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New York at a Glance**Unemployment Rate In New York City**

The unemployment rate is determined by the number of individuals *actively* seeking work. Here are the seasonally adjusted unemployment rates for 2007—2008:

Month 2007— 2008	NYC	US
July	5.7%	4.6%
August	5.7%	4.6%
September	5.1%	4.7%
October	5.3%	4.7%
November	5.1%	4.7%
December	5.1%	5.0%
January (2008)	5.7%	4.9%
February (2008)	4.1%	4.8%
March (2008)	4.5%	5.1%
April (2008)	4.7%	5.0%
May (2008)	5.2%	5.5%
June (2008)	5.4%	5.5%
July (2008)	5.0%	5.7%

Legislative Updates

Cutting the State Budget. Gov. David Paterson and the state legislature reached agreement on a deal to cut \$400 million to \$500 million from this year's budget and \$1 billion over two years. The plan includes reductions in member items (also known as earmarks or pork barrel), aid to hospitals and spending for the City University of New York. It does not call for any new taxes. Paterson, who has painted a grim picture of the state's fiscal outlook, called the legislature back into session to reduce spending. [More.](#)

In the News

City, so far, Bucks Trend in Poverty. The median household income is up and the percentage of New Yorkers living in poverty is down, defying all trends in nationwide poverty statistics. Naysayers warn that these statistics don't reflect the economic downturn, but optimists wonder if the boon for the impoverished may be a reflection of the good work done at Bloomberg's Center of Economic Opportunity. [More.](#)

Never Underestimate the Power of a Jobs Crisis. Gov. Paterson has taken a "glass half empty" approach to economic forecasting. If he proceeds wisely, the economic crisis may help him carve out more funding for workforce and economic development. [More.](#)

Foreclosures Leave Many New Yorkers without a Penny in the Bank. The number of New Yorkers who declared bankruptcy was up 31% over the first seven months of 2008. [More.](#)

Jobless Fund Running Dry. With unemployment on the rise, New York State's jobless benefits fund is likely to run out of money again in early 2009, if not sooner, according to state officials and labor market analysts. [More.](#)

Graduation Rates are Up in the City, but Still Lag. After six years of mayoral control of the school, the graduation rates have turned a corner. Now, for the first time in years, NYC is graduating over half of the kids that it serves each year on time – 52.2% to be exact. Victory is sweet, for everyone except of course the 47.8% of young adults that still aren't getting the education they deserve. [More.](#)

GED's are on the Up and Up. The GED Testing Service announced recently that the number of adults who took the GED Tests in 2007 rose to nearly 729,000 worldwide, the biggest increase in nearly a decade. Almost a half million adults passed the test battery in 2007, according to the 2007 GED Testing Program Statistical Report, for an increase of almost 15,000 from 2006. [More.](#)

In the News

City to Open Vocational Schools. New York City could open as many as four vocational career schools by September 2009. The schools would serve as models for "a shift of educational resources that would challenge the dominant 'college for all' philosophy, which considers high school a stop on the road to a four-year bachelor's degree." [More.](#)

In the Neighborhood

Brooklyn Studies. The Independence Community Foundation recently awarded Brooklyn College with a \$300,000 grant to expand and support their "Center for the Study of Brooklyn." The funding will enable the center, launched in 2005, to deepen its engagement at a critical time in the borough's history.

Gang violence on the Rise in Williamsburg. It seems the brunt of the violence is towards "white hipster boys on bikes." [More.](#)

On-line Resources

GED Prep Info. The site offers test preparation information and sample practice questions. [More.](#)

Workforce USA. The website is an aggregator of information for the workforce development field and includes links to relevant research reports, tools, case studies, news articles, events, and funding opportunities. [More.](#)

Newly Released Studies and Reports

2008 Unheard Third Survey of Low-Income New Yorkers. The Community Service Society (CSS). August 2008. The report found, among other things, that across all income bands and political affiliations, jobs and the economy will most influence New Yorkers' voting decisions when they go to the polls this November. [More.](#)

New York's Rising Unemployment – The Other Crisis in Albany. Fiscal Policy Institute. August 2008. As of July 2008, 500,000 workers were unemployed across the state. That is 56,000 more workers than the same period last year, and unemployment claims are up to 25 percent higher, it said. But the state's unemployment system isn't adequately funded, nor are its benefits large enough, to support New Yorkers out of work. [More.](#)

Improving Adolescent Literacy: Effective Classroom and Intervention Practices. Education Department. September 2008. The practice guide provides five specific recommendations to improve literacy among adolescents in the upper elementary, middle, and high school grades. Designed for teachers and other personnel who have direct contact with students, the guide presents strategies that have the strongest research support and are appropriate for use with adolescents. [More.](#)

The Building Blocks of Success: Higher-Level Math for All Students. Achieve, Inc. August 2005. Higher-level math is important for all students, not just those seeking a four-year academic degree or a math-related career, according to the report, which explores the intellectual and practical benefits of taking higher-level mathematics courses during high school and the impact on college access and success, career-readiness, and U.S. competitiveness. [More.](#)

Given Half a Chance: the Schott 50 State Report on Public Education and Black Males Schott Foundation. August 2008. Equity of resources and quality of programs are to blame for half the number of black students graduating, compared to white students. The report suggests monitoring the distribution of education funds in states where less than half of black males graduate or where the graduation-rate gap between black and white males exceeds 15 percentage points. [More.](#)

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