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WISCONSIN MARCH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DECLINES TO 6.8 PERCENT

Preliminary BLS estimates: More employed, fewer jobless compared to year ago

MADISON – The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today released the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) preliminary data for March, showing Wisconsin's unemployment rate declined to 6.8 percent (seasonally adjusted) from February. Compared to a year ago, more people are working.

"Wisconsin's March preliminary unemployment rate dropped to 6.8 percent, after holding at 6.9 percent for two months," Secretary Reggie Newson said. "A year ago, the rate was 7.6 percent. With unemployment rates not this low since 2008, Wisconsin's economic picture continues to improve."

"In addition, the same BLS survey data show more people are working today than a year ago," Secretary Newson continued. "Approximately 18,500 more Wisconsin residents are employed compared to March 2011."

Place of Residence Data

Based on unemployment insurance claims and a monthly survey of 1,400 households, BLS said Wisconsin's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for March was 6.8 percent, down slightly from January and February, and down from 7.6 percent in March 2011.

The unemployment rates encompass Wisconsin residents who are available for work and actively seeking jobs and are generated by BLS from Wisconsin household surveys and other input.

The U.S. seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 8.2 percent, down slightly from 8.3 percent in February and 8.9 percent in March 2011. Wisconsin unemployment rates remain below the national rates and, through February, below rates of other major manufacturing Midwest states including Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio.

The BLS data also estimated that more people are working and fewer are unemployed, when comparing data either month to month or year to year. The over-the-year comparison shows an estimated 18,500 more people employed, and a 24,700 decrease in those unemployed.

The corresponding over-the-month estimates show 7,000 more people employed, and slightly fewer unemployed.

"Wisconsin had 83,000 entrants to its labor force in March, including 63,300 re-entrants, signaling greater optimism by job seekers," Secretary Newson said. "We encourage individuals to take advantage of the opportunities available on <https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/>, our online employment site, as the hiring season begins in earnest."

(more)

Place of Work Data

Based on a monthly survey of employers, preliminary seasonally adjusted data show private-sector job numbers declined by 4,300 over the month and 6,100 over the year, but grew by a net 15,600 since December 2011 and 5,900 since December 2010.

Total nonfarm employment decreased by 4,500 from February to March and 23,900 compared to March 2011, but grew by a net 10,800 since December 2011. A total nonfarm decline of 10,200 since December 2010 is entirely due to a drop in government jobs over this time frame.

The net growth in job numbers since December 2011 include BLS' upward revisions to preliminary February nonfarm and private sector totals, as shown in the following table:

2012 Revision History: Over-the-Month Changes (seasonally adjusted)						
Month	Total Nonfarm			Private		
	Preliminary	Revised	Difference	Preliminary	Revised	Difference
January 2012	12,500	5,200	(7,300)	15,700	13,800	(1,900)
February 2012	8,300	10,100	1,800	4,000	6,100	2,100

The upward revisions include 1,800 more in nonfarm jobs for a January-to-February gain of 10,100; and 2,100 more in private sector jobs for a January-to-February gain of 6,100.

The preliminary March totals will undergo further revisions in the next several weeks.

WISCONSIN LABOR FORCE SUMMARY

Seasonally Adjusted

PLACE OF RESIDENCE DATA	PRELIM.	FINAL	YEAR AGO	NET CHANGE OVER	
	Mar-12	Feb-12	Mar-11	1-Month	1-Year
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	3,064,200	3,059,400	3,070,300	4,800	-6,100
EMPLOYMENT (1)	2,856,600	2,849,600	2,838,100	7,000	18,500
UNEMPLOYMENT	207,500	209,900	232,200	-2,400	-24,700
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	6.8%	6.9%	7.6%	-0.1%	-0.8%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	8.2%	8.3%	8.9%	-0.1%	-0.7%

