



# Data Digest: Alabama

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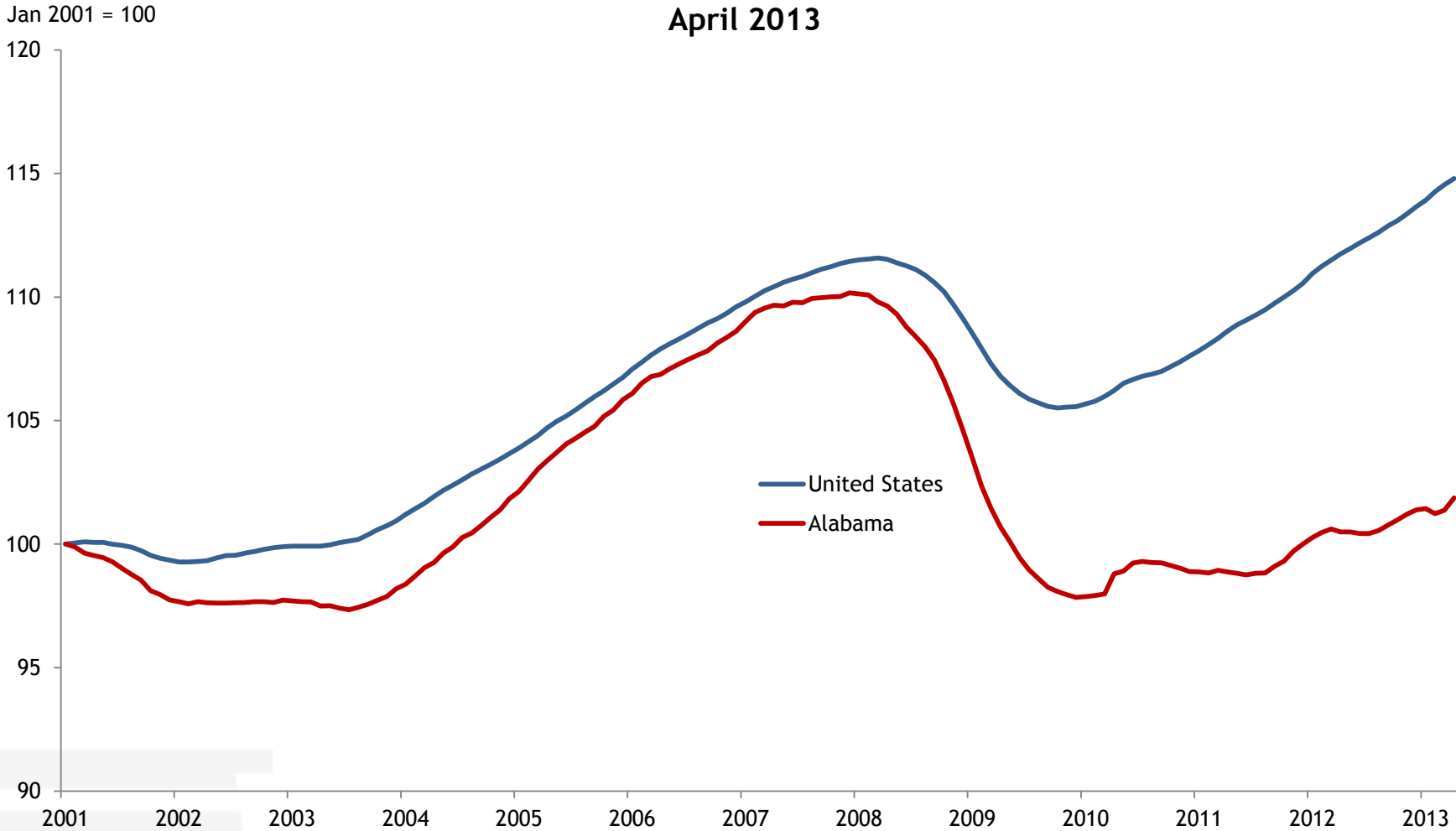
June 2013



**Broad indicators of economic activity for Alabama remain well below the indicators for the United States.**

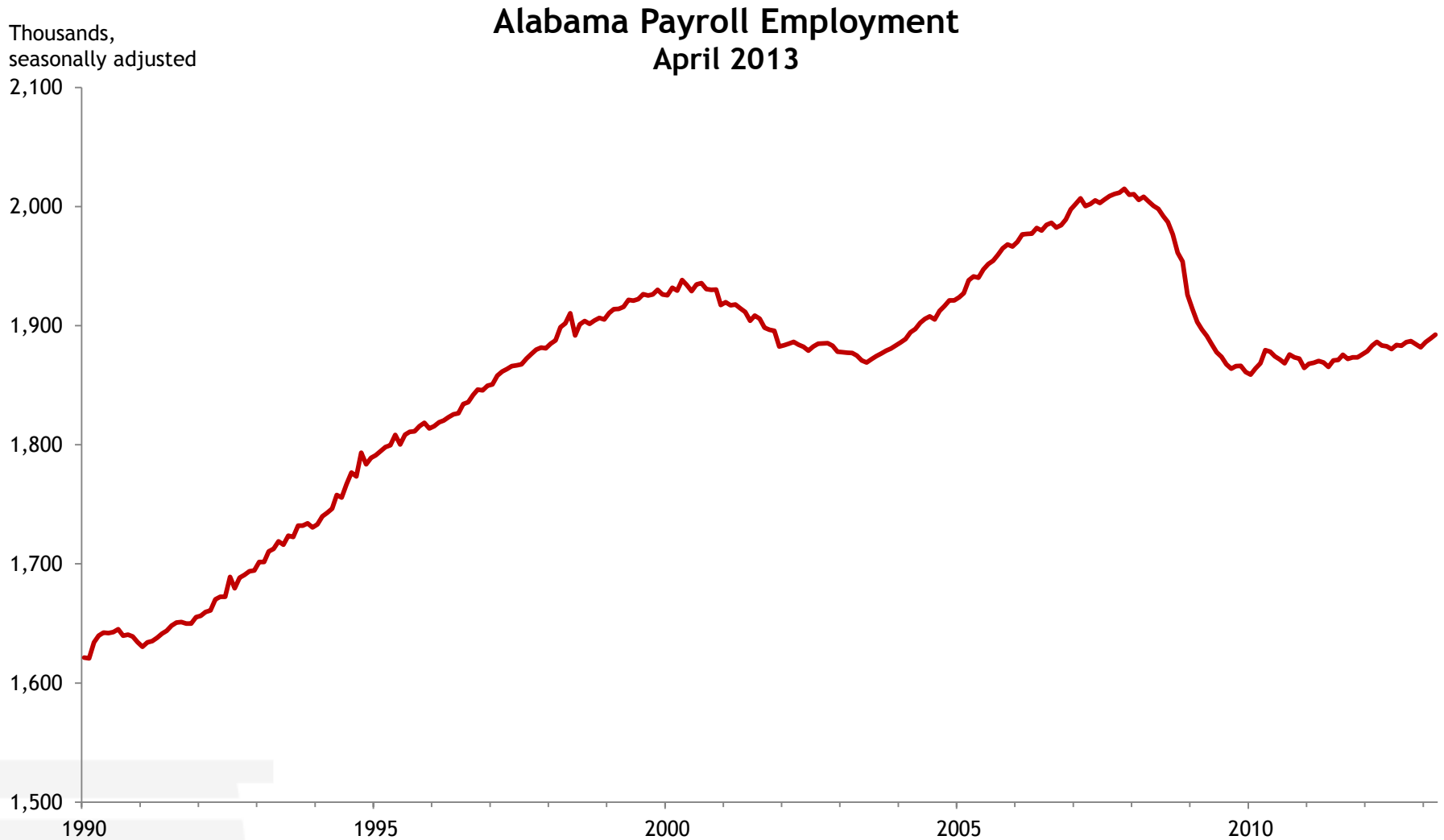
[About the Coincident Economic Indicator](#)

