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Labor Market Digest, August 2009

Maine Department of Labor

Maine Center for Workforce Research and Information

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MAINE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Center for Workforce
Research and Information

INSIDE . . .

Lincoln County recorded the lowest unemployment rate at 6.1 percent.....page 3

Adjusted statewide unemployment rate increased from 8.5% to 8.6%.....page 4

Nonfarm employment declined by 21,900 over the year.....page 6

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the

MAINE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
Center for Workforce
Research and Information

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The Maine Department of Labor provides equal opportunity employment and programs. Auxiliary aids and services are provided upon request to individuals with disabilities.

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LABOR MARKET DIGEST

August Data

October 2009

The Economic Benefits of Unemployment Insurance

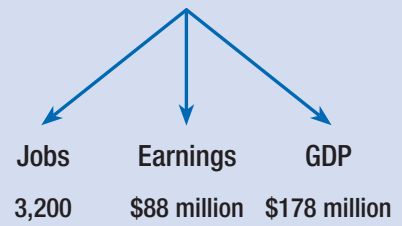
Unemployment insurance serves as an important economic stabilizer to workers, their families, and communities when jobs are lost. The program, which provides temporary, partial wage replacement, is funded through a quarterly tax paid by employers. Maine's unemployment compensation law establishes maximum payment amounts workers may receive depending on their earnings. The current maximum is \$350 per week. The regular unemployment compensation program is limited to 26 weeks of benefits.

During economic downturns Congress may authorize additional weeks of benefits. With the current recession the longest since the 1930s, extended benefit programs have increased the maximum to 79 weeks.

During the year from March, 2008 to March, 2009, displaced workers received \$235 million in unemployment compensation, an amount approximately equal to the third largest private sector payroll in Maine.

Unemployment compensation beneficiaries rely on these payments to cover housing, food, utilities, transportation, and other critical needs. These expenditures tend to immediately circulate through the economy creating an economic ripple effect. Economic models suggest that \$235 million in benefits paid supports 3,200 jobs, \$88 million in earnings, contributing \$178 million to Maine's gross domestic product.

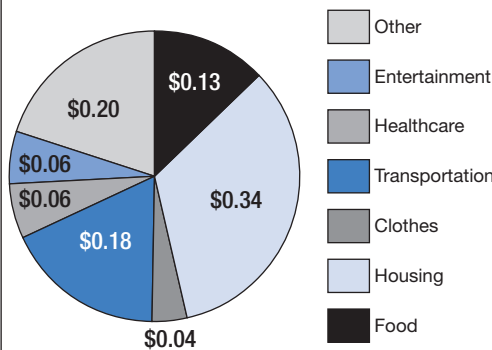
\$235 Million Dollars in Unemployment Insurance Benefits Supports



Source: RIMS

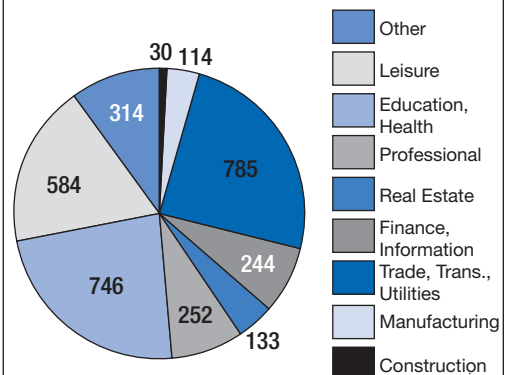
A national consumer expenditure survey indicates recipients spent their benefits the same way employed workers spent their paychecks, on food, housing, transportation, and healthcare.

How a typical dollar is spent in the Maine economy



As this spending circulates through Maine, it supports 3,200 jobs across a wide range of industries.