PLACE OF WORK DATA

<i>NONFARM WAGE & SALARY</i>	2,730,600	2,735,100	2,754,500	-4,500	-23,900
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,329,500	2,333,800	2,335,600	-4,300	-6,100
<i>GOODS PRODUCING</i>	533,700	536,200	532,000	-2,500	1,700
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	3,000	3,000	3,000	0	0
CONSTRUCTION	87,900	92,400	93,700	-4,500	-5,800
MANUFACTURING	448,800	446,800	441,300	2,000	7,500
Durable Goods	277,200	274,700	267,400	2,500	9,800
Nondurable Goods	171,600	172,100	173,900	-500	-2,300
<i>SERVICE PROVIDING</i>	2,196,900	2,198,900	2,222,500	-2,000	-25,600
<i>PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING</i>	1,795,800	1,797,600	1,803,600	-1,800	-7,800
TRADE	406,900	407,600	408,300	-700	-1,400
Wholesale Trade	116,100	115,300	113,800	800	2,300
Retail Trade	290,800	292,300	294,500	-1,500	-3,700
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	98,700	101,100	101,200	-2,400	-2,500
Utilities					
INFORMATION	46,300	46,000	46,900	300	-600
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	155,500	156,400	159,600	-900	-4,100
Finance and Insurance					
Real Estate, Rental, & Lease	23,900	23,900	24,400	0	-500
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	281,700	283,800	284,300	-2,100	-2,600
Prof., Scien., & Tech. Services	92,000	92,300	95,500	-300	-3,500
Mgmt. Of Companies and Enterprises					
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Services	137,900	140,100	139,500	-2,200	-1,600
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	415,600	415,900	408,500	-300	7,100
Educational Services	50,200	50,200	49,800	0	400
Health Care & Social Assistance	365,400	365,700	358,700	-300	6,700
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	250,000	246,500	251,700	3,500	-1,700
Arts, Entertain., & Recreation	34,000	33,600	34,500	400	-500
Accommodation & Food Services	216,000	212,900	217,200	3,100	-1,200
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	135,100	134,300	137,100	800	-2,000
GOVERNMENT	401,100	401,300	418,900	-200	-17,800
Federal Government	28,700	28,500	29,500	200	-800
State Government	93,500	92,200	99,200	1,300	-5,700
Local Government	278,900	280,600	290,200	-1,700	-11,300

*Differences in total may occur as a result of rounding.

(1) Includes L-M Disputes

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics and Current Employment Statistics programs, Labor Market Information Section.

Cautionary note to users: Revised methodological procedures mandated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) force individual state estimates of employment into closer alignment with the national estimate. This change results in larger month-to-month employment change for the states and the information reported by DWD.

WISCONSIN LABOR FORCE SUMMARY

Not Seasonally Adjusted

PLACE OF RESIDENCE DATA	PRELIM.	FINAL	YEAR AGO	NET CHANGE OVER	
	Mar-12	Feb-12	Mar-11	1-Month	1-Year
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	3,049,100	3,050,800	3,052,800	-1,700	-3,700
EMPLOYMENT (1)	2,819,500	2,809,800	2,797,900	9,700	21,600
UNEMPLOYMENT	229,600	241,000	254,900	-11,400	-25,300
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.5%	7.9%	8.3%	-0.4%	-0.8%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	8.4%	8.7%	9.2%	-0.3%	-0.8%

PLACE OF WORK DATA

NONFARM WAGE & SALARY	2,675,000	2,668,400	2,705,000	6,600	-30,000
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,264,800	2,260,300	2,276,900	4,500	-12,100
GOODS PRODUCING	514,400	513,900	517,300	500	-2,900
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	2,500	2,400	2,600	100	-100
CONSTRUCTION	70,800	72,500	79,500	-1,700	-8,700
MANUFACTURING	441,100	439,000	435,200	2,100	5,900
Durable Goods	272,700	270,400	264,500	2,300	8,200
Nondurable Goods	168,400	168,600	170,700	-200	-2,300
SERVICE PROVIDING	2,160,600	2,154,500	2,187,700	6,100	-27,100
PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING	1,750,400	1,746,400	1,759,600	4,000	-9,200
TRADE	397,400	396,800	398,100	600	-700
Wholesale Trade	114,600	113,700	112,100	900	2,500
Retail Trade	282,800	283,100	286,000	-300	-3,200
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	97,000	98,600	99,700	-1,600	-2,700
Utilities	10,900	10,800	10,800	100	100
INFORMATION	46,000	45,800	46,400	200	-400
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	154,600	154,600	158,300	0	-3,700
Finance and Insurance	131,700	131,600	134,700	100	-3,000
Real Estate, Rental, & Lease	22,900	23,000	23,600	-100	-700
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	273,000	274,300	277,600	-1,300	-4,600
Prof., Scien., & Tech. Services	92,200	92,600	96,700	-400	-4,500
Mgmt. Of Companies and Enterprises	51,000	50,800	49,800	200	1,200
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Services	129,800	130,900	131,100	-1,100	-1,300
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	416,000	416,100	408,400	-100	7,600
Educational Services	52,000	51,900	51,000	100	1,000
Health Care & Social Assistance	364,000	364,200	357,400	-200	6,600
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	232,000	226,600	235,000	5,400	-3,000
Arts, Entertain., & Recreation	28,900	28,200	28,100	700	800
Accommodation & Food Services	203,100	198,400	206,900	4,700	-3,800
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	134,400	133,600	136,100	800	-1,700
GOVERNMENT	410,200	408,100	428,100	2,100	-17,900
Federal Government	28,500	28,300	29,300	200	-800
State Government	96,000	95,100	102,700	900	-6,700
Local Government	285,700	284,700	296,100	1,000	-10,400
PERSONS INVOLVED IN LABOR/MGT. DISP	0	0	0	0	0