**Coincident Economic Indicator**  
**April 2013**



Source: Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia

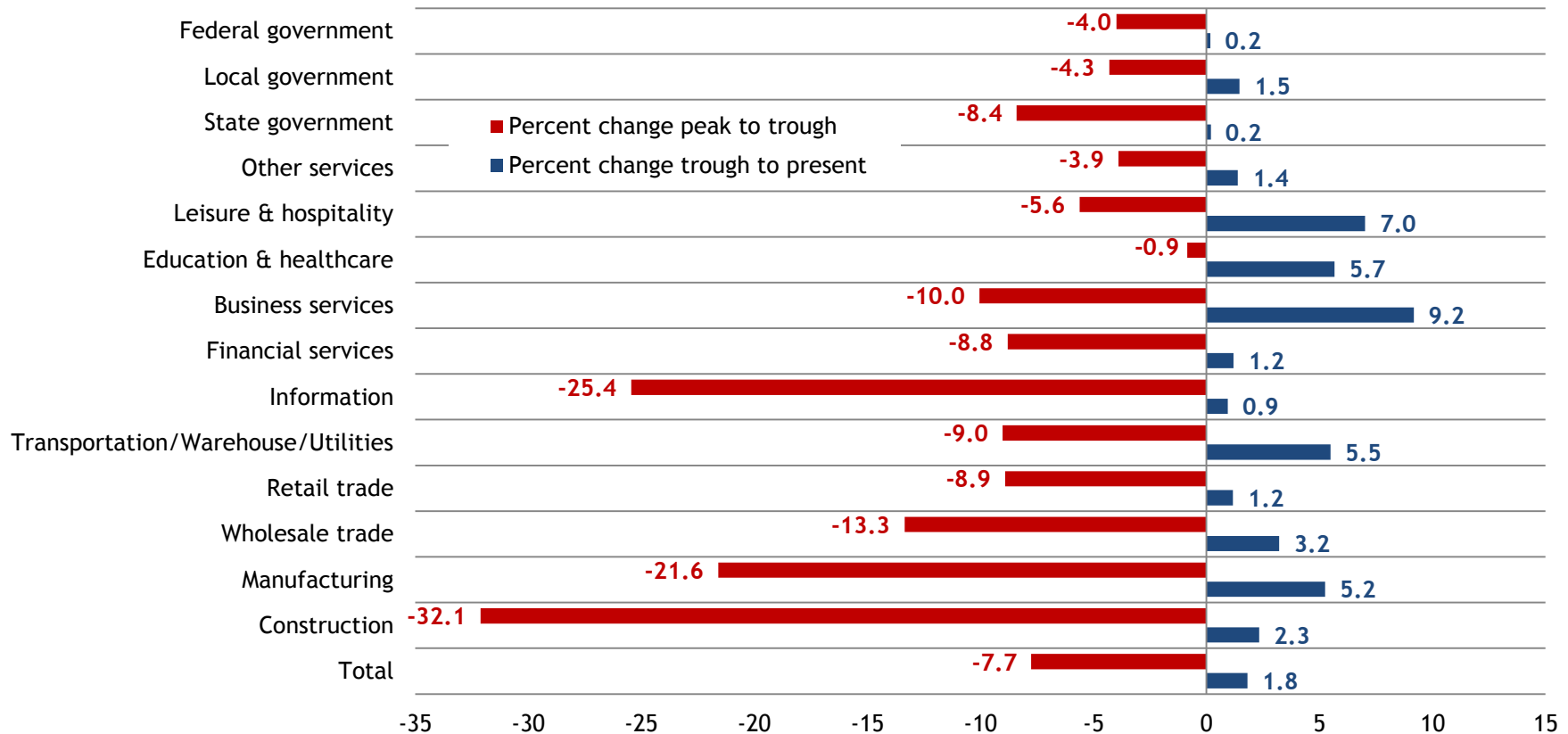
Total employment in Alabama has increased slightly during the first four months of 2013, but it continues to be quite below prerecession levels.



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 32 percent of its jobs. All sectors have seen some job gains since their troughs, with business services experiencing the largest increase.

