

2011 Kansas Economic Report released by Department of Labor *Report provides overview of the economy, slow recovery*

TOPEKA — The Kansas Department of Labor today released the 2011 Kansas Economic Report. The report may be found online and its charts and tables give insight to what is happening in the Kansas economy.

"The LMIS Division at KDOL recognizes how important accurate and relevant information is to the drivers of our Kansas economy," stated Inayat Noormohmad, Director of Labor Market Information Services. "Our team has worked hard to make sure those who are interested in our Kansas economy have the best data available in order to make the best decisions possible. We are proud to release the 2011 Kansas Economic Report."

Overall, the report notes, the economy in Kansas continued to be slow in 2010 despite the official end of the recession in June 2009. Labor market conditions, including indicators like the unemployment rate and non-farm employment, did not show any real improvement in 2010. The unemployment rate improved slightly from an average of 7.1 percent in 2009 to 7.0 percent in 2010. However, both the number of employed and unemployed Kansans declined, indicating a possible increase in discouraged workers – those who are unemployed and available to work, but have stopped looking for jobs because of the difficulty in finding employment.

"We know we are not immune to the trends and consequences of our suffering national economy," said Karin Brownlee, Kansas Secretary of Labor. "We released the 2011 Kansas Economic Report to give Kansans, and all others who are interested, the meat and potatoes details that make up our Kansas economy. This report contains a great deal of helpful information."

Among other items, the 2011 Economic Report indicates that Kansas continues to have a high labor force participation rate compared to the rest of the nation. Additionally, both short-term and long-term occupational projections show an increase of jobs in the future in the vast majority of occupations and industries. Also, the number of online job openings has increased steadily over recent months, indicating an increase in the demand for Kansas workers.

"A silver lining to the current economic conditions is that the Kansas economy has consistently been healthier than the overall national economy," Brownlee said. "Our current unemployment rate is almost two and a half points lower than the national average. While this still remains too high, it shows the 'infrastructure' of our state's economy is healthy and ready to rebound at any moment."

Other report findings include:

- Inflation returned in 2010 after the year of deflation experienced in 2009. The Midwest Consumer Price Index (CPI) – a measure of the change in price paid by consumers for a representative basket of goods and services – which includes Kansas, increased by 1.9 percent.

- The housing market continues to be weak in Kansas as home prices declined slightly and existing home sales and the number of building permits decreased. Despite the softness of the market, the Kansas housing market has fared better than most of the nation.
- The gross domestic product (GDP) – the sum of all goods and services produced in the state – grew after declining in 2009. GDP growth was also experienced in nine of the 11 major industry sectors, including large increases in natural resources and mining, manufacturing, and trade, transportation and utilities. Exports also increased from 2009 to 2010 by \$1 billion, spurred by the growing demand for food products and chemical products, including ethanol.

The *2011 Kansas Economic Report* is available [online](#).

Watch an interview about this report with Director Noormohmad on [KDOL's YouTube Channel](#).

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