



Data Digest: Alabama

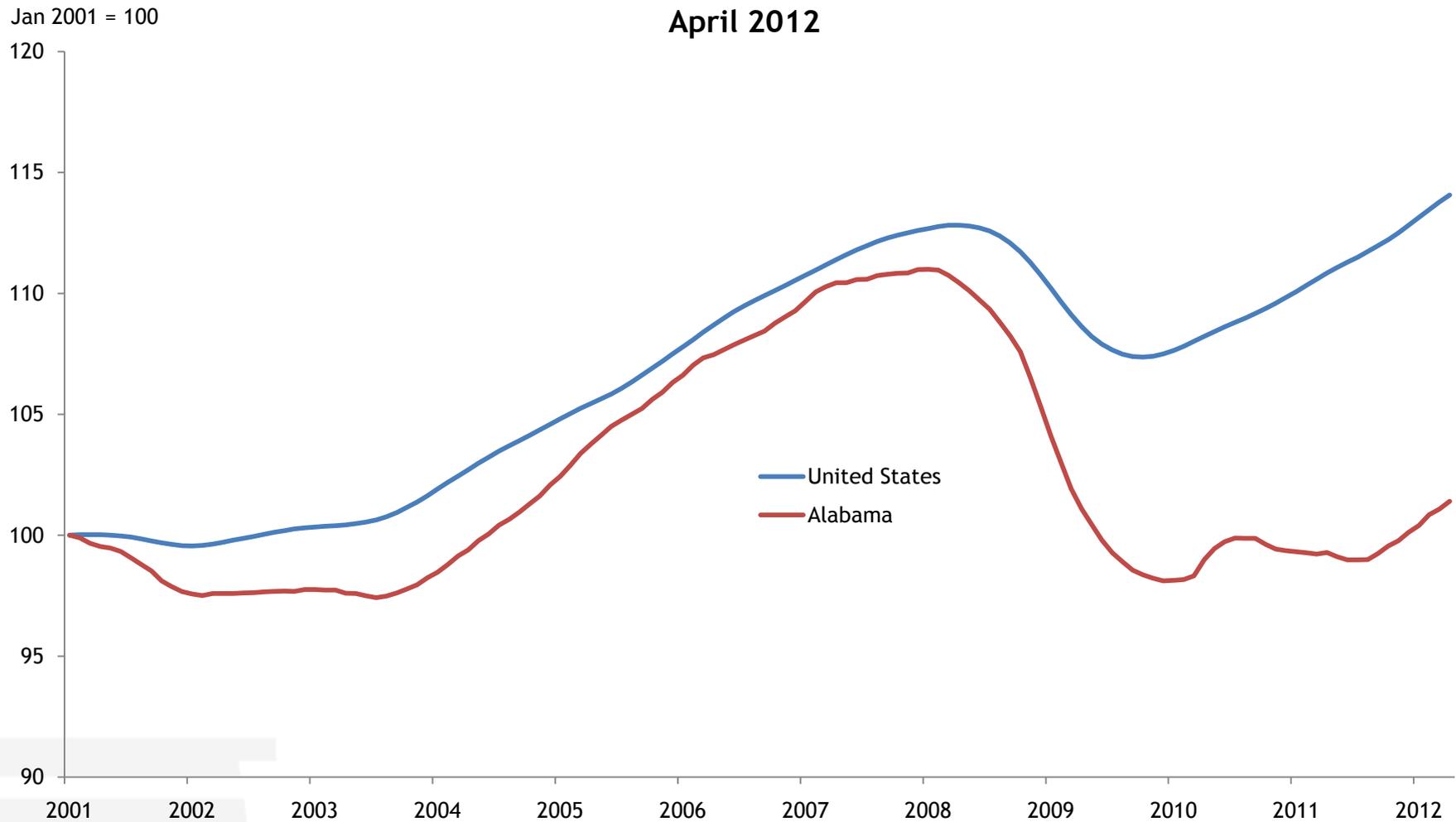
June 2012



Broad indicators of economic activity for the United States and Alabama continued to improve steadily in April. Although Alabama remains below the national level, it has been improving over the past several months and is at its highest level since April 2009.

[About the Coincident Economic Indicator](#)