## Employment Loss and Gain by Industry: Alabama April 2013

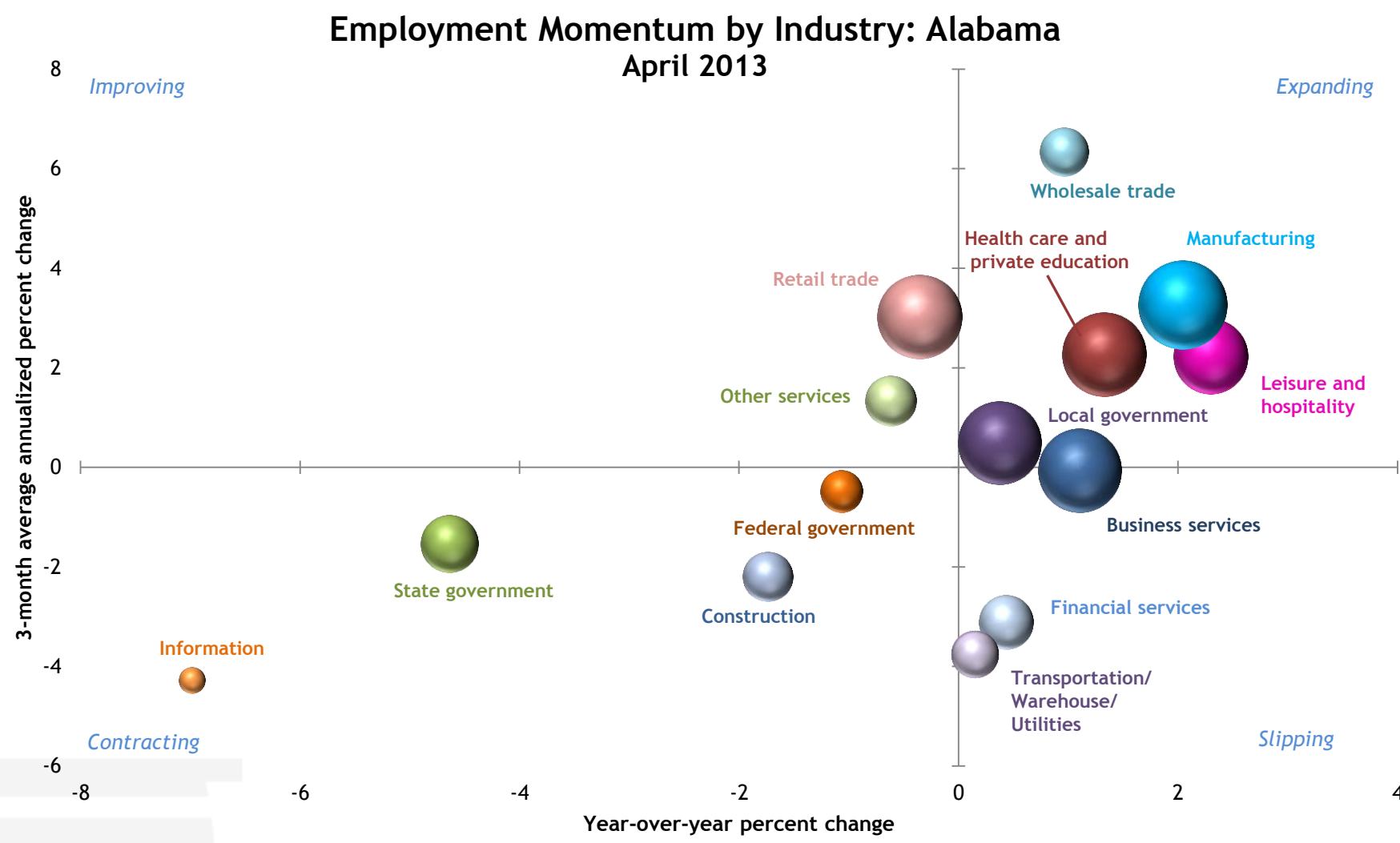


Note: A reading of 0.0 in the “trough to present” measure indicates that employment continues to decline in these industries. Likewise, a reading of 0.0 in the “peak to trough” measure indicates that employment continues to increase in these industries; in this instance “trough to present” is the percent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

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

Employment momentum in manufacturing, wholesale trade, health care and private education, leisure and hospitality, and local government expanded in April. Other sectors contracted or slipped; state government and information continued to be the weakest sectors. Momentum in retail trade and other services improved.

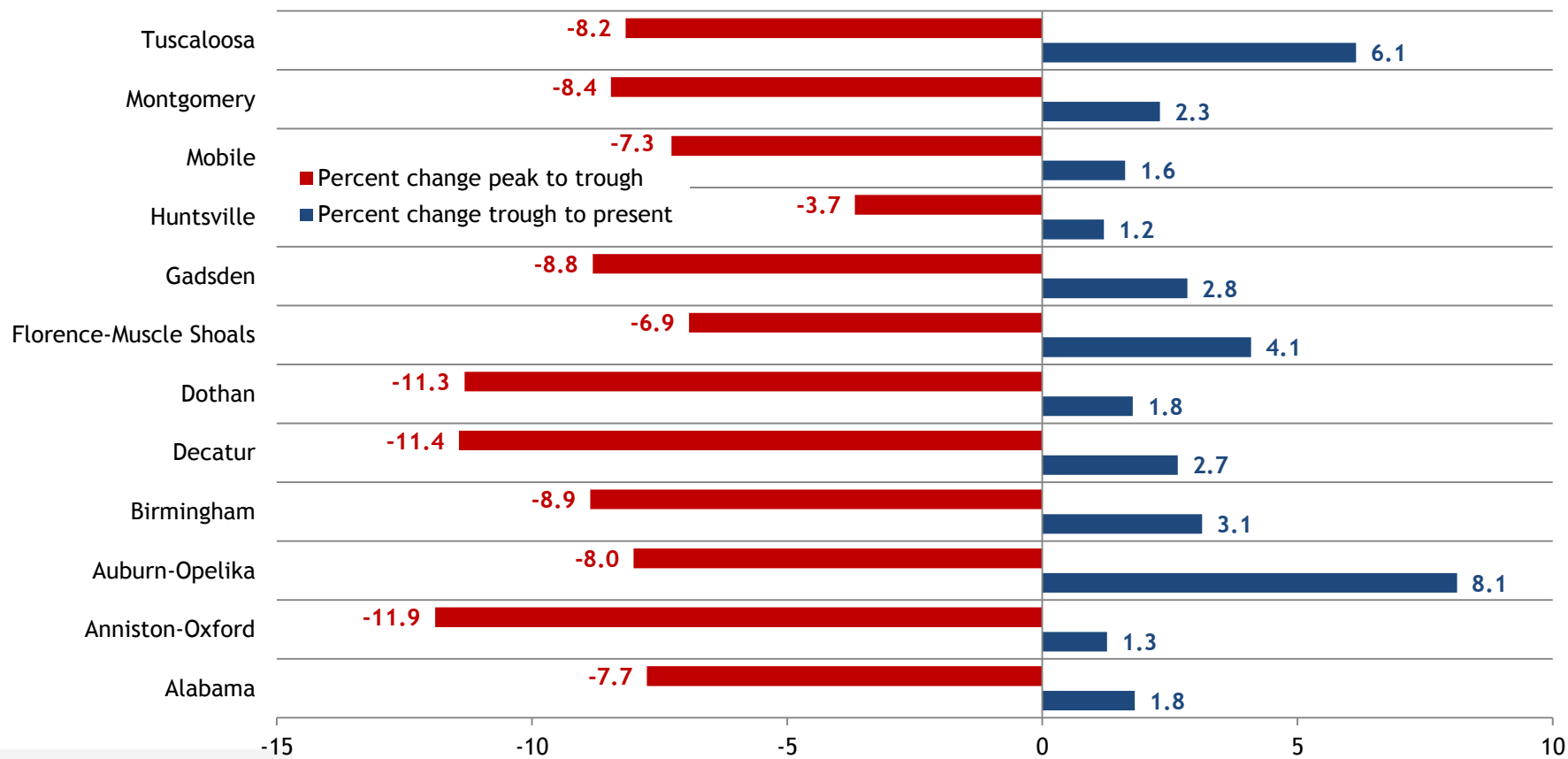
[About Employment Momentum](#)



