



Unemployment Rate

Unemployment rates on a local, state and national level have been slowly improving since their peak in late 2009. The unemployment rate in Maricopa County has outperformed Arizona and the US for most of the last decade. Unemployment rate cycles tend to be illustrated by shorter periods of rising unemployment rates, followed by longer periods of recovery. Local, regional and state unemployment rates generally follow the trends of the national unemployment rate.

Employment vs. Labor Force

The gap between employment and labor force illustrates the size of the unemployed population. This does not illustrate the full picture of underemployment since many workers, who would otherwise be considered part of the labor force no longer seek work for one reason or another. A large portion of workers shifted to part-time work, fewer hours, lower pay, or enrolled in school, during the economic downturn. These elements form the underemployed portion of the economy not illustrated by the unemployment rate.

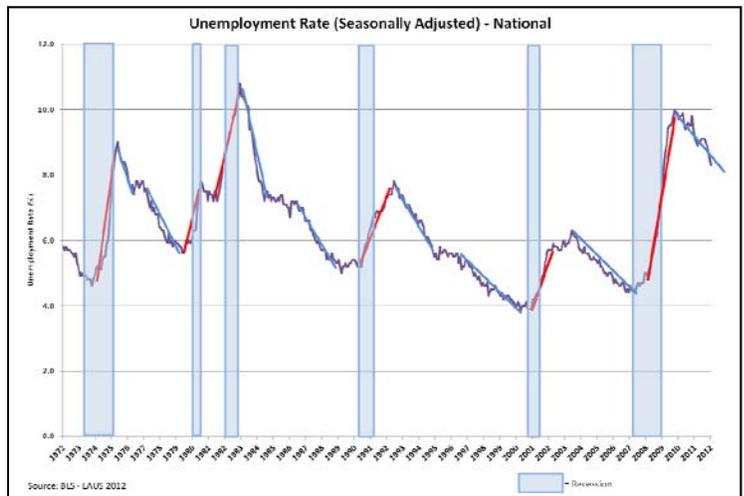
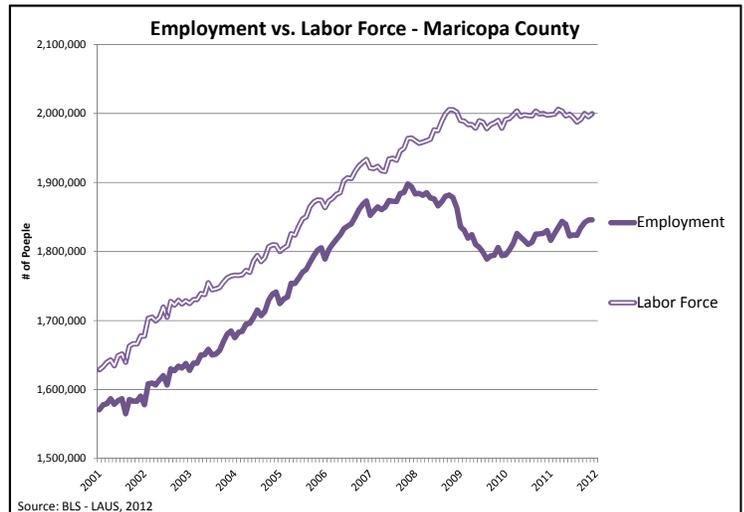
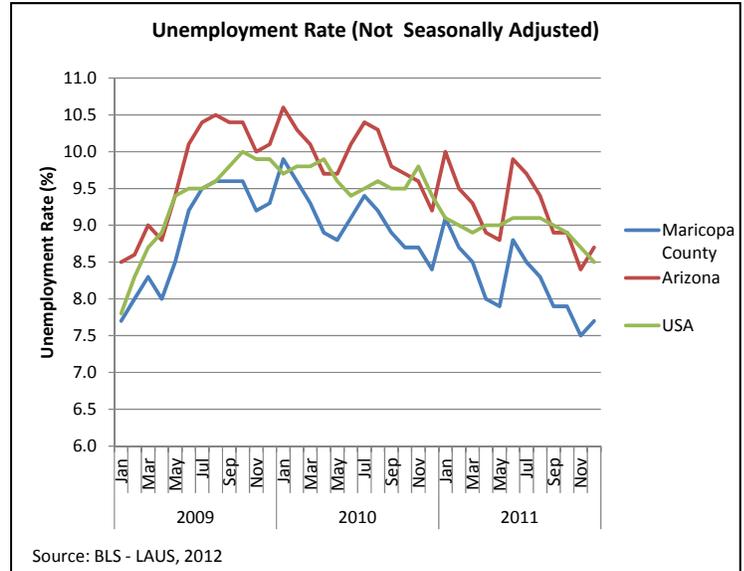
Unemployment Rate Trending

Unemployment rates generally rise and fall in longer term trends as the economy slips into recession and recovers. These trends can be observed on the Phoenix MSA (bottom right of this page), National, and State charts (reverse page). The red trend lines illustrate times of rising unemployment rate. The blue trend lines illustrate periods of falling unemployment rates.

