such as those which can be introduced into the data collection and processing operations. Estimates not directly derived from sample surveys are subject to additional errors resulting from the specific estimation processes used. In table 1, level estimates for states may not sum to level estimates for regions and divisions because of rounding. Unemployment rates and employment-population ratios are computed from unrounded levels and, thus, may differ slightly from rates and ratios computed using the rounded level estimates displayed in table 1.

Additional information
Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over by region, division, and state, 2013–14 annual averages

(Numbers in thousands)

Region, division, and state	Population		Civilian labor force		Employed		Unemployed		Unemployment rate		Error range of rate, 2014 [1]		
	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014	2013	2014			
United States	245,679	247,947	155,389	155,922	143,929	146,305	11,460	9,617	7.4	6.2	6.1	–	6.2
Northeast	44,673	44,875	28,343	28,251	26,221	26,518	2,121	1,733	7.5	6.1	6.0	–	6.3
New England	11,779	11,848	7,735	7,785	7,202	7,327	533	458	6.9	5.9	5.6	–	6.2
Connecticut	2,858	2,867	1,869	1,885	1,724	1,760	145	125	7.7	6.6	6.1	–	7.1
Maine	1,086	1,090	707	699	660	659	47	40	6.6	5.7	5.2	–	6.2
Massachusetts	5,401	5,446	3,509	3,557	3,272	3,353	237	205	6.7	5.8	5.2	–	6.3
New Hampshire	1,072	1,079	742	741	704	709	38	32	5.1	4.3	3.9	–	4.7
Rhode Island	849	852	557	553	505	511	52	42	9.3	7.7	7.1	–	8.2
Vermont	513	514	351	349	336	335	16	14	4.4	4.1	3.7	–	4.5
Middle Atlantic	32,894	33,027	20,608	20,466	19,019	19,191	1,589	1,275	7.7	6.2	6.0	–	6.5
New Jersey	7,018	7,057	4,534	4,519	4,164	4,218	370	300	8.2	6.6	6.1	–	7.1
New York	15,693	15,765	9,632	9,569	8,891	8,964	741	605	7.7	6.3	6.0	–	6.7
Pennsylvania	10,183	10,205	6,442	6,378	5,964	6,009	478	370	7.4	5.8	5.4	–	6.2
Midwest	52,605	52,869	34,301	34,443	31,831	32,429	2,471	2,014	7.2	5.8	5.7	–	6.0
East North Central	36,472	36,621	23,286	23,319	21,390	21,817	1,896	1,502	8.1	6.4	6.2	–	6.7
Illinois	10,026	10,053	6,555	6,525	5,961	6,064	594	460	9.1	7.1	6.6	–	7.5
Indiana	5,065	5,097	3,192	3,231	2,947	3,036	245	195	7.7	6.0	5.5	–	6.6
Michigan	7,814	7,846	4,728	4,750	4,306	4,402	422	348	8.9	7.3	6.8	–	7.8
Ohio	9,056	9,092	5,726	5,719	5,299	5,392	427	328	7.5	5.7	5.3	–	6.2
Wisconsin	4,511	4,534	3,085	3,094	2,877	2,924	208	170	6.8	5.5	5.0	–	6.0
West North Central	16,133	16,248	11,016	11,124	10,441	10,611	575	512	5.2	4.6	4.4	–	4.8
Iowa	2,405	2,420	1,674	1,705	1,594	1,629	80	75	4.8	4.4	4.0	–	4.9
Kansas	2,185	2,197	1,487	1,500	1,408	1,432	79	68	5.3	4.5	4.0	–	5.1
Minnesota	4,225	4,259	2,966	2,974	2,819	2,852	146	122	4.9	4.1	3.7	–	4.5
Missouri	4,693	4,719	3,016	3,058	2,814	2,871	202	187	6.7	6.1	5.6	–	6.7
Nebraska	1,424	1,434	1,022	1,022	983	988	39	34	3.8	3.3	2.9	–	3.7