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

Job losses occurred throughout the state during the downturn, but each of Alabama’s metro areas has slowly begun to rebound, with Auburn-Opelika and Tuscaloosa leading the pack.

Employment Loss and Gain by Metro Area: Alabama  
April 2013



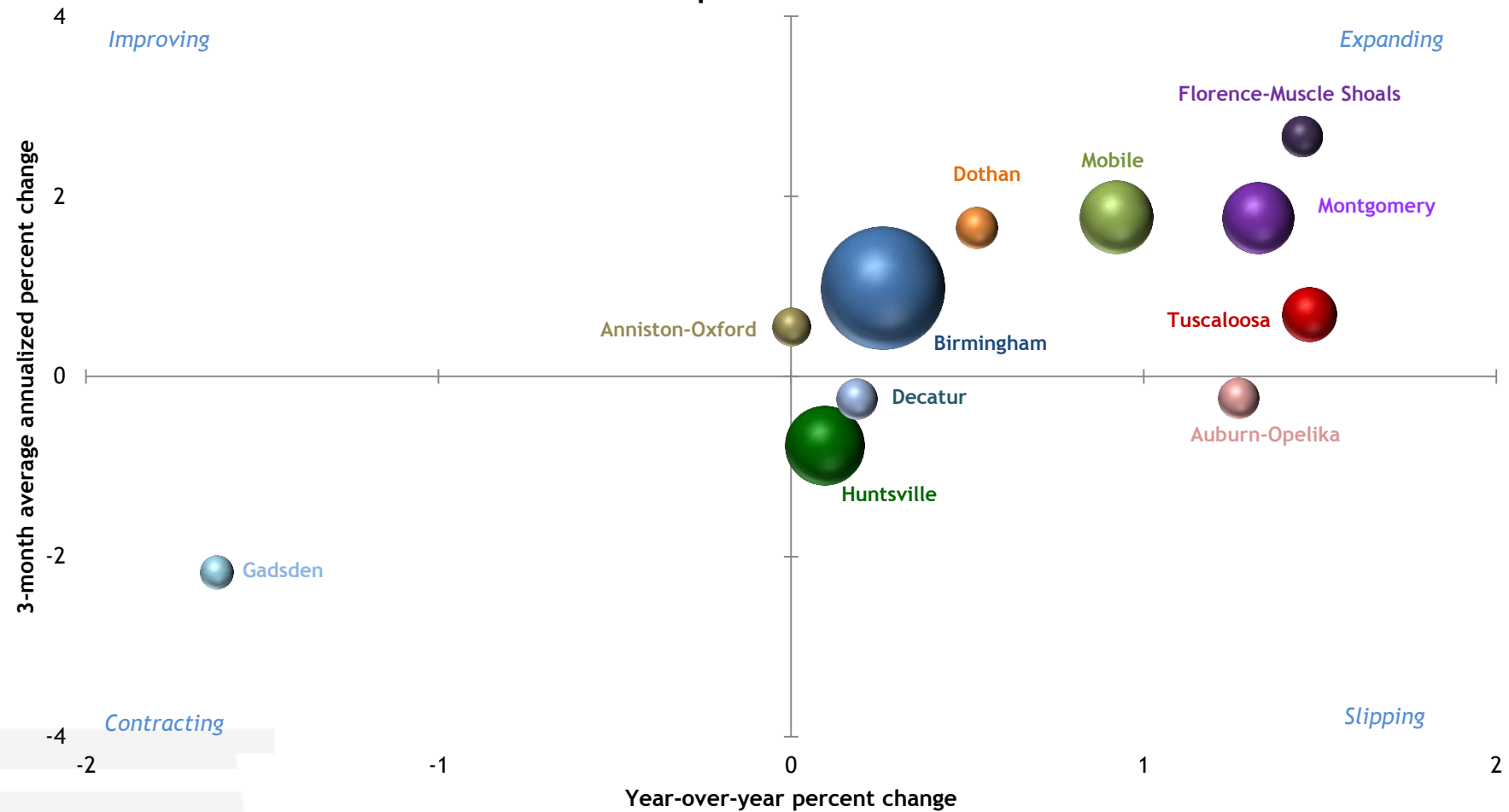
Note: A reading of 0.0 in the “trough to present” measure indicates that employment continues to decline in these metro areas. Likewise, a reading of 0.0 in the “peak to trough” measure indicates that employment continues to increase in these metro areas; in this instance “trough to present” is the percent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

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

Employment momentum in Birmingham and several of Alabama's other metro areas expanded in April. Momentum for Huntsville, Decatur, and Auburn-Opelika slipped while it contracted in Gadsden.

