



# EPI FACT SHEET

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## Double-Digit Unemployment

*After rising for two-and-a-half years, the U.S. unemployment rate rose to 10.2% in October, marking the first time in 26 years that it has been above 10%. The following data offer more historical context and demographic detail on the job market.*

*For more information about current and historical unemployment, read the monthly [Jobs Picture](#) and visit EPI's [Economy Track](#).*

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- Current unemployment rate (October 2009): **10.2%**
- Current *underemployment* rate, including people who have been unable to find full-time work and are working either part time or not at all: **17.5%**
- Number of consecutive months of job loss during this recession: **22**
- Last time the United States saw 10.2% unemployment: **April 1983**
- Number of months double-digit unemployment lasted during the 1980s recession: **10**
- Peak rate of unemployment during the recession in 2001: **5.5%**
- Number of months that passed after the 2001 recession had officially ended before unemployment peaked, at 6.3%: **19**

### CURRENT RECESSION

- Ratio of job seekers to job openings when the current recession began: **1.7 to 1**
- Ratio of job seekers to job openings today: **6.3 to 1**
- Total number of jobs lost during the current recession: **8.1 million**
- Number of people who have been unemployed for more than six months: **5.6 million**
- Jobs needed to return to pre-recession employment levels when population growth is factored in: **10.9 million**

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## DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

- Current unemployment rate for black workers: **15.7%**
- Current unemployment rate for Hispanic workers: **13.1%**
- Current unemployment rate for white workers: **9.5%**
- Current unemployment rate for men: **11.4%**
- Current unemployment rate for women: **8.8%**
- State with the highest unemployment: **Michigan, 15.3%**
- State with the lowest unemployment: **North Dakota, 4.2%**
- State showing the largest portion of job loss during this recession: **Arizona, 10%**
- Unemployment rate among black workers in Michigan: **23.9%**
- Unemployment rate among white workers in Michigan: **13.7%**
- Unemployment rate for college-educated workers: **4.7%**
- Unemployment rate for workers who did not complete high school: **15.5%**

## RELATED ECONOMIC DATA

- Number of Americans with no health insurance in 2008: **46.3 million**
- Number of Americans projected to have no health insurance by 2010: **more than 50 million**
- Percent of U.S. population living in poverty in 2008: **13.2%**
- Percent of U.S. children living in poverty in 2008: **19%**
- Percent of African American children living in poverty in 2008: **34.7%**
- Portion of African American children expected to be living in poverty in the coming years, as a result of higher unemployment: **more than half**