North Dakota	559	572	407	416	395	405	12	12	2.9	2.8	2.4	–	3.2
South Dakota	641	647	445	448	428	433	17	15	3.8	3.4	3.0	–	3.8
South	91,329	92,479	56,781	56,996	52,792	53,580	3,989	3,416	7.0	6.0	5.9	–	6.1
South Atlantic	48,388	49,000	30,078	30,240	27,897	28,359	2,181	1,881	7.3	6.2	6.0	–	6.4
Delaware	728	738	442	452	413	426	30	26	6.7	5.7	5.2	–	6.2
District of Columbia	537	543	373	377	342	348	32	29	8.5	7.8	7.2	–	8.4
Florida	15,715	15,978	9,473	9,638	8,783	9,034	690	603	7.3	6.3	5.9	–	6.6
Georgia	7,575	7,669	4,759	4,757	4,368	4,414	391	342	8.2	7.2	6.6	–	7.8
Maryland	4,649	4,684	3,124	3,111	2,917	2,930	207	181	6.6	5.8	5.4	–	6.3
North Carolina	7,595	7,690	4,681	4,656	4,310	4,370	370	286	7.9	6.1	5.6	–	6.7
South Carolina	3,708	3,762	2,180	2,198	2,013	2,056	167	141	7.6	6.4	5.8	–	7.0
Virginia	6,394	6,451	4,246	4,261	4,005	4,041	241	220	5.7	5.2	4.7	–	5.6
West Virginia	1,486	1,485	800	790	746	739	54	52	6.7	6.5	5.8	–	7.2
East South Central	14,506	14,602	8,581	8,403	7,909	7,830	672	573	7.8	6.8	6.5	–	7.2
Alabama	3,767	3,786	2,169	2,150	2,012	2,004	157	146	7.2	6.8	6.0	–	7.6
Kentucky	3,406	3,425	2,057	2,005	1,892	1,875	165	130	8.0	6.5	5.8	–	7.2
Mississippi	2,265	2,274	1,274	1,236	1,163	1,140	111	96	8.7	7.8	6.9	–	8.7
Tennessee	5,068	5,117	3,082	3,011	2,842	2,811	239	201	7.8	6.7	6.0	–	7.3
West South Central	28,435	28,877	18,122	18,353	16,987	17,392	1,135	962	6.3	5.2	5.0	–	5.5
Arkansas	2,275	2,285	1,307	1,301	1,211	1,221	96	80	7.4	6.1	5.4	–	6.9
Louisiana	3,528	3,551	2,107	2,157	1,965	2,020	142	138	6.7	6.4	5.6	–	7.1
Oklahoma	2,922	2,946	1,803	1,784	1,707	1,704	96	80	5.3	4.5	3.9	–	5.1
Texas	19,711	20,095	12,905	13,112	12,104	12,448	801	664	6.2	5.1	4.8	–	5.3
West	57,430	58,201	36,189	36,529	33,293	34,057	2,896	2,473	8.0	6.8	6.6	–	6.9
Mountain	17,448	17,723	11,130	11,252	10,352	10,601	777	652	7.0	5.8	5.5	–	6.0
Arizona	5,087	5,176	3,041	3,091	2,804	2,878	237	213	7.8	6.9	6.2	–	7.6
Colorado	4,069	4,145	2,780	2,817	2,591	2,676	189	141	6.8	5.0	4.6	–	5.5
Idaho	1,210	1,228	771	777	724	740	47	37	6.1	4.8	4.2	–	5.4
Montana	800	808	514	516	486	492	28	24	5.4	4.7	4.1	–	5.3
Nevada	2,169	2,210	1,384	1,395	1,252	1,286	132	108	9.5	7.8	7.1	–	8.4
New Mexico	1,597	1,601	923	918	859	858	64	60	6.9	6.5	5.8	–	7.3
Utah	2,068	2,104	1,410	1,431	1,344	1,377	66	54	4.7	3.8	3.3	–	4.3
Wyoming	449	451	307	307	292	294	15	13	4.7	4.3	3.8	–	4.8
Pacific	39,982	40,478	25,059	25,277	22,941	23,456	2,119	1,821	8.5	7.2	7.0	–	7.4
Alaska	539	541	366	367	340	342	25	25	6.9	6.8	5.7	–	7.9
California	29,788	30,158	18,672	18,811	17,003	17,397	1,669	1,414	8.9	7.5	7.3	–	7.8
Hawaii	1,075	1,084	651	668	620	639	32	29	4.8	4.4	3.9	–	4.8
Oregon	3,132	3,171	1,911	1,942	1,761	1,807	150	135	7.9	6.9	6.3	–	7.6
Washington	5,447	5,524	3,460	3,488	3,217	3,270	243	218	7.0	6.2	5.7	–	6.8
Puerto Rico	2,897	2,875	1,189	1,152	1,019	992	170	160	14.3	13.9	NA		