Unemployment Data Sources

Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) - Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

- Estimates on a city, county, metropolitan area, state, and national level.
 - Relatively recent estimates with state produced 2.5 -3 weeks following the reference month (3rd Fri. of month following) and local area data 1.5 weeks later (Wed. before 1st Friday of month after).
 - Local data only for cities with 25,000+ population
- US Census Bureau – American Community Survey (ACS)
- Estimates available for geographies smaller than 20,000, but are based on 60 months of collected data.



Unemployment Terms

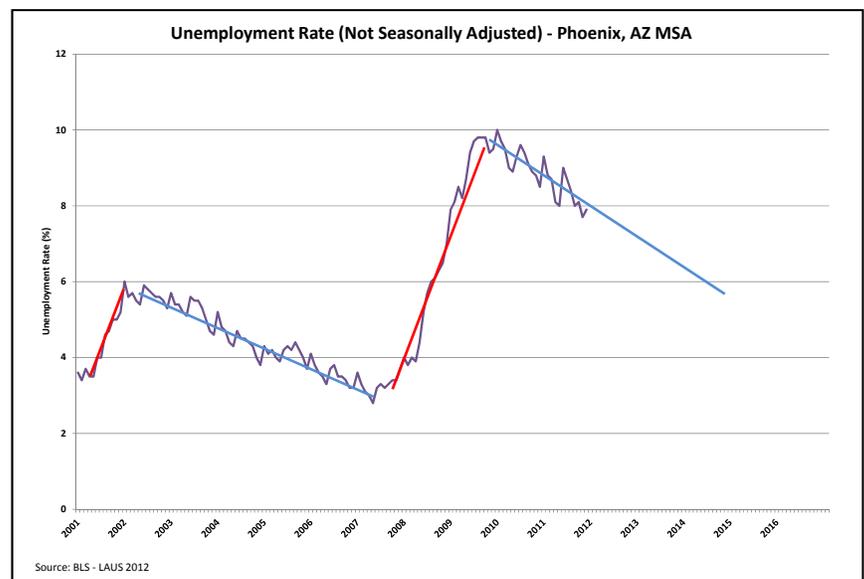
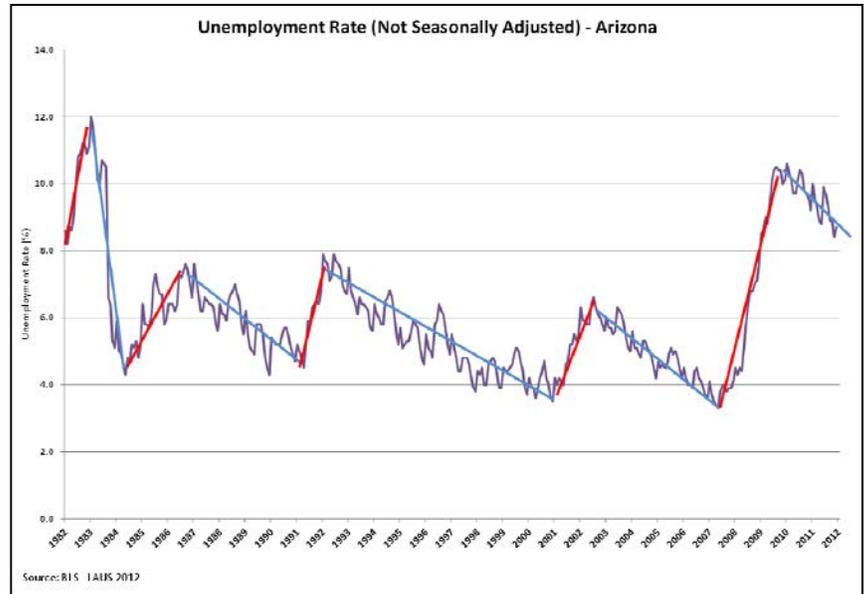
Civilian Labor Force: Included are all persons in the civilian non-institutional population classified as either employed or unemployed.

Employed Persons: These are all persons who, during the reference week (the week including the 12th of the month), (a) did any work as paid employees, worked in their own business or profession or on their own farm, or worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in an enterprise operated by a member of their family, or (b) were not working but who had jobs from which they were temporarily absent because of vacation, illness, bad weather, childcare problems, maternity or paternity leave, labor-management dispute, job training, or other family or personal reasons, whether or not they were paid for the time off or were seeking other jobs. Each employed person is counted only once, even if he or she holds more than one job.

Unemployed Persons: Included are all persons who had no employment during the reference week, were available for work, except for temporary illness, and had made specific efforts to find employment some time during the 4 week-period ending with the reference week. Persons who were waiting to be recalled to a job from which they had been laid off need not have been looking for work to be classified as unemployed.

Unemployment Rate: The ratio of unemployed to the civilian labor force expressed as a percent [i.e., 100 times (unemployed/labor force)].

Seasonally Adjusted: Adjustment to data in an effort to smooth out seasonal fluctuations caused by things like weather, holidays, school years, etc., in order to better observe non-seasonal trends.



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