[About Employment Momentum](#)

### Employment Momentum by Metro Area: Alabama April 2013

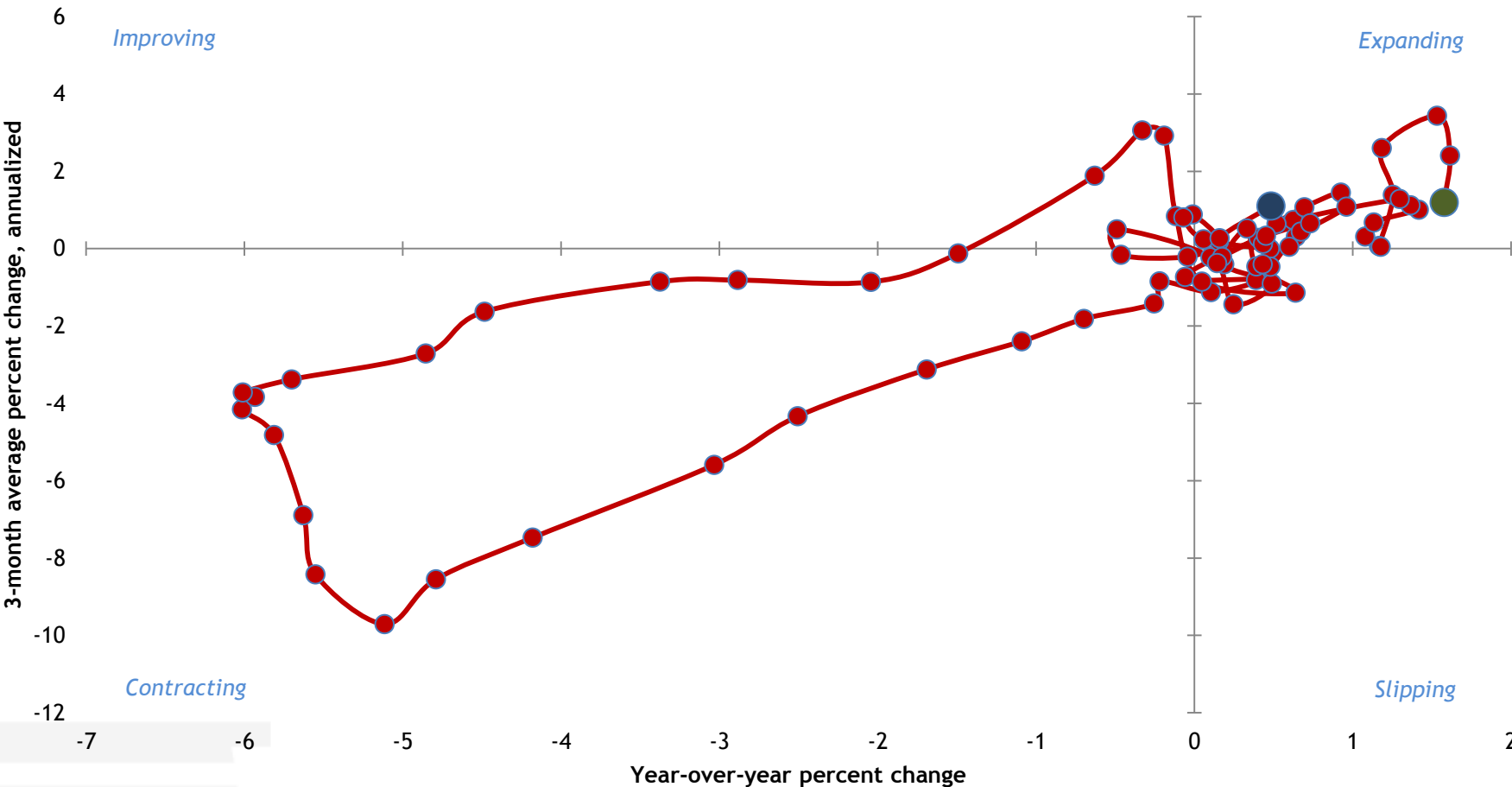


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

The state's employment momentum track varied extensively during 2012. It moved further into the "expanding" quadrant in April.

[About Employment Momentum Track](#)