Coincident Economic Indicator April 2012

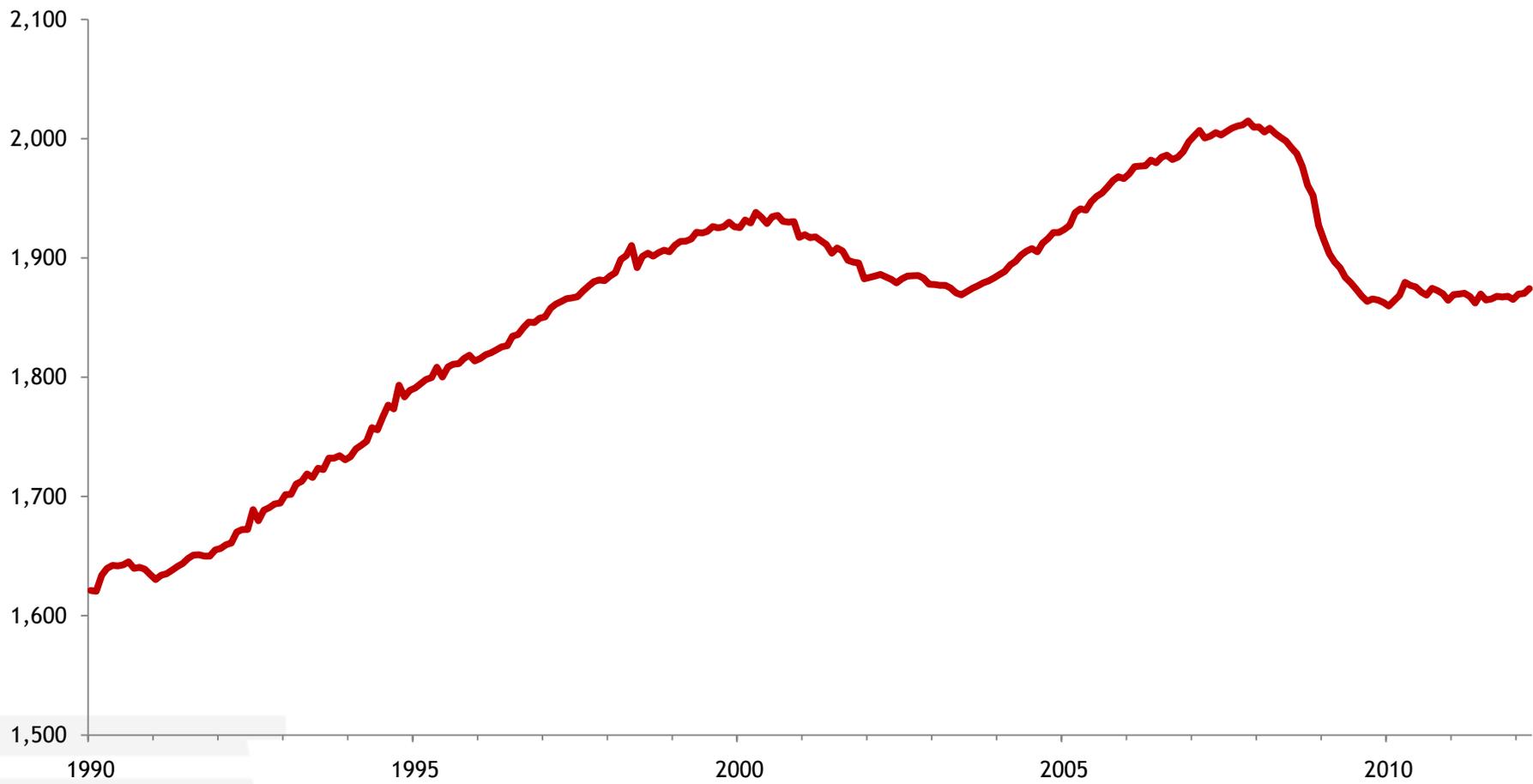


Source: Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia

Total employment in Alabama has stabilized near recession lows and job gains remain modest.

Alabama Payroll Employment April 2012

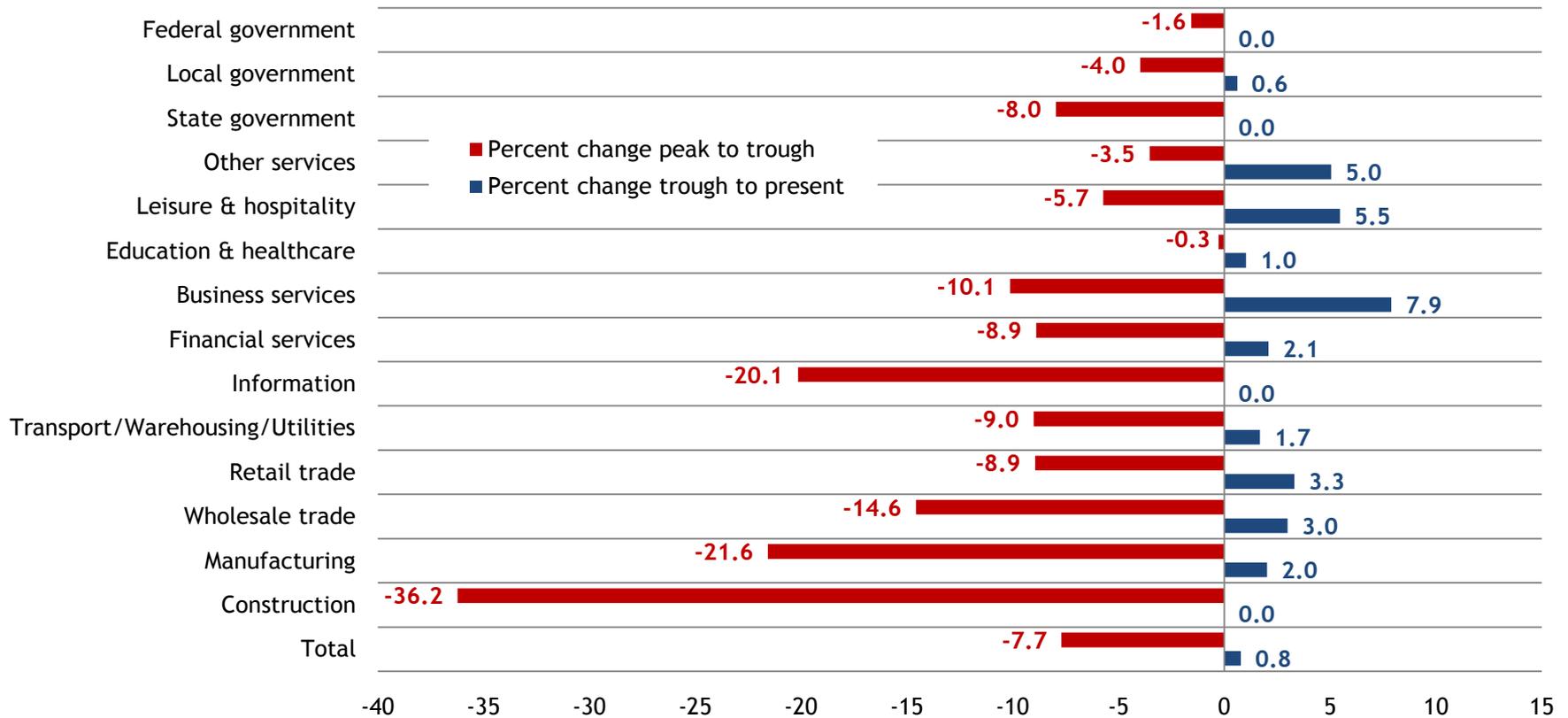
Thousands,
seasonally adjusted



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics

All industries lost jobs during the downturn. The construction industry was the hardest hit, losing more than 36 percent of its jobs. Many sectors have seen job gains since their troughs, with business services experiencing the largest increase. Construction, information, federal government, and state government continue to lose jobs.