*Differences in total may occur as a result of rounding.

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Preliminary to Final Estimate Revisions February 2012

	Not-Seasonally Adjusted			Seasonally Adjusted		
	Prelim	Final	Change	Prelim	Final	Change
PLACE OF RESIDENCE DATA						
CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE	3,050,500	3,050,800	300	3,059,300	3,059,400	100
EMPLOYMENT (1)	2,809,700	2,809,800	100	2,849,600	2,849,600	0
UNEMPLOYMENT	240,800	241,000	200	209,800	209,900	100
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	7.9%	7.9%	0.0%	6.9%	6.9%	0.0%
U.S. Unemployment Rate	8.7%	8.7%	0.0%	8.3%	8.3%	0.0%

PLACE OF WORK DATA

<i>NONFARM WAGE & SALARY</i>	2,666,600	2,668,400	1,800	2,733,300	2,735,100	1,800
TOTAL PRIVATE	2,258,200	2,260,300	2,100	2,331,700	2,333,800	2,100
<i>GOODS PRODUCING</i>	513,600	513,900	300	535,900	536,200	300
NATURAL RESOURCES & MINING	2,400	2,400	0	3,000	3,000	0
CONSTRUCTION	72,400	72,500	100	92,300	92,400	100
MANUFACTURING	438,800	439,000	200	446,600	446,800	200
Durable Goods	270,300	270,400	100	274,600	274,700	100
Nondurable Goods	168,500	168,600	100	172,000	172,100	100
<i>SERVICE PROVIDING</i>	2,153,000	2,154,500	1,500	2,197,400	2,198,900	1,500
<i>PRIVATE SERVICE PROVIDING</i>	1,744,600	1,746,400	1,800	1,795,800	1,797,600	1,800
TRADE	396,800	396,800	0	407,600	407,600	0
Wholesale Trade	113,800	113,700	-100	115,400	115,300	-100
Retail Trade	283,000	283,100	100	292,200	292,300	100
TRANS., WAREHOUSING, & UTILITIES	98,500	98,600	100	101,000	101,100	100
Utilities	10,800	10,800	0			
INFORMATION	45,700	45,800	100	45,900	46,000	100
FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES	154,700	154,600	-100	156,500	156,400	-100
Finance and Insurance	131,700	131,600	-100			
Real Estate, Rental, & Lease	23,000	23,000	0	23,900	23,900	0
PROFESSIONAL & BUSINESS SERVICES	273,900	274,300	400	283,400	283,800	400
Prof., Scien., & Tech. Services	92,200	92,600	400	91,900	92,300	400
Mgmt. Of Companies and Enterprises	50,800	50,800	0			
Admin. Support & Waste Mgmt. Services	130,900	130,900	0	140,100	140,100	0
EDUCATIONAL & HEALTH SERVICES	415,400	416,100	700	415,200	415,900	700
Educational Services	51,900	51,900	0	50,200	50,200	0
Health Care & Social Assistance	363,500	364,200	700	365,000	365,700	700
LEISURE & HOSPITALITY	226,000	226,600	600	245,900	246,500	600
Arts, Entertain., & Recreation	28,300	28,200	-100	33,700	33,600	-100
Accommodation & Food Services	197,700	198,400	700	212,200	212,900	700
OTHER SERVICES, except Public Admin.	133,600	133,600	0	134,300	134,300	0
GOVERNMENT	408,400	408,100	-300	401,600	401,300	-300
Federal Government	28,300	28,300	0	28,500	28,500	0
State Government	95,100	95,100	0	92,200	92,200	0
Local Government	285,000	284,700	-300	280,900	280,600	-300

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