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NYS Unemployment Rate Falls to 8.2% in December 2020

Fifth Straight Month of Declining Unemployment Rates in New York State

In December 2020, New York State's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased to 8.2%, falling from 8.4% in November 2020, according to preliminary figures released today by the New York State Department of Labor. The number of unemployed New Yorkers also decreased over the month, by 20,200, from 764,500 to 744,300. This represents the fifth straight month of declining unemployment rates in New York State, bucking the national trend. The U.S. unemployment rate held steady between November and December 2020.

At the same time, the number of private sector jobs in New York State decreased over the month by 22,100, or 0.3%, to 7,354,300. By comparison, the number of private sector jobs in the U.S. decreased by 0.1% in December 2020.

The number of private sector jobs in New York State is based on a payroll survey of 18,000 New York businesses conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Monthly payroll employment estimates are preliminary and subject to revision as more complete data become available the following month. The BLS calculates New York State's unemployment rate based partly upon the results of the monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) of approximately 3,100 households in the State.

Note: Seasonally adjusted data are used to provide the most valid month-to-month comparison. Non-seasonally adjusted data are valuable in year-to-year comparisons of the same month – for example, December 2019 versus December 2020.

United States and New York State: November – December 2020

1) Jobs data (seasonally adjusted):

The table below compares the month-over-month change in total nonfarm and private sector jobs in the United States and New York State.

**Change in Total Nonfarm and Private Sector Jobs
November – December 2020**

| | Change in Total Nonfarm Jobs (private sector + government) | | Change in Private Sector Jobs | |
|----------------|---|------|----------------------------------|------|
| | Net | % | Net | % |
| United States | -140,000 | -0.1 | -95,000 | -0.1 |
| New York State | -37,200 | -0.4 | -22,100 | -0.3 |

2) Unemployment rates (seasonally adjusted):

The State's unemployment rate is calculated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, using a statistical regression model that primarily uses the results from the monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) of approximately 3,100 households in New York State.

In December 2020, the statewide unemployment rate decreased from 8.4% to 8.2%. New York City's unemployment rate decreased over the month from 12.1% to 11.4%. Outside of New York City, the unemployment rate increased from 5.7% to 5.9%.

The number of unemployed New Yorkers decreased over the month by 20,200, from 764,500 in November to 744,300 in December 2020.

Unemployment Rates (%)*

| | December 2020* | November 2020 | December 2019 |
|------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| United States | 6.7 | 6.7 | 3.6 |
| New York State | 8.2 | 8.4 | 3.9 |
| New York City | 11.4 | 12.1 | 3.6 |
| NYS, outside NYC | 5.9 | 5.7 | 4.1 |

*Data are preliminary and subject to change.

United States, New York State and Metro Areas: December 2019 – December 2020

1) Jobs data (not seasonally adjusted):

The following table compares the changes in total nonfarm and private sector jobs occurring in the U.S., New York State and metro areas in the state, between December 2019 and December 2020.

Change in Total Nonfarm and Private Sector Jobs by Area*
December 2019 – December 2020

| | Change in Total Nonfarm Jobs: (private sector + government) | | Change in Private Sector Jobs: | |
|-----------------------------|--|-------|--------------------------------|-------|
| | Net | % | Net | % |
| United States | -9,152,000 | -6.0 | -7,891,000 | -6.1 |
| New York State | -1,018,400 | -10.3 | -966,000 | -11.5 |
| Albany-Schenectady-Troy | -45,600 | -9.5 | -39,800 | -10.6 |
| Binghamton | -6,600 | -6.3 | -5,400 | -6.7 |
| Buffalo-Niagara Falls | -44,700 | -7.8 | -42,500 | -8.9 |
| Dutchess-Putnam | -14,500 | -9.6 | -12,400 | -10.0 |
| Elmira | -2,300 | -6.1 | -1,800 | -5.8 |
| Glens Falls | -4,100 | -7.6 | -3,500 | -8.2 |
| Ithaca | -3,000 | -4.6 | -3,400 | -6.0 |
| Kingston | -3,200 | -5.1 | -2,500 | -5.2 |
| Nassau-Suffolk | -104,700 | -7.7 | -98,500 | -8.5 |
| New York City | -578,000 | -12.2 | -560,100 | -13.5 |
| Orange-Rockland-Westchester | -61,900 | -8.5 | -58,000 | -9.4 |
| Rochester | -54,400 | -10.0 | -47,500 | -10.3 |
| Syracuse | -34,600 | -10.6 | -30,600 | -11.6 |
| Utica-Rome | -10,100 | -7.9 | -7,100 | -7.4 |
| Watertown-Fort Drum | -3,800 | -9.2 | -3,600 | -12.3 |
| Non-metro counties | -38,400 | -7.5 | -33,900 | -8.9 |

Note: The sum of sub-state area job estimates will usually differ from the New York State total. This is because the State total is calculated separately from the sub-state areas and is estimated based on an independent sample.

Change in jobs by major industry sector: December 2019 – December 2020

1) Jobs data (not seasonally adjusted):

The table below compares the change in jobs by major industry sector in New York State occurring between December 2019 and December 2020.

Change in Jobs by Major Industry Sector December 2019 – December 2020

| Sectors with Job Losses: | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| Leisure & Hospitality | -366,600 |
| Educational & Health Services* | -157,600 |
| Trade, Transportation & Utilities | -141,900 |
| Professional & Business Services | -141,800 |
| Other Services | -53,800 |
| Government* | -52,400 |
| Manufacturing | -38,100 |
| Financial Activities | -37,200 |
| Construction | -22,400 |
| Information | -6,000 |
| Natural Resources & Mining | -600 |

*Educational and health services is in the private sector. Government includes public education and public health services.

Note: The responsibility for the production of monthly estimates of state and metro area nonfarm employment by industry moved from the NYS Department of Labor's Division of Research and Statistics to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), starting with the March 2011 estimates. More detailed information on the change is available on the [BLS web site](#).

Many economic data series have a seasonal pattern, which means they tend to occur at the same time each year (e.g., retail jobs usually increase in December). Seasonal adjustment is the process of removing seasonal effects from a data series. This is done to simplify the data so that they may be more easily interpreted and help to reveal true underlying trends. Seasonal adjustment permits comparisons of data from one month to data from any other month.

In New York State, payroll jobs data by industry come from a monthly survey of 18,000 business establishments conducted by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data are preliminary and subject to revision. Jobs data by industry do not include agricultural workers, the self-employed, unpaid family workers or domestic workers in private households.

Labor force statistics, including the unemployment rate, for New York and every other state are based on statistical regression models specified by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The state's unemployment rate is based partly upon the results of the Current Population Survey, which contacts approximately 3,100 households in New York each month.

See [State and Area Jobs Data](#)

See [Labor Market Overview](#)

See [Jobs and Unemployment Fact Sheet](#)