Employment Loss and Gain by Industry: Alabama April 2012



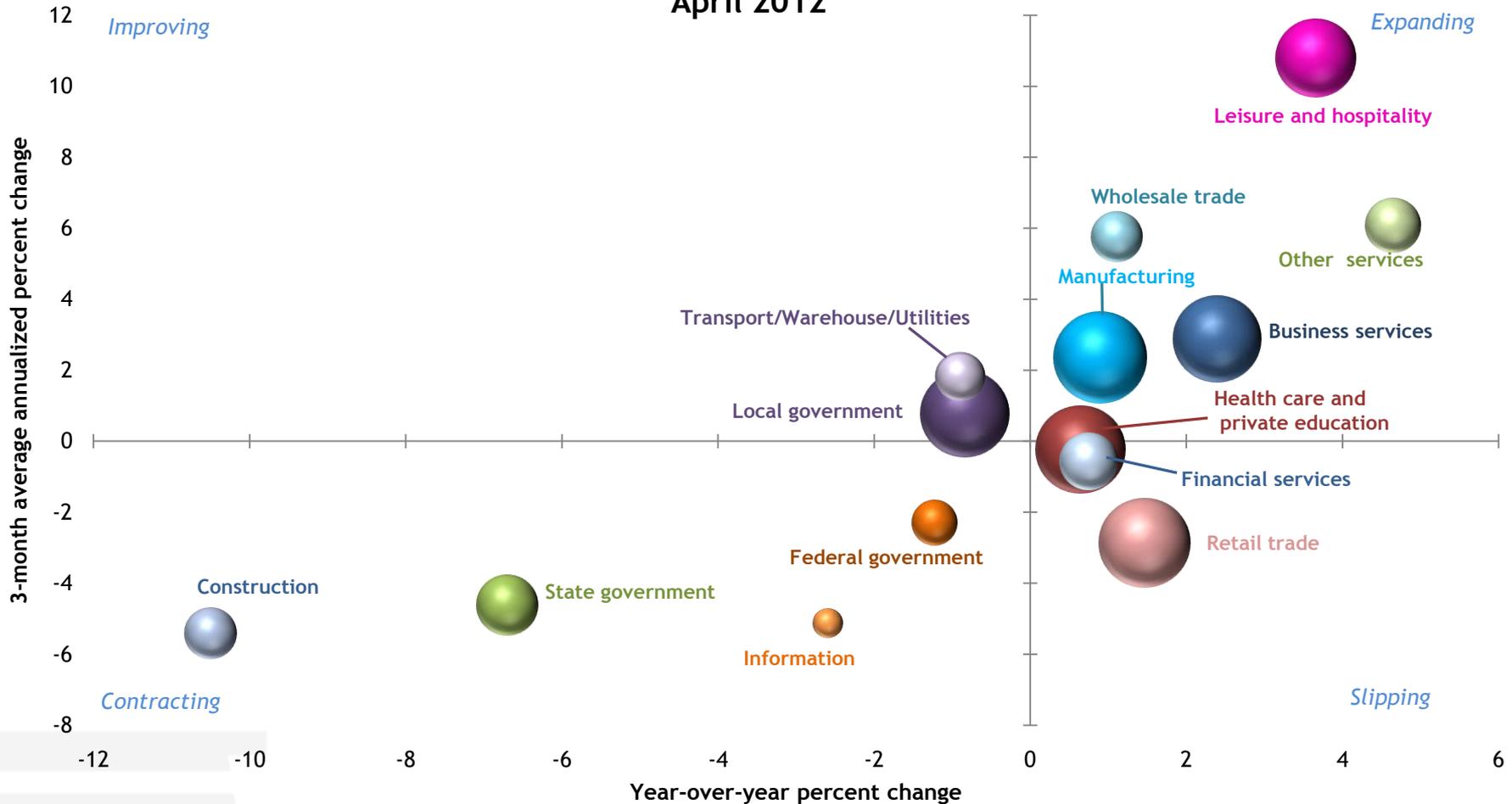
Note: A reading of 0.0 in the “trough to present” measure indicates that employment continues to decline in these industries. Likewise, a reading of 0.0 in the “peak to trough” measure indicates that employment continues to increase in these industries; in this instance “trough to present” is the percent change from January 2007 to present.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Employment momentum in leisure and hospitality, business services, manufacturing, wholesale trade, and other services expanded in April. Retail trade, financial services, and health care and private education slipped, while local government and transportation/warehouse/utilities momentum improved.

[About Employment Momentum](#)

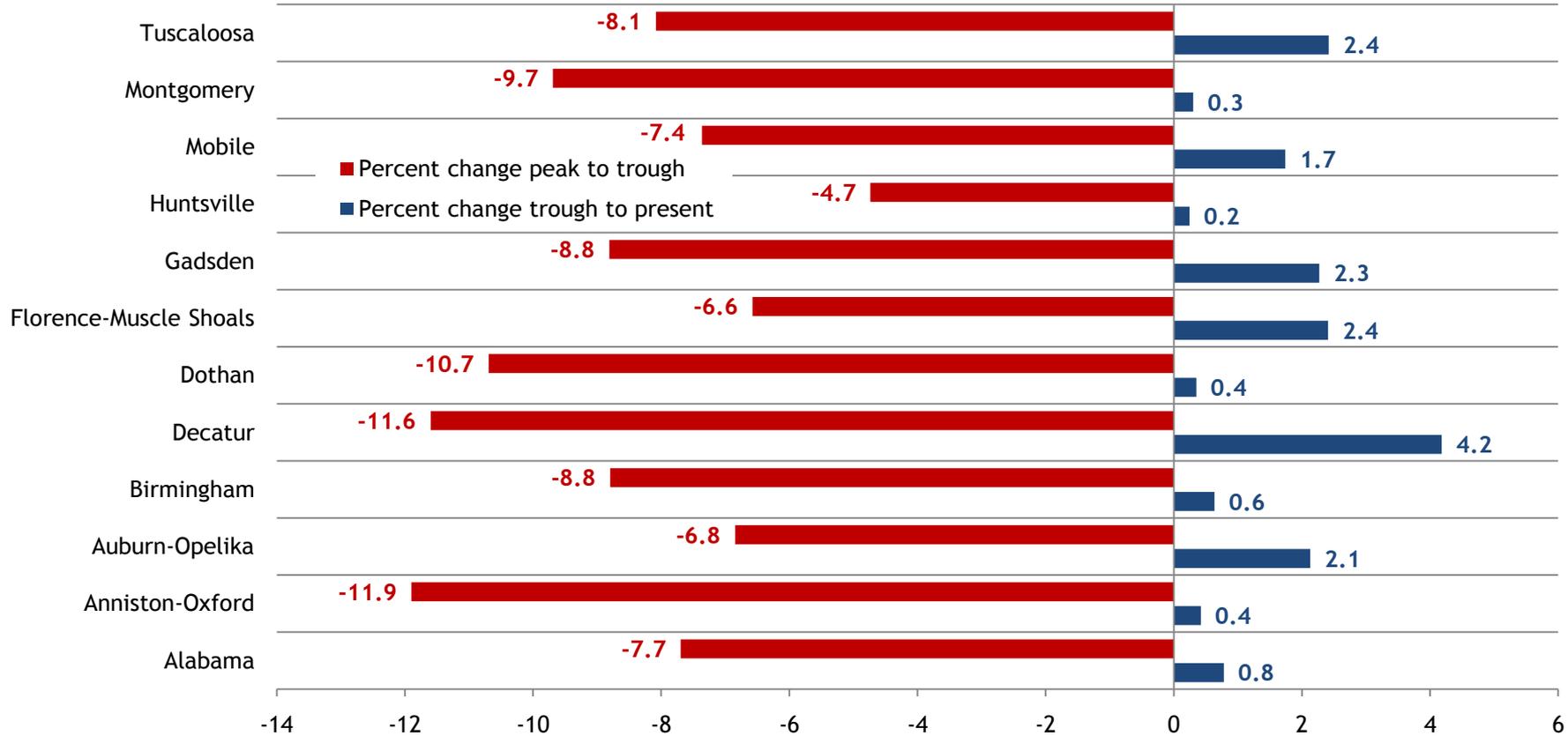
Employment Momentum by Industry: Alabama April 2012



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Job losses occurred throughout the state during the downturn; Dothan, Decatur, and Anniston-Oxford lost more than 10 percent of their jobs. All metro areas have regained jobs since their trough.