[1] Error ranges are shown at the 90-percent confidence level and are based on unrounded data.
NA = Data not available.
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. Data for Puerto Rico are derived from a monthly household survey similar to the Current Population Survey.

Table 2. Employment-population ratios of persons 16 years of age and over by region, division, and state, 2013–14 annual averages

(Percent)

Region, division, and state	Employment-population ratio [1]		Over-the-year change	Error range of ratio, 2014 [2]		
	2013	2014				
United States	58.6	59.0	0.4	58.8	–	59.2
Northeast	58.7	59.1	.4	58.6	–	59.5
New England	61.1	61.8	.7	61.1	–	62.6
Connecticut	60.3	61.4	1.1	60.1	–	62.7
Maine	60.8	60.5	-.3	59.1	–	61.8
Massachusetts	60.6	61.6	1.0	60.1	–	63.0
New Hampshire	65.7	65.7	.0	64.6	–	66.9
Rhode Island	59.5	59.9	.4	58.8	–	61.1
Vermont	65.4	65.0	-.4	63.7	–	66.4
Middle Atlantic	57.8	58.1	.3	57.6	–	58.7
New Jersey	59.3	59.8	.5	58.7	–	60.9
New York	56.7	56.9	.2	56.0	–	57.7
Pennsylvania	58.6	58.9	.3	58.0	–	59.8
Midwest	60.5	61.3	.8	60.9	–	61.8
East North Central	58.6	59.6	1.0	59.0	–	60.1
Illinois	59.5	60.3	.8	59.3	–	61.3
Indiana	58.2	59.6	1.4	58.1	–	61.0
Michigan	55.1	56.1	1.0	54.9	–	57.3
Ohio	58.5	59.3	.8	58.1	–	60.5
Wisconsin	63.8	64.5	.7	63.0	–	66.0
West North Central	64.7	65.3	.6	64.7	–	66.0
Iowa	66.3	67.3	1.0	66.0	–	68.7
Kansas	64.4	65.2	.8	63.7	–	66.7
Minnesota	66.7	67.0	.3	65.7	–	68.3
Missouri	60.0	60.8	.8	59.2	–	62.4
Nebraska	69.1	68.9	-.2	67.6	–	70.2
North Dakota	70.6	70.8	.2	69.1	–	72.6
South Dakota	66.8	66.9	.1	65.4	–	68.4
South	57.8	57.9	.1	57.6	–	58.3
South Atlantic	57.7	57.9	.2	57.4	–	58.3
Delaware	56.7	57.7	1.0	56.4	–	59.0
District of Columbia	63.7	64.0	.3	62.8	–	65.3
Florida	55.9	56.5	.6	55.6	–	57.5
Georgia	57.7	57.6	-.1	56.4	–	58.7
Maryland	62.7	62.6	-.1	61.5	–	63.7
North Carolina	56.8	56.8	.0	55.6	–	58.0
South Carolina	54.3	54.7	.4	53.2	–	56.1
Virginia	62.6	62.6	.0	61.2	–	64.1
West Virginia	50.2	49.7	-.5	47.7	–	51.8
East South Central	54.5	53.6	-.9	52.7	–	54.5
Alabama	53.4	52.9	-.5	51.1	–	54.8
Kentucky	55.5	54.8	-.7	52.9	–	56.6
Mississippi	51.3	50.1	-1.2	48.3	–	52.0
Tennessee	56.1	54.9	-1.2	53.3	–	56.5
West South Central	59.7	60.2	.5	59.5	–	60.9
Arkansas	53.2	53.4	.2	51.8	–	55.0
Louisiana	55.7	56.9	1.2	55.2	–	58.5
Oklahoma	58.4	57.8	-.6	56.1	–	59.5
Texas	61.4	61.9	.5	61.1	–	62.8
West	58.0	58.5	.5	58.2	–	58.9
Mountain	59.3	59.8	.5	59.1	–	60.5
Arizona	55.1	55.6	.5	54.0	–	57.2
Colorado	63.7	64.6	.9	63.0	–	66.1
Idaho	59.9	60.2	.3	58.5	–	62.0
Montana	60.7	60.9	.2	59.0	–	62.8
Nevada	57.8	58.2	.4	56.7	–	59.7
New Mexico	53.8	53.6	-.2	51.8	–	55.4
Utah	65.0	65.4	.4	63.8	–	67.1
Wyoming	65.0	65.1	.1	63.4	–	66.8
Pacific	57.4	57.9	.5	57.5	–	58.4
Alaska	63.1	63.3	.2	61.1	–	65.5
California	57.1	57.7	.6	57.2	–	58.2
Hawaii	57.6	59.0	1.4	57.7	–	60.2
Oregon	56.2	57.0	.8	55.6	–	58.4
Washington	59.1	59.2	.1	58.1	–	60.3
Puerto Rico	35.2	34.5	-.7	NA		