### Employment Momentum Track January 2007-April 2013

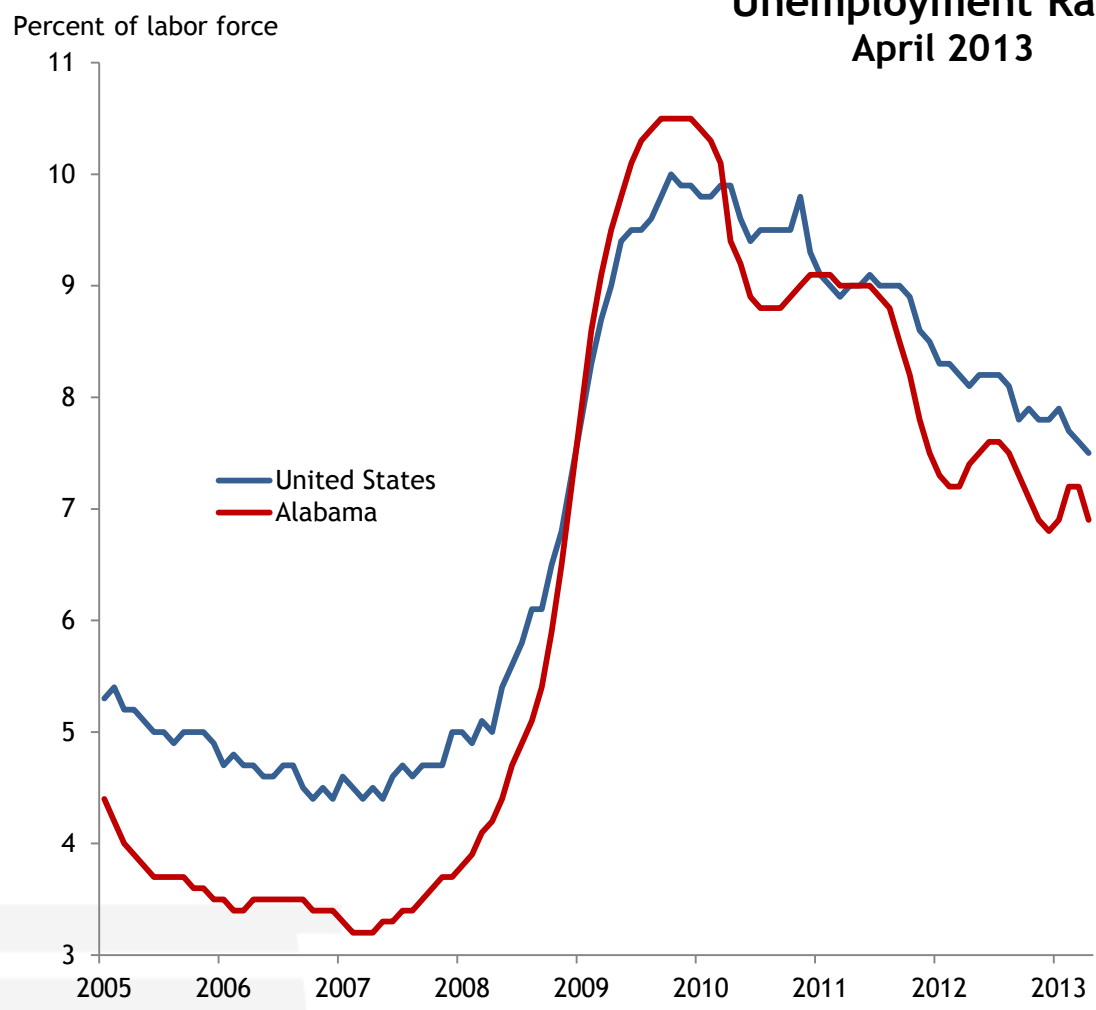


Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Haver Analytics, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta



Until the recession, Alabama’s unemployment rate was well below the U.S. rate. Alabama’s unemployment rate has been lower than the national rate since mid-2011.