Jobs Supported by UI Payments Total Jobs = 3,193

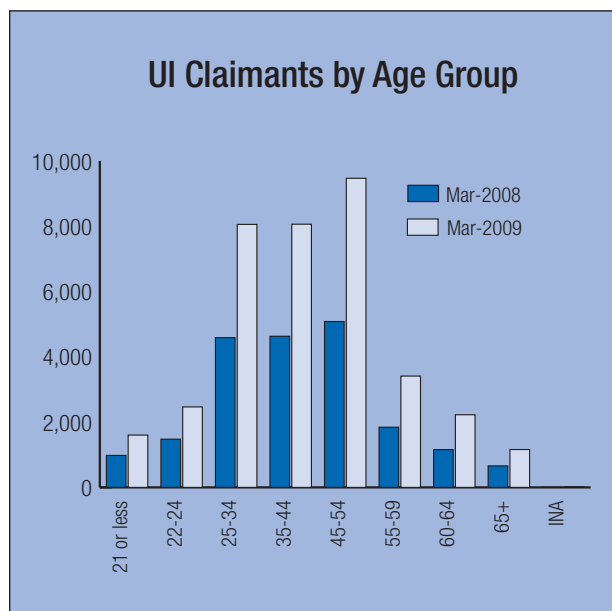
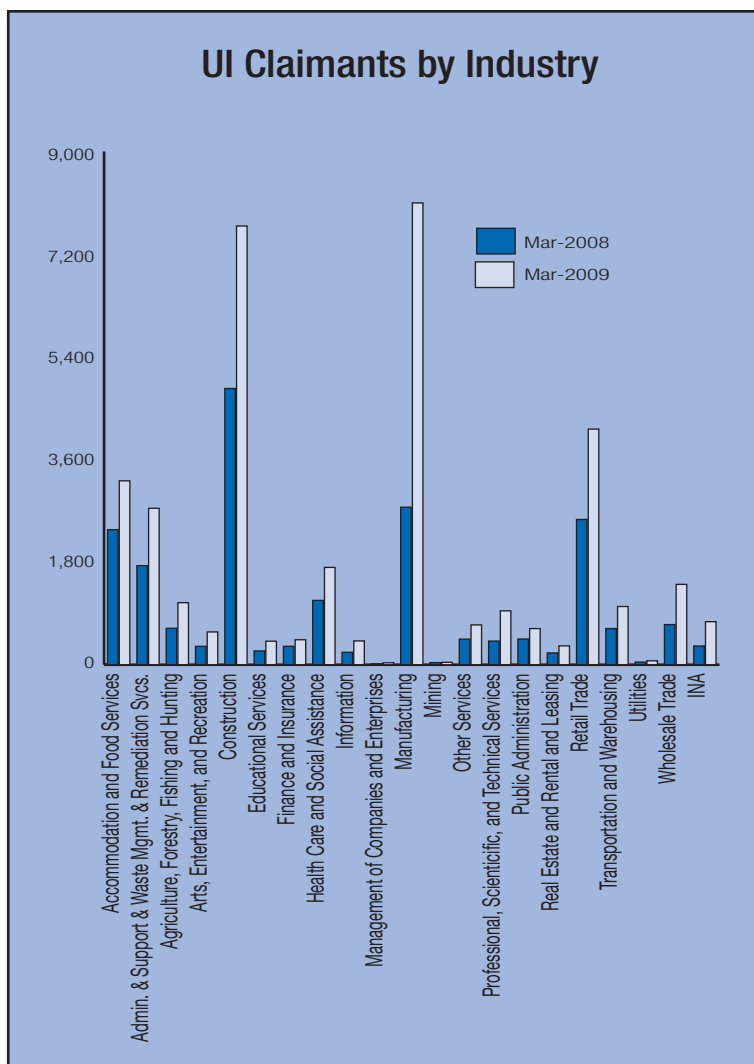


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Between March of 2008 and March of 2009, the number of claimants increased 79 percent to 36,462, reflecting deteriorating economic conditions. Claims were up in all industry sectors, most significantly in construction, manufacturing, and retail trade. Workers in their prime earnings years were most adversely impacted.



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