Employment Loss and Gain by Metro Area: Alabama April 2012



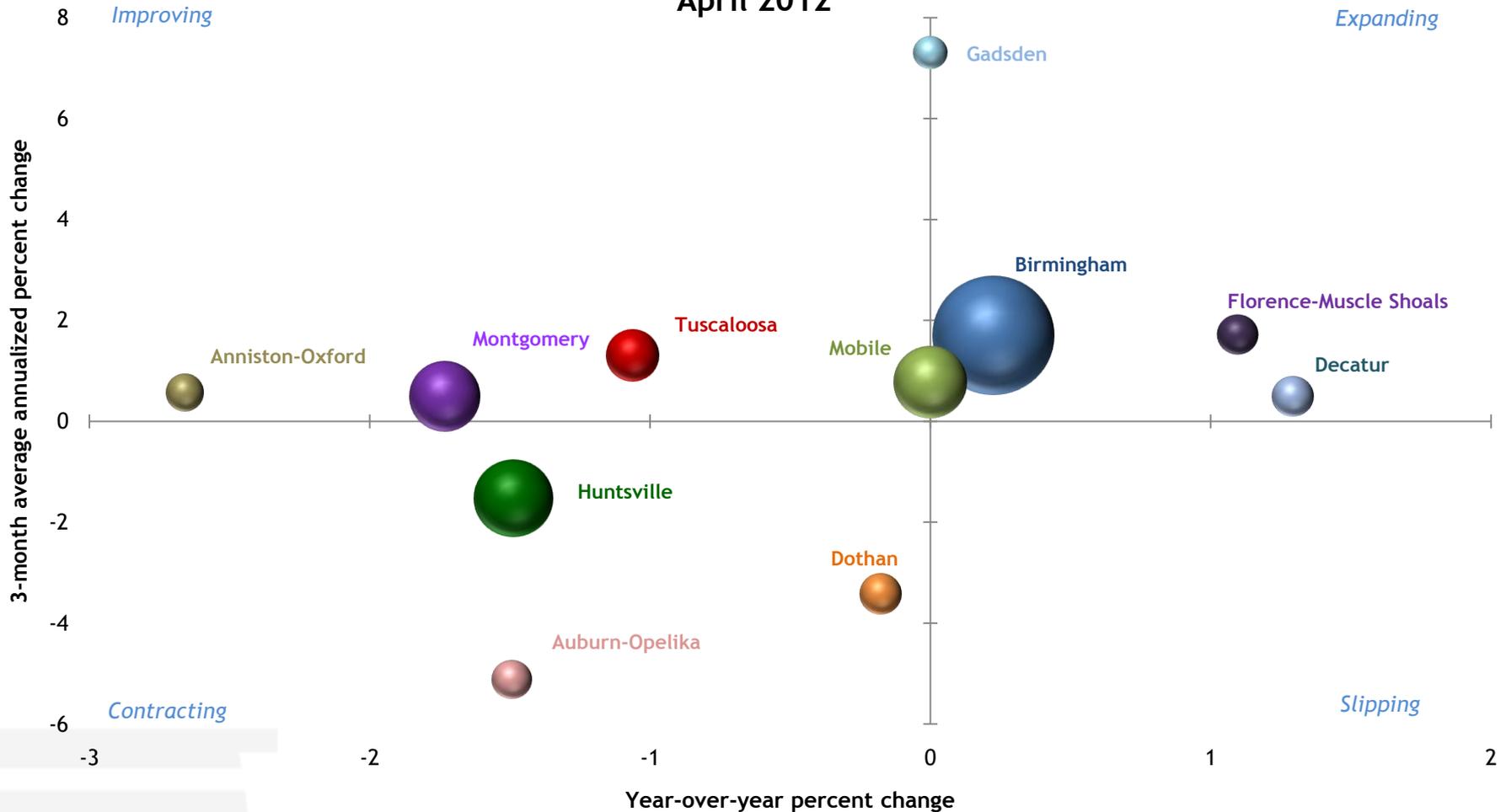
Note: A reading of 0.0 in the “trough to present” measure indicates that employment continues to decline in these metro areas. Likewise, a reading of 0.0 in the “peak to trough” measure indicates that employment continues to increase in these metro areas; in this instance “trough to present” is the percent change from January 2007 to present.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Employment momentum in Birmingham, Decatur, and Florence-Muscle Shoals expanded in April. Gadsden and Mobile pulled back somewhat, while Anniston-Oxford, Montgomery, and Tuscaloosa experienced improving momentum. Momentum in Huntsville, Dothan, and Auburn-Opelika continued to contract. Momentum in Huntsville, Dothan, and Auburn-Opelika continued to contract.

[About Employment Momentum](#)