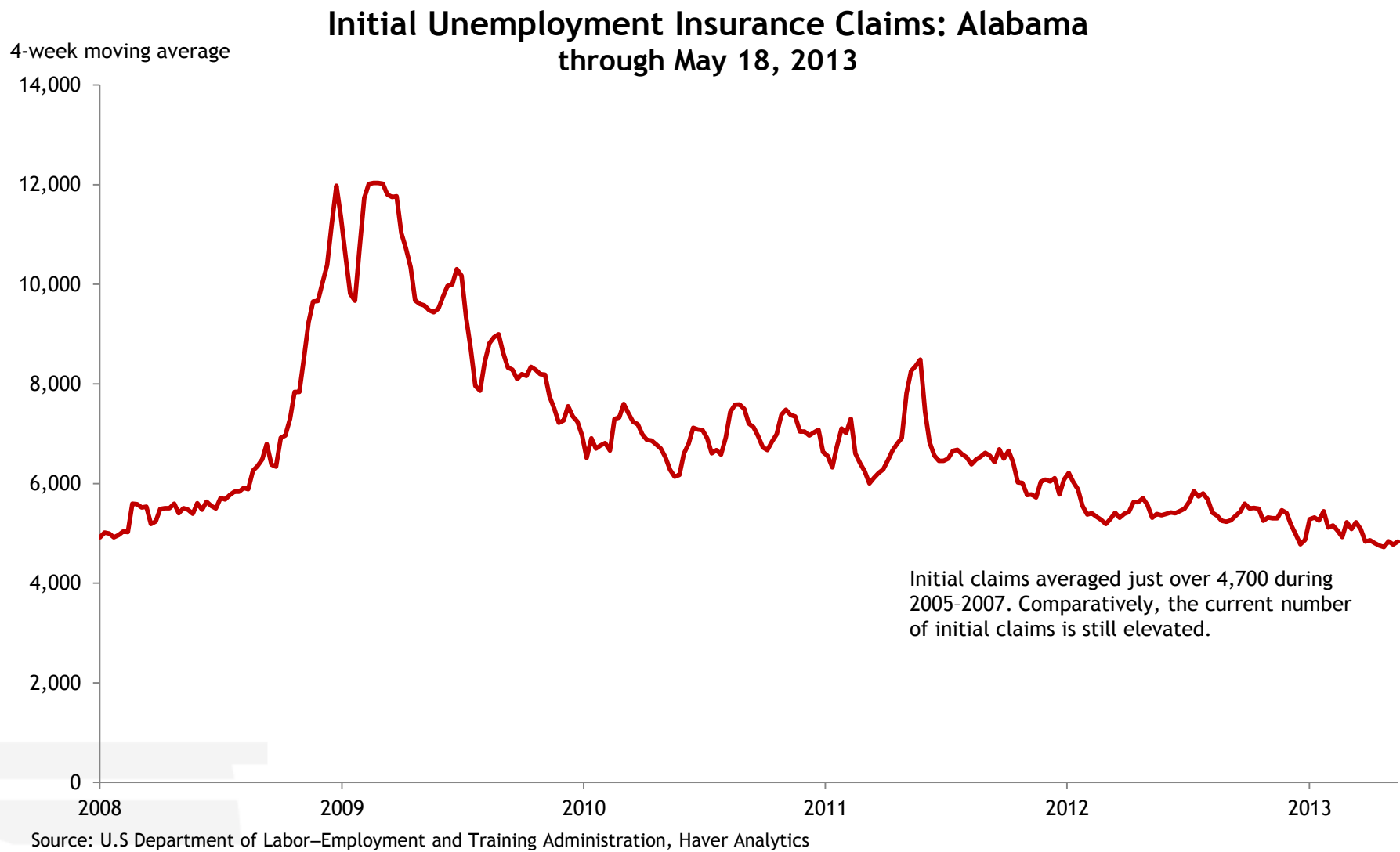
Unemployment Rates  
April 2013



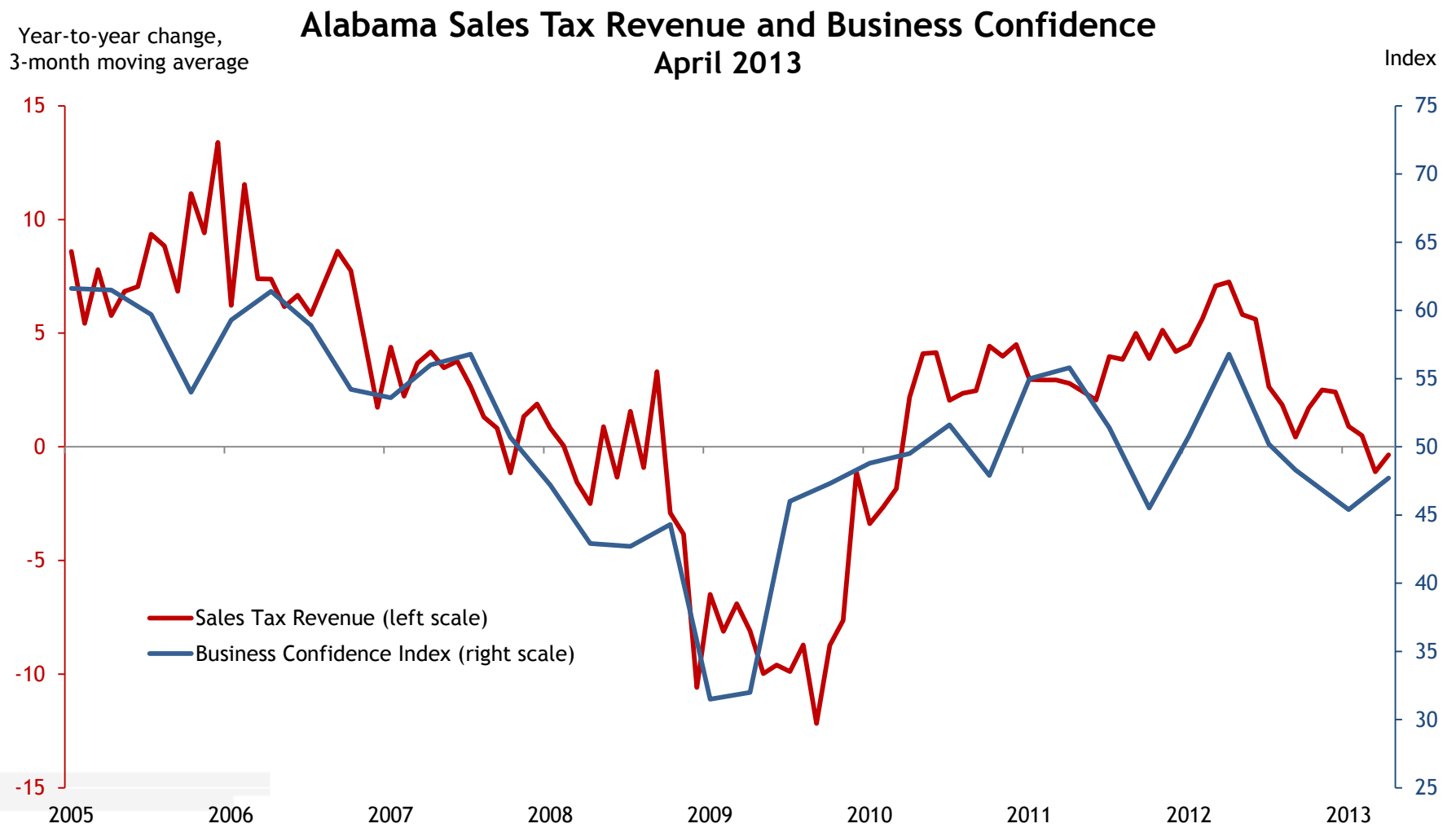
Unemployment Rates			
	Current	Year Ago	Jan 2007
United States	7.5	8.1	4.6
Alabama	6.9	7.4	3.3
Anniston-Oxford	6.5	6.7	3.4
Auburn-Opelika	4.9	5.6	3.4
Birmingham	5.2	5.7	3.2
Decatur	5.8	6.7	3.5
Dothan	5.8	6.1	3.2
Florence-Muscle Shoals	5.5	6.0	4.1
Gadsden	6.1	6.3	4.0
Huntsville	5.2	5.6	2.9
Mobile	7.0	7.6	3.5
Montgomery	6.1	6.7	3.6
Tuscaloosa	5.6	6.9	3.2

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

The number of individuals filing initial claims for unemployment insurance increased slightly over the last month.



