

Economic Overview and Outlook: Arkansas

JOBS

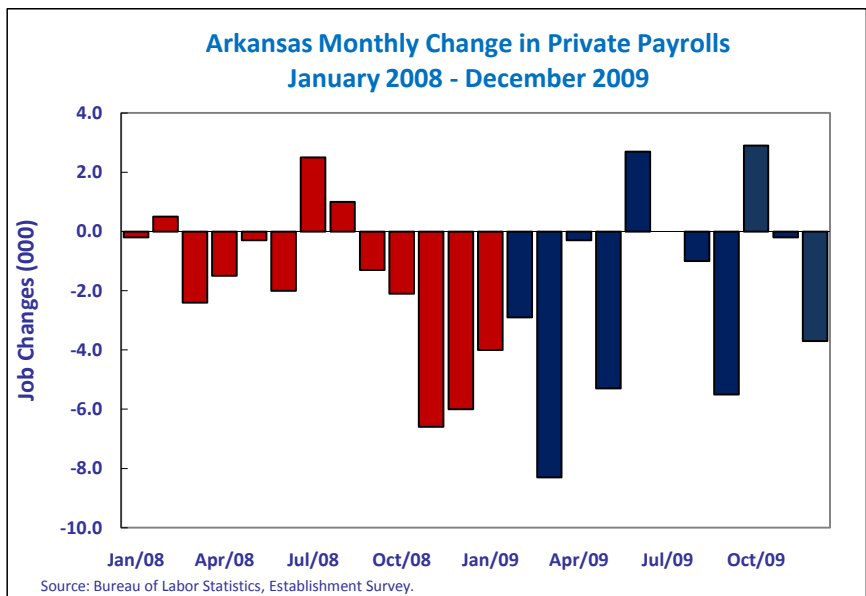
- Across the country, job losses have slowed dramatically since President Obama took office, nearly coming to a halt. Congress and the Administration worked swiftly to pass the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which has boosted employment by an estimated 2 million jobs since it was enacted.
- The President's Council of Economic Advisers estimates that investments made through the Recovery Act have boosted employment in Arkansas by 17,000 jobs through the 4th quarter of 2009.
- In Arkansas, employees in information services, construction, and transportation and utilities faced the largest job losses (as a percent of employment within an industry) over the recession.
- While job losses nationwide have dissipated, the weakness in the labor market has been compounded by lackluster job creation in the private sector during the previous administration's eight-year tenure.
- As the economy recovers from the Great Recession, service-providing industries are projected to add the most jobs between 2008 and 2018, with the largest gains in professional and business services, education, health care and social assistance, and State and local government. Within the goods-producing sector of the economy, only the construction industry is projected to add jobs above its 2008 level.

EMPLOYMENT

- The unemployment rate in Arkansas was 7.7 percent in December 2009, up 2.8 percentage points from December 2007, surpassing its most recent peak of 7.6 percent reached in October 2009.
- 105,000 Arkansas residents were counted among the unemployed in Arkansas during December 2009.

EARNINGS

- Between the start of the recession in the 4th quarter of 2007 and the 1st quarter of 2009, inflation-adjusted total personal income in the United States declined 2.5 percent, before leveling off. Most recently, in the 3rd quarter of 2009, total personal income remained 2.4 percent below the 4th quarter 2007 peak.
- Real per capita personal income (in 2005 \$) in Arkansas was \$29,171.70 in the 3rd quarter of 2009, down from \$29,952.30 in the 3rd quarter of 2007.