Employment Momentum by Metro Area: Alabama April 2012

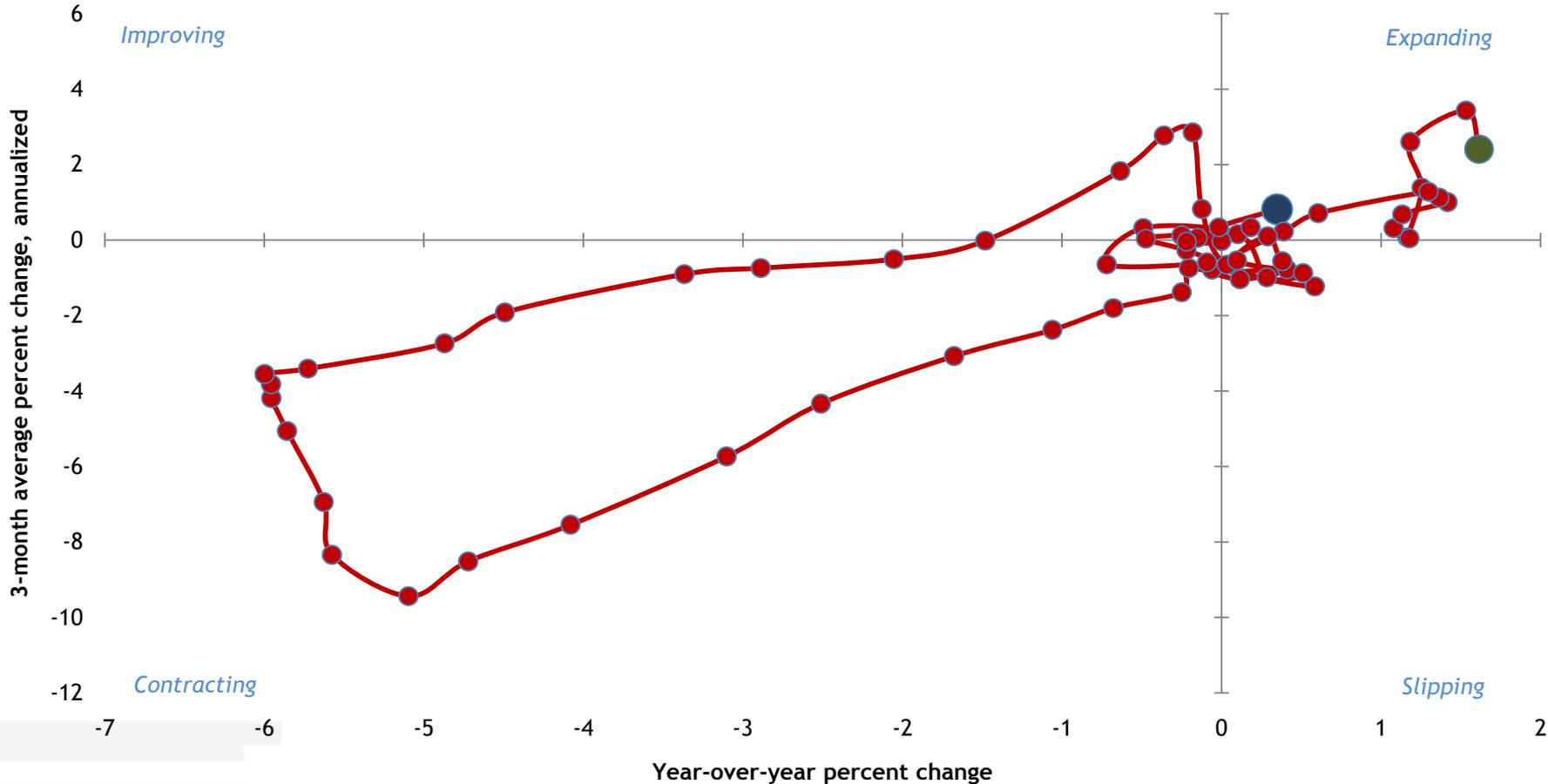


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

The state's employment momentum track has varied extensively during the past year. Alabama's employment momentum contracted in January, expanded in February, improved in March, and moved back into the "expanding" quadrant in April.

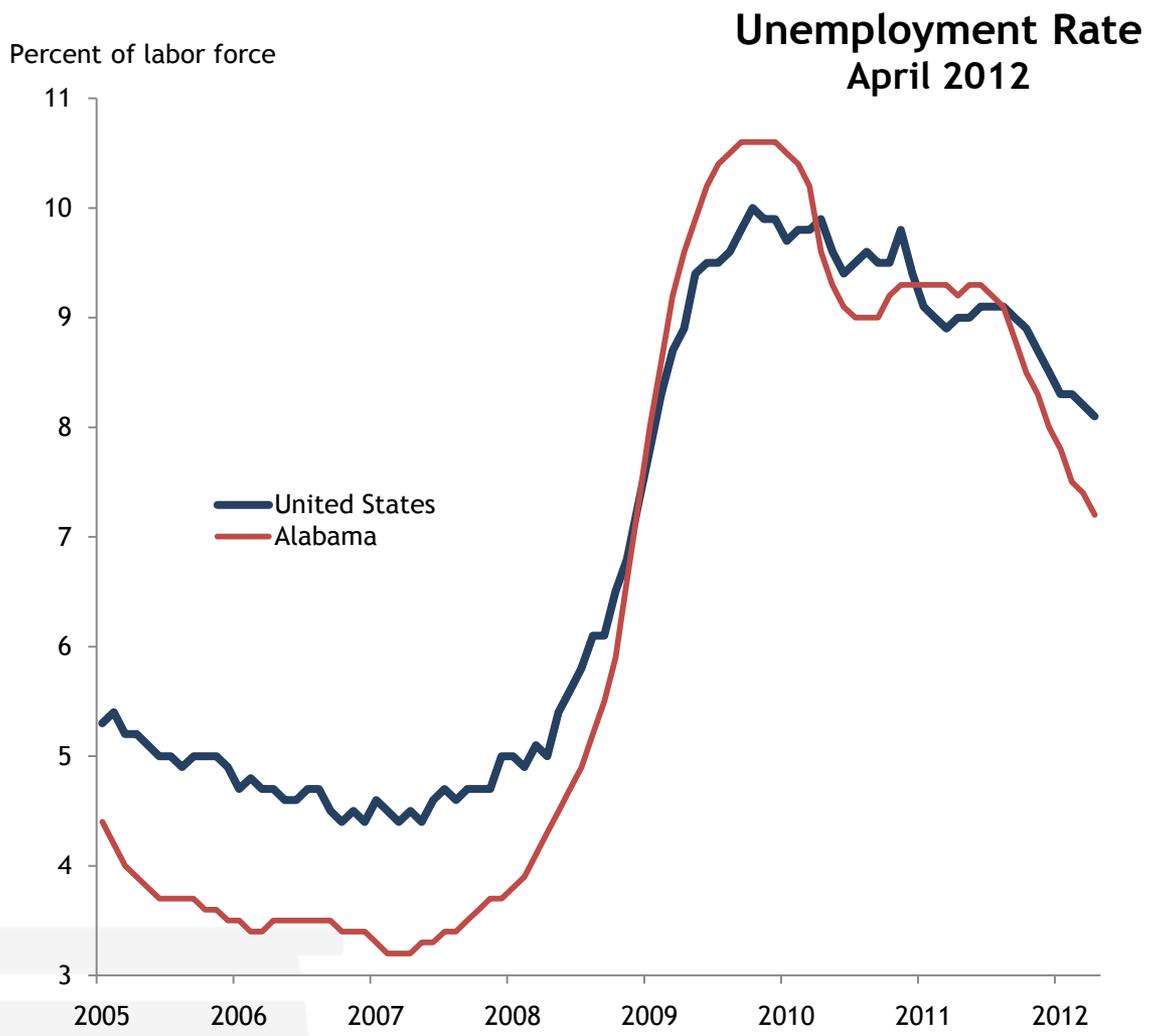
[About Employment Momentum Track](#)

Employment Momentum Track January 2007–April 2012



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Until the recession, Alabama's unemployment rate was well below the overall U.S. rate. Alabama's rate fell during the last half of 2011 and is now below the U.S. rate again. Unemployment rates for the state and all metro areas continue to fall and are lower than their year-ago rates.