[1] Employment as a percent of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and over.
[2] Error ranges are shown at the 90-percent confidence level and are based on unrounded data.
NA = Data not available.

NOTE: Data refer to place of residence. Employment-population ratios are based on unrounded levels. Data for subnational areas reflect revised population controls and model reestimation. Data for Puerto Rico are derived from a monthly household survey similar to the Current Population Survey.

Chart 1. Over-the-year change in unemployment rates by state, 2014 annual averages
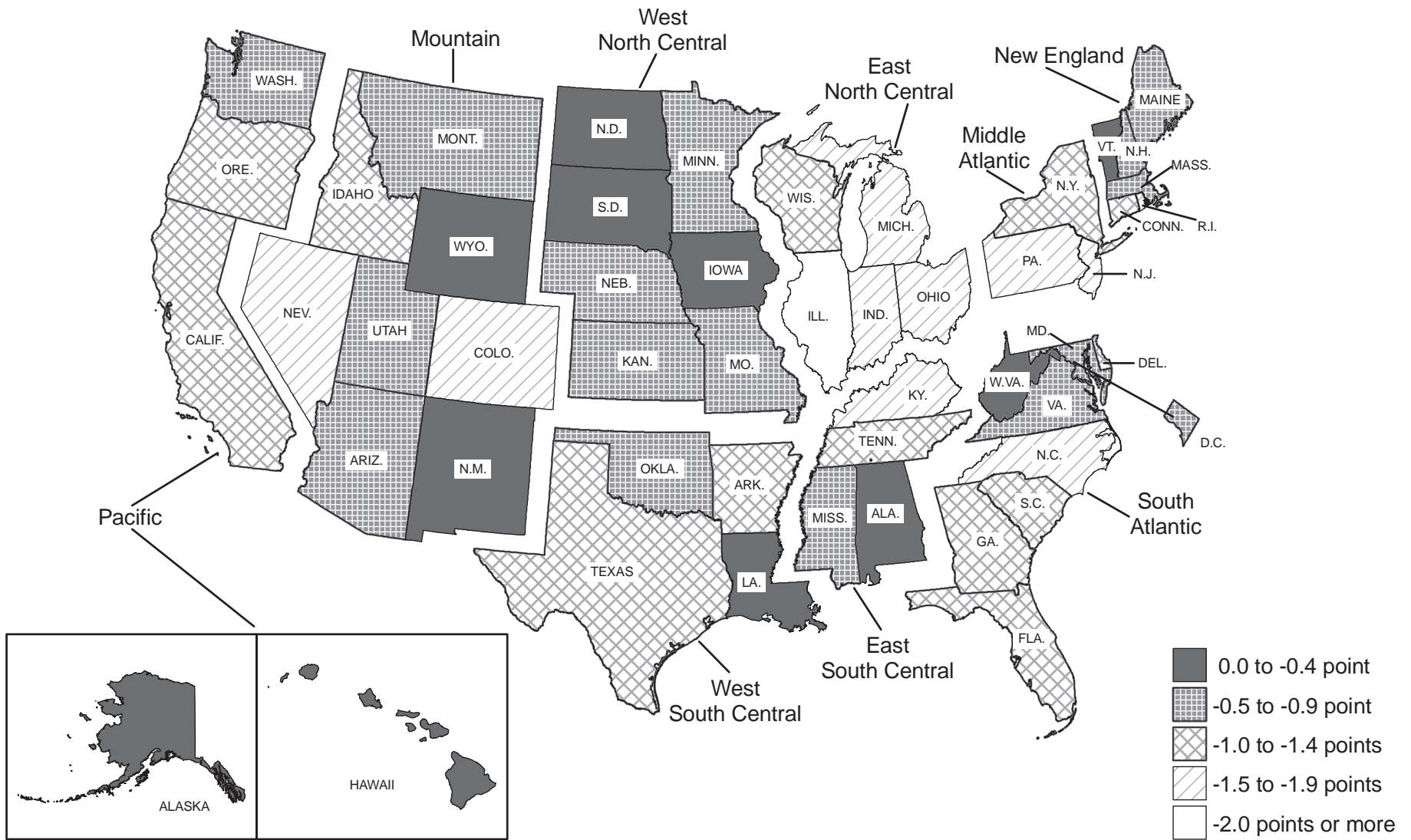
(U.S. change = -1.2 percentage points)

