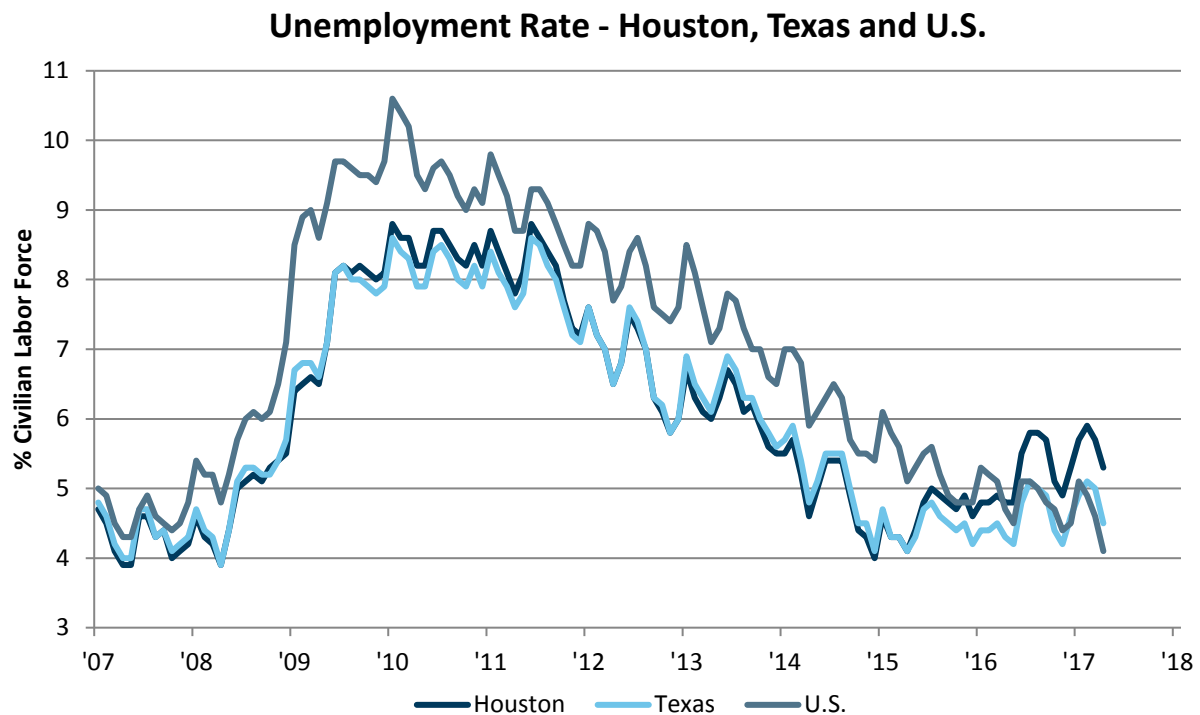


Unemployment Rate

Houston's unemployment rate peaked at 5.9 percent in February '17 but never approached the levels of the Great Recession.



Source: Texas Workforce Commission

- Houston's unemployment rate was 5.3 percent in April '17, down from 5.7 percent in March but up from 4.8 percent in April '16. Texas' unemployment rate was 4.5 percent in April, down from 5.0 percent in March but up from 4.3 percent in April '16. The U.S. rate was 4.1 percent in April, down from 4.9 percent in March and from 4.7 percent in April '16. The rates are not seasonally adjusted.
- Houston's unemployment rate tracked below the U.S. rate for nearly a decade from December '06 to early '16. During much of this period, the region's unemployment rate was below the national rate by at least one percentage point. Since April '16, Houston's unemployment rate has tracked above the national rate.
- Houston's unemployment rate remained relatively strong through the beginning of the energy downturn, not creeping up until May '15, nearly a year after oil prices plummeted. It reached a high of 5.9 percent in February '17 but has since trended down.
- During the energy downturn, Houston's labor force stagnated between 3,240,000 and 3,260,000. As of April '17, the labor force has grown to 3,337,041, potentially reflecting workers returning to the workforce either because they see better prospects for employment or that their finances no longer allow them to stay out of the labor force.