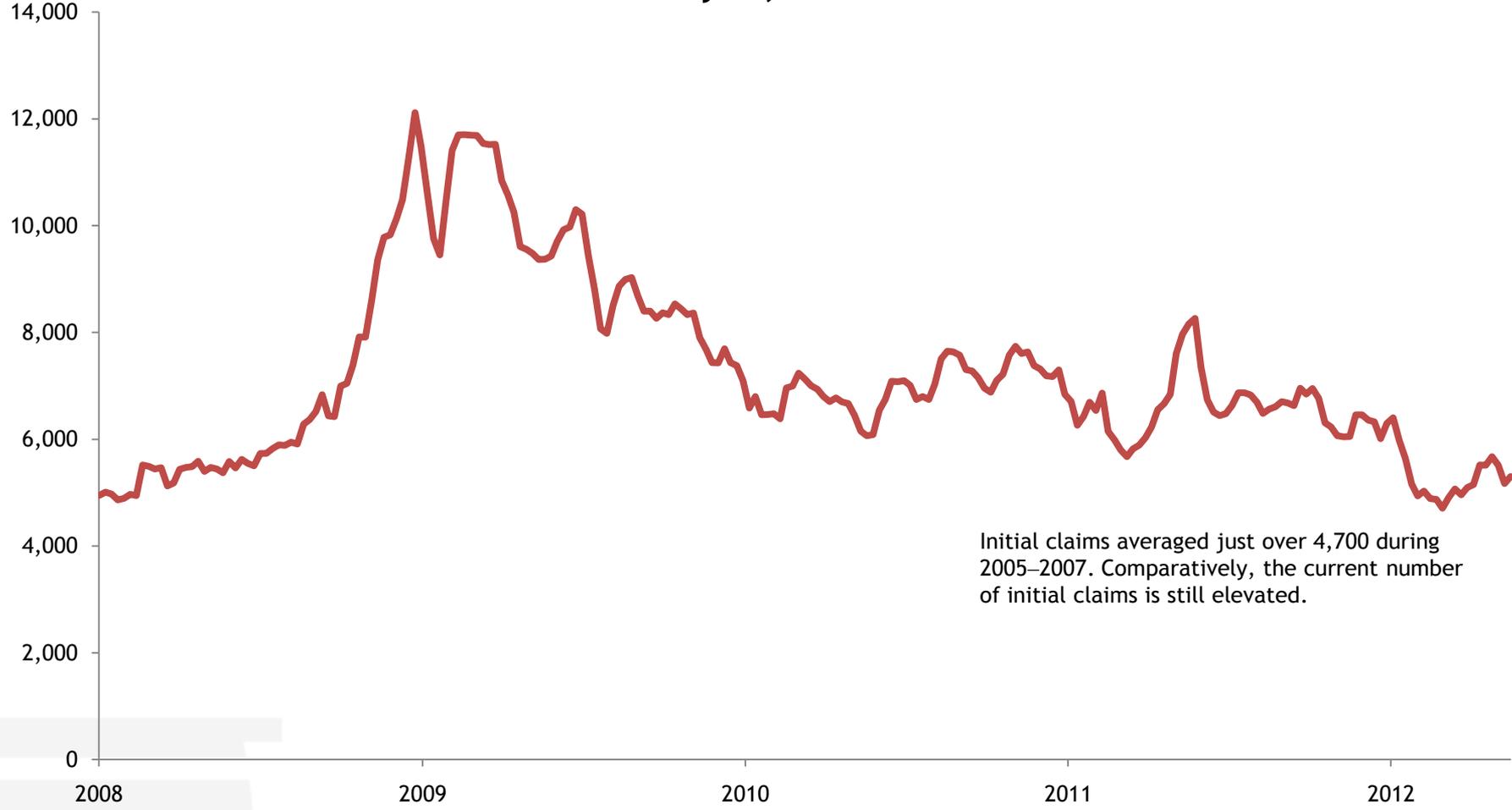
Unemployment Rates			
	Current	Year Ago	Jan 2007
United States	8.1	9.0	4.6
Alabama	7.2	9.2	3.3
Anniston	6.9	9.0	3.4
Auburn-Opelika	5.6	7.1	3.4
Birmingham	5.9	8.0	3.2
Decatur	6.7	8.7	3.5
Dothan	6.3	7.8	3.2
Florence	6.1	8.1	4.1
Gadsden	6.4	8.6	4.0
Huntsville	5.7	7.2	2.9
Mobile	7.6	9.8	3.5
Montgomery	6.7	8.6	3.6
Tuscaloosa	7.1	8.0	3.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics

Initial claims for unemployment insurance slowed in April. Claims have increased since early March after trending downward following the spike from tornadoes hitting several parts of the state in April 2011.

Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims May 19, 2012

4-week moving average

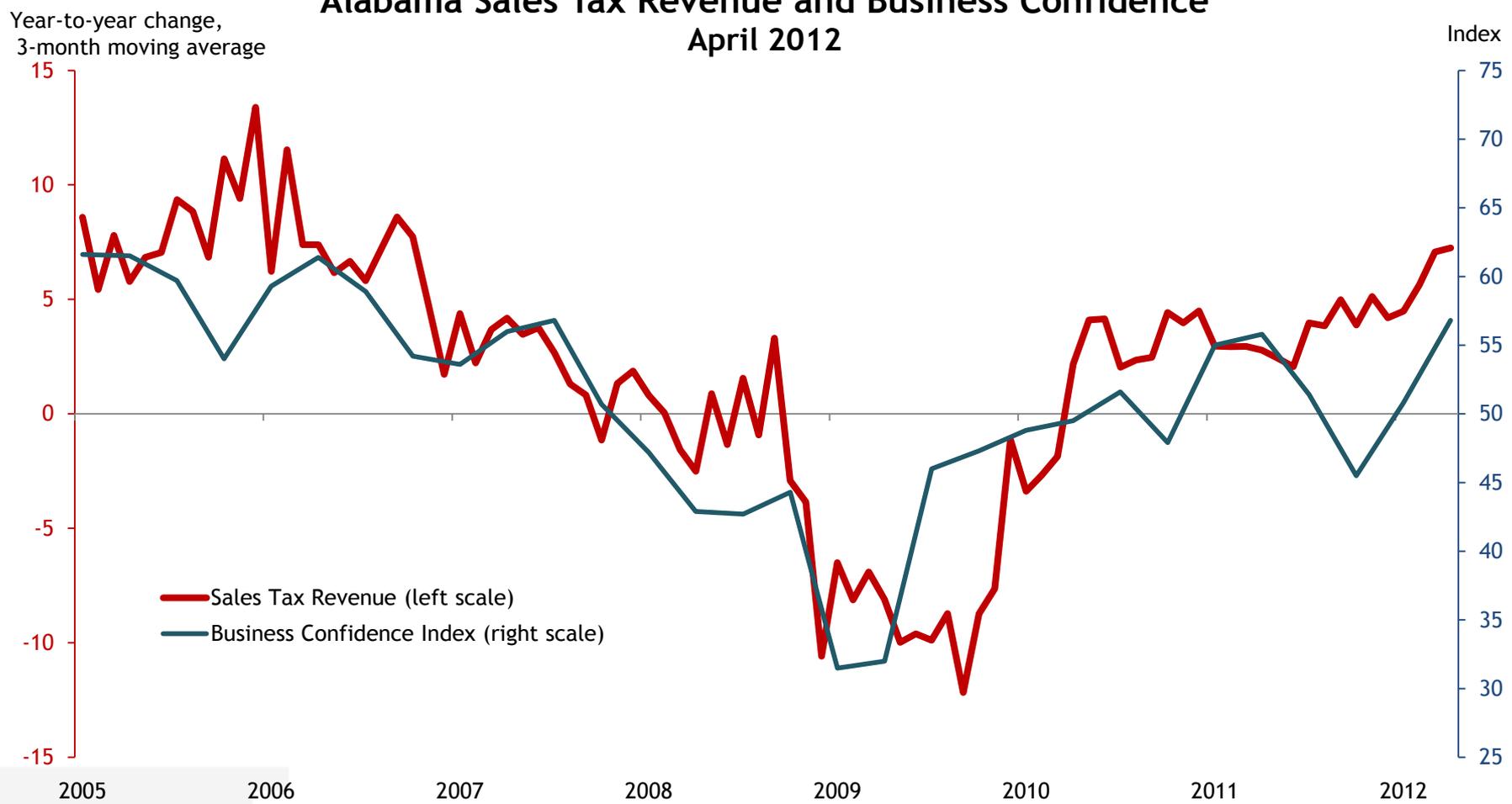


Initial claims averaged just over 4,700 during 2005–2007. Comparatively, the current number of initial claims is still elevated.