HOUSING

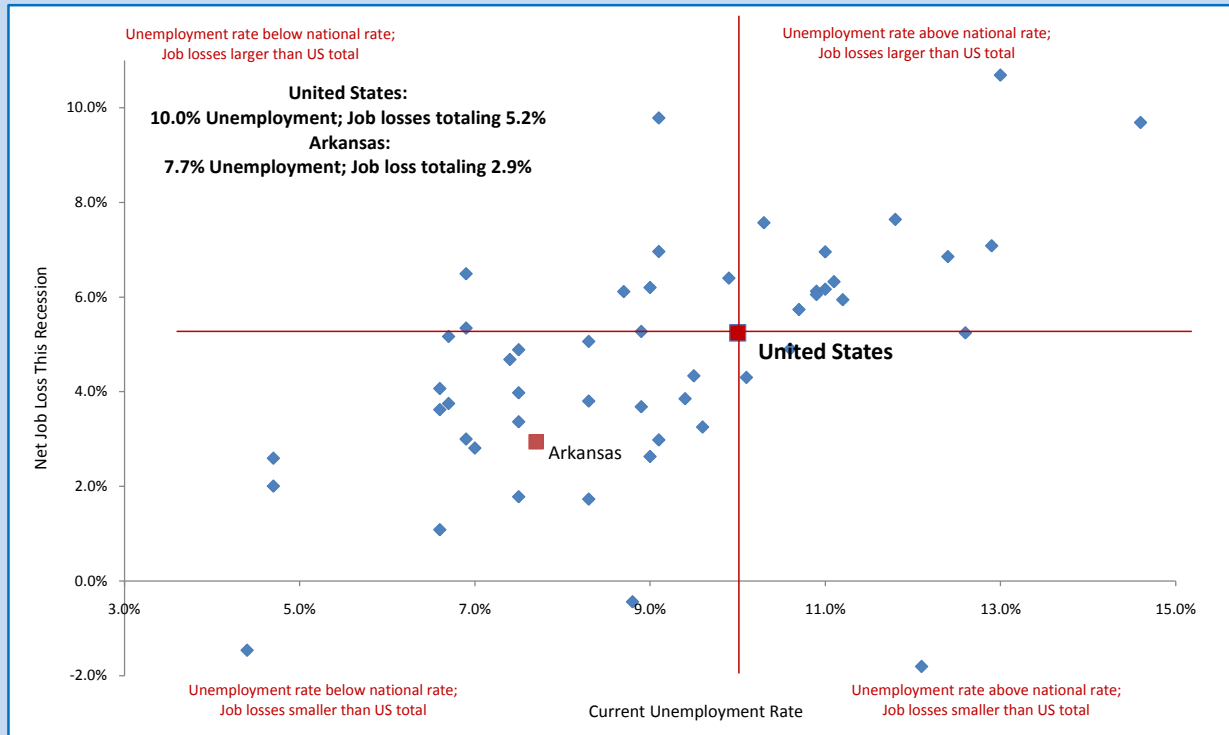
- Actions taken by Congress and the Administration have stabilized plummeting home prices, which fell nearly 11 percent across the country between March 2007 and December 2008. In the West South Central census division, which includes Arkansas, home prices increased 0.3 percent between October and November 2009.
- The median price of single-family homes in Arkansas was \$156,000 in 2008, compared to \$250,000 nationwide.
- As of the 3rd quarter of 2009, 1.9 percent of all mortgages, including 6.67 percent of subprime mortgages, were in foreclosure in Arkansas.
- Housing starts in Arkansas totaled 5,990 units (seasonally adjusted annual rate) in November 2009, a decrease of 17.0 percent from October.
- Within the South census region, which includes Arkansas, sales of new single-family homes totaled 179,000 units in November 2009, a decrease of 21.1 percent from October. Sales of existing single-family homes decreased 16.1 percent to 1,820,000 units (at seasonally adjusted annual rates) from November to December.

How Does Arkansas Compare To Other States?

Workers across the country have been hard hit by the Great Recession. This chart allows you to compare Arkansas to other states using two metrics.

The current unemployment rate (measured along the horizontal axis) serves as a gauge of current labor market conditions faced by residents, while the proportion of jobs lost within Arkansas over the course of the recession (shown along the vertical axis) measures the toll the recession has taken on the job supply in Arkansas.

States falling in the upper right quadrant have lost a disproportionate share of jobs, relative to the total United States, and have unemployment rates higher than the national unemployment rate. States falling in the lower left quadrant have unemployment rates lower than the national average and smaller job losses over the recession.



STATE QUICK FACTS

		Arkansas	United States
Unemployment Rates	December 2007	4.9%	5.0%
	December 2008	5.7%	7.4%
	December 2009	7.7%	10.0%
Percent of Population Who Are Veterans	2008	11.3%	9.8%
Veterans' Unemployment Rate	December 2009		8.2%
Median Household Income	2000	\$ 37,734	\$ 52,532
	2008	\$ 40,974	\$ 51,233
Poverty Rate	2000	15.6%	11.6%
	2008	14.5%	12.9%
No Health Insurance	2000	13.7%	13.9%
	2008	17.0%	15.3%

Prepared by the Majority Staff of the Joint Economic Committee