■	0.0 to -0.4 point
▦	-0.5 to -0.9 point
▨	-1.0 to -1.4 points
▧	-1.5 to -1.9 points
□	-2.0 points or more

Chart 2. Unemployment rates by state, 2014 annual averages

(U.S. rate = 6.2 percent)

Mountain	
West North Central	
East North Central	
New England	
Middle Atlantic	
South Atlantic	
Pacific	
West South Central	
East South Central	

WASH.
ORE.
IDAHO
MONT.
N.D.
MINN.
S.D.
WYO.
IOWA
NEB.
NEV.
UTAH
COLO.
KAN.
MO.
CALIF.
ARIZ.
N.M.
OKLA.
ARK.
TEXAS
LA.
WIS.
MICH.
ILL.
IND.
OHIO
KY.
TENN.
MISS.
ALA.
GA.
N.Y.
PA.
N.J.
MAINE
VT.
N.H.
MASS.
CONN.
R.I.
MD.
DEL.
W.VA.
VA.
N.C.
S.C.
D.C.
FLA.
ALASKA
HAWAII

Legend:
- 7.0% or higher
- 6.0% to 6.9%
- 5.0% to 5.9%
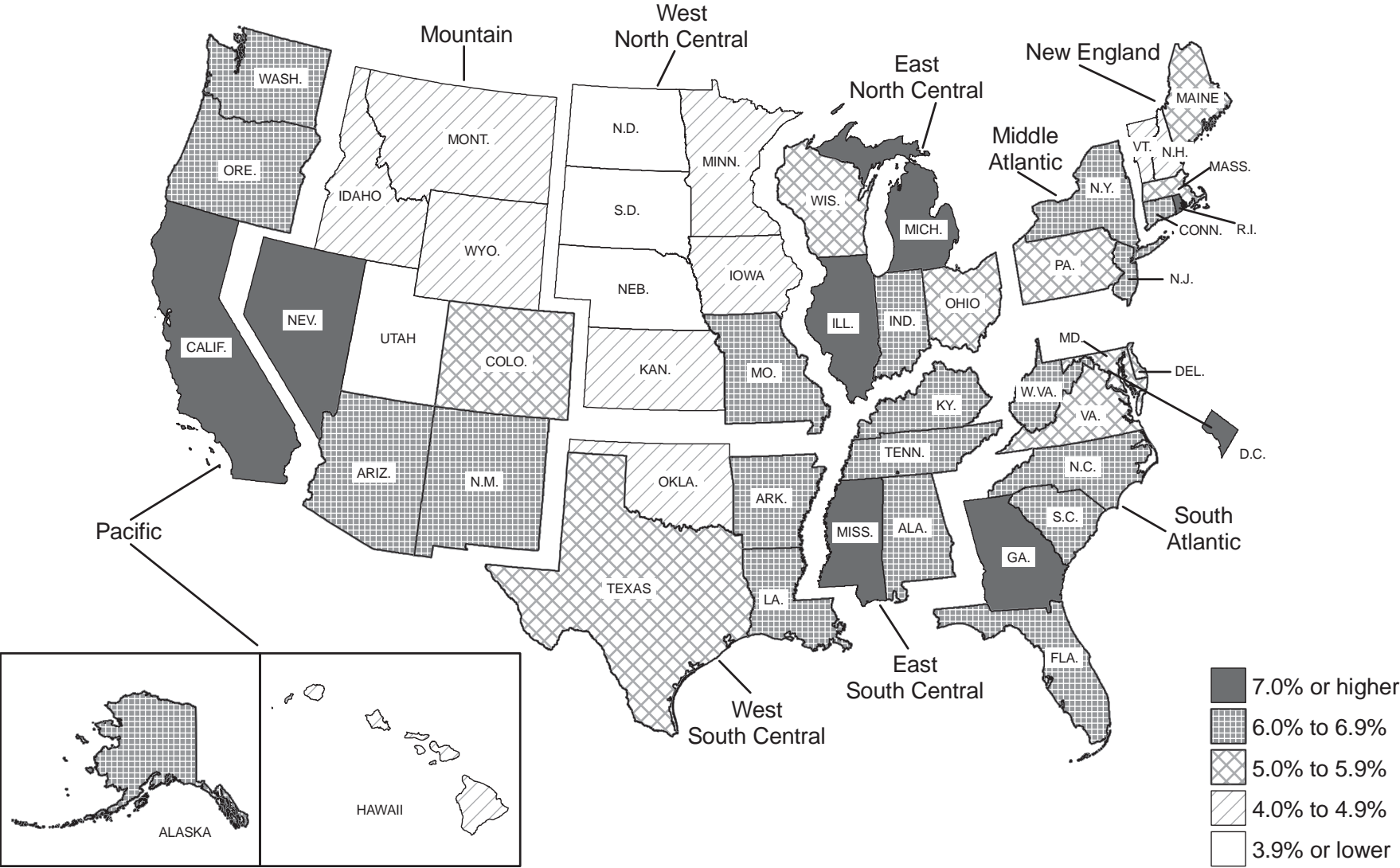- 4.0% to 4.9%
- 3.9% or lower

Chart 3. Employment-population ratios by state, 2014 annual averages

(U.S. ratio= 59.0 percent)

Mountain

West North Central

East North Central

New England

Middle Atlantic

WASH.

MONT.

N.D.

MINN.

MAINE

ORE.

IDAHO

S.D.

WIS.

VT. N.H.

MASS.

N.Y.

WYO.

MICH.

CONN. R.I.

NEV.

IOWA

NEB.

OHIO

PA.

N.J.

CALIF.

UTAH

COLO.

KAN.

ILL. IND.

MD.

DEL.

W.VA.

KY.

VA.

ARIZ.

N.M.

OKLA.

MO.

TENN.

N.C.

D.C.

Pacific

ARK.

MISS. ALA.

S.C.

South Atlantic

TEXAS

LA.

GA.

East South Central

FLA.

West South Central

ALASKA

HAWAII

	62.0% or higher
	57.0% to 61.9%
	56.9% or lower