Source: U.S Department of Labor–Employment and Training Administration, Haver Analytics

Business confidence, as measured by the University of Alabama's survey, remained in positive territory for the second quarter of 2012. Business confidence improved across all industries and matched the level last seen in the third quarter of 2007. Sales tax revenue continues to experience positive year-over-year growth.

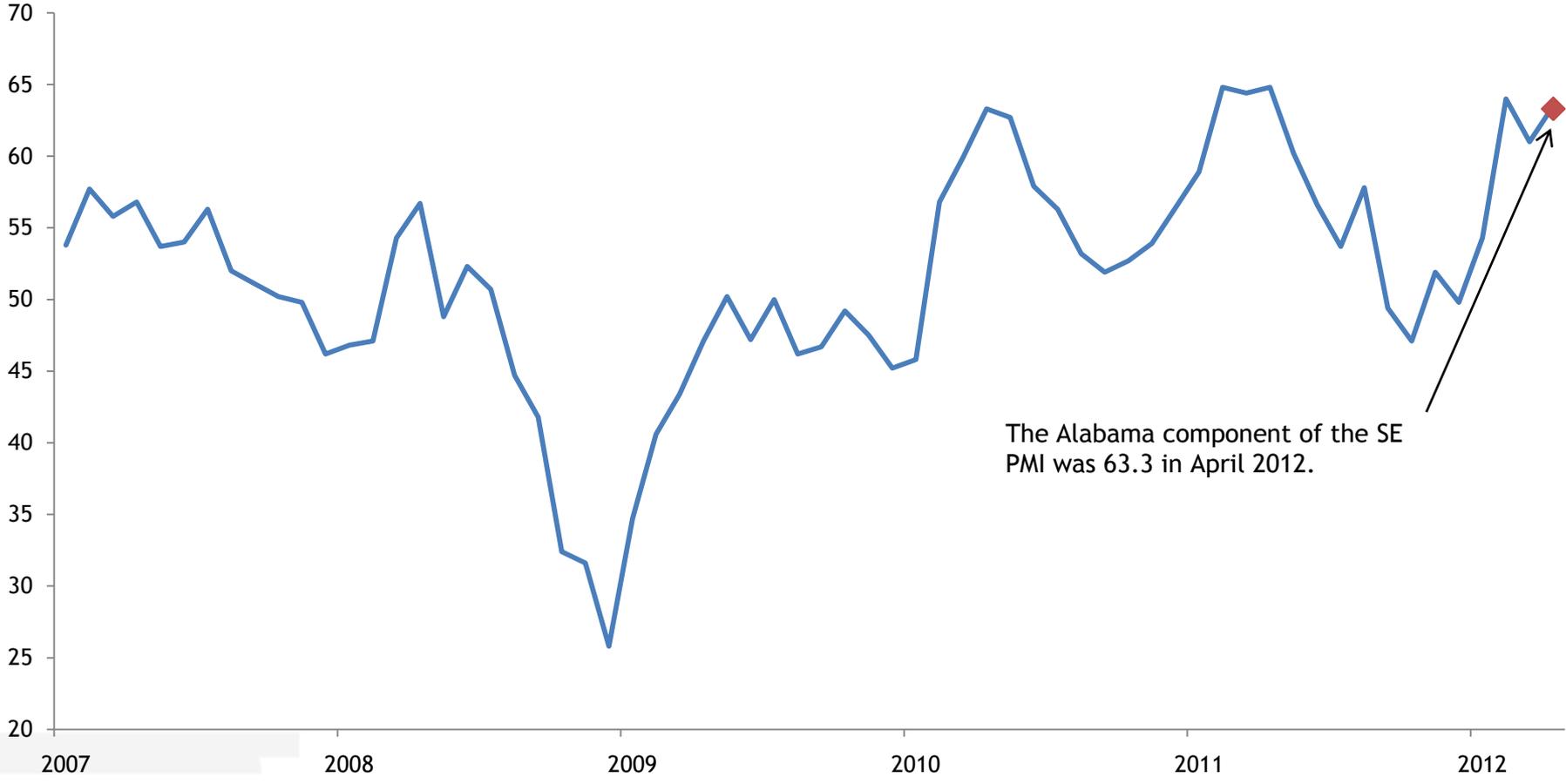
Alabama Sales Tax Revenue and Business Confidence April 2012



Note: Sales tax data are through April 2012; Business Confidence Index as of second quarter 2012.
Source: Alabama Department of Revenue, University of Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Regional manufacturing activity accelerated in April, according to the Southeast Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) produced by Kennesaw State University. Alabama's component measured 63.3, just below the overall regional reading of 63.5, but both remain in expansionary territory.

Southeast Purchasing Managers Index April 2012



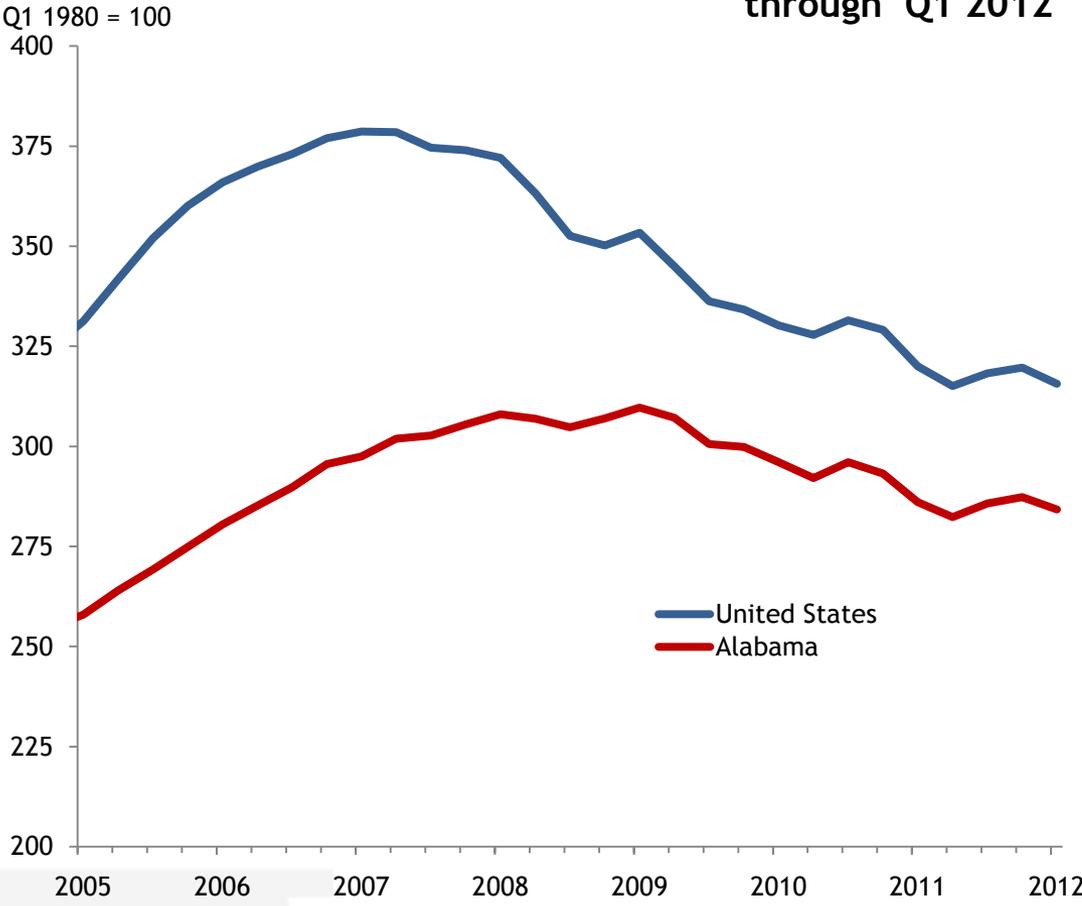
The Alabama component of the SE PMI was 63.3 in April 2012.

Note: 50+ = Expansion

Source: Kennesaw State University, Coles College of Business Econometric Center

First quarter data indicated that home prices declined for both Alabama and the United States, after improving the last two quarters of 2011.

Federal Housing Finance Agency Home Price Index through Q1 2012



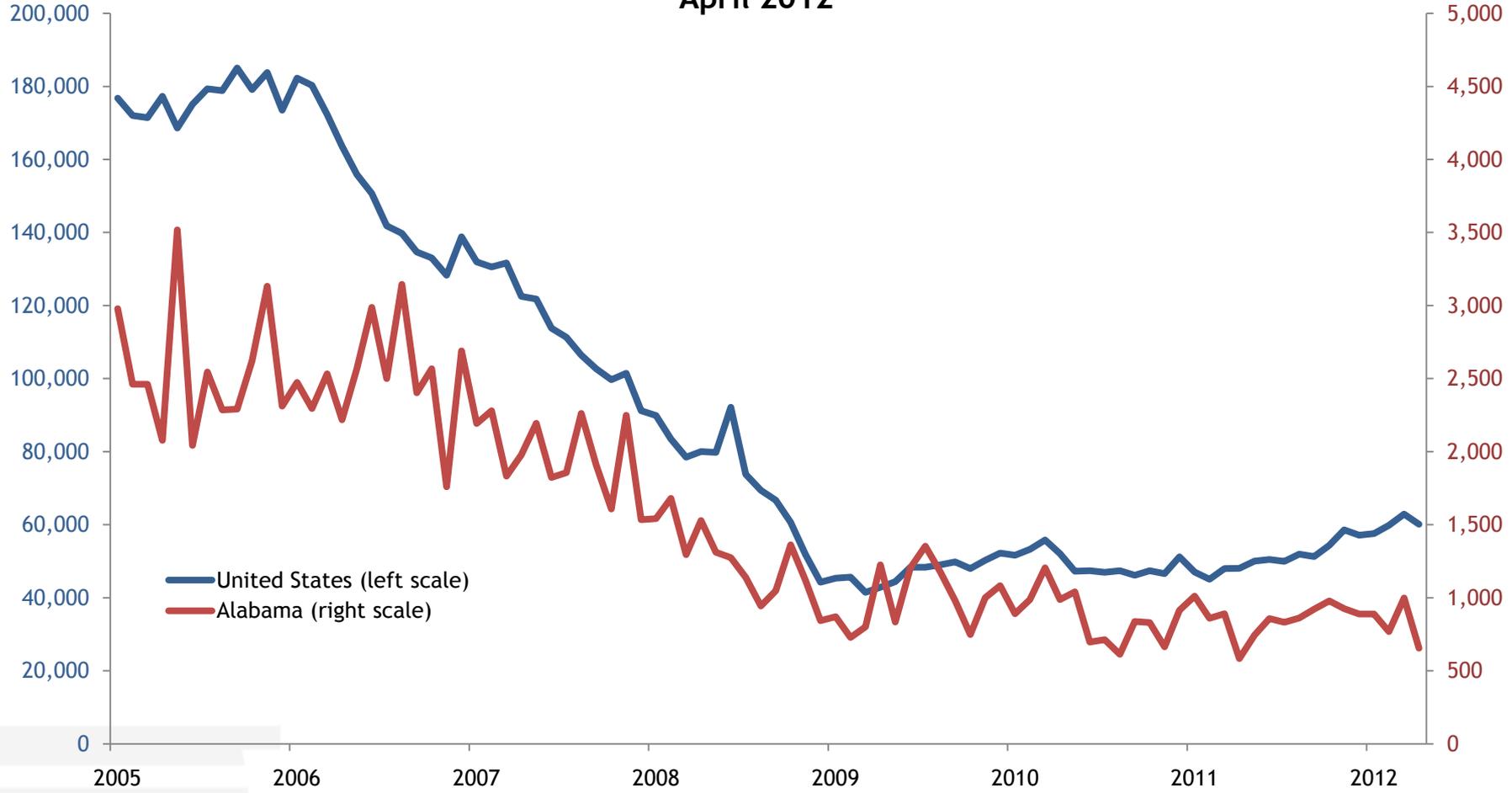
FHFA House Price Index: Q1 2012	1-yr % change	5-yr % change	10-yr % change
USA	-1.4	-16.7	20.8
Alabama	-0.6	-4.4	24.9
Anniston-Oxford	0.5	-2.0	23.9
Auburn-Opelika	-4.3	-10.3	25.1
Birmingham	-1.5	-8.2	19.2
Decatur	-1.6	2.6	21.5
Dothan	-1.7	-3.8	27.6
Florence-Muscle Shoals	0.5	3.9	26.6
Gadsden	4.0	2.6	31.1
Huntsville	0.5	4.1	32.5
Mobile	-2.6	-10.6	23.7
Montgomery	-4.9	-7.3	17.1
Tuscaloosa	2.2	-0.4	28.2

Source: Federal Housing Finance Agency, Haver Analytics

Source: Federal Housing Finance Agency, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

New home construction has stabilized at very low levels. Both the United States and Alabama recorded declines in the number of new home permits issued in April.

New Residential Home Construction Permits April 2012



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Haver Analytics

For additional sources of information, see our Local Economic Analysis Research Network membership at www.frbatlanta.org/rein/learn/map/learn_members.cfm.