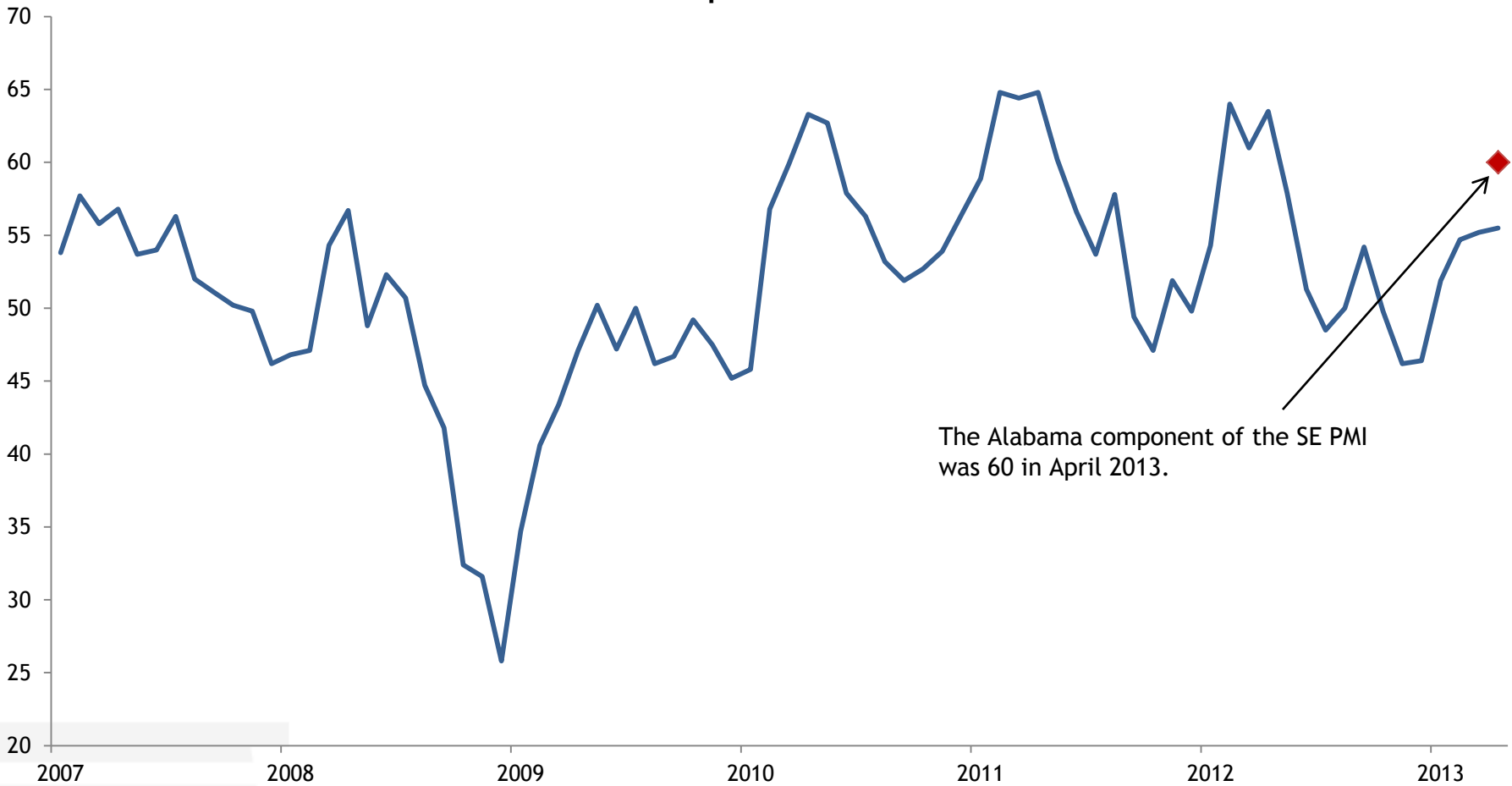
Business sentiment, as measured by the University of Alabama's second quarter 2013 survey, improved but remained in negative territory. Sales tax revenue experienced negative year-over-year growth as well.



Note: Sales tax data are through April 2013; Business Confidence Index as of second quarter 2013.  
Source: Alabama Department of Revenue, University of Alabama Center for Business and Economic Research, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta

Regional manufacturing activity expanded in April, according to the Southeast Purchasing Managers Index (PMI) produced by Kennesaw State University. The overall regional reading of 55.5 was in expansionary territory, and Alabama's component of the PMI stood at 60.

Southeast Purchasing Managers Index  
April 2013

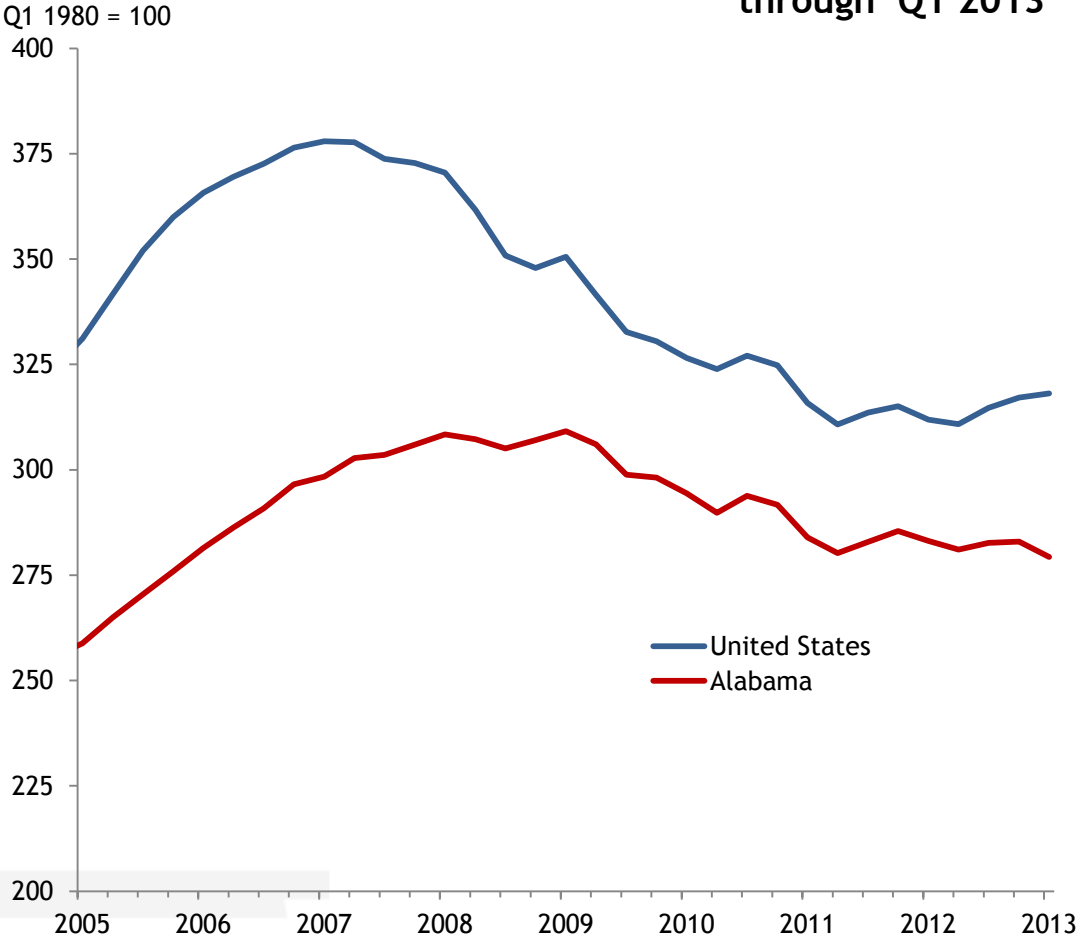


The Alabama component of the SE PMI was 60 in April 2013.

Note: 50+ = Expansion  
Source: Kennesaw State University, Coles College of Business Econometric Center

Home prices for Alabama declined in the first quarter of 2013, as U.S. housing prices increased slightly for the third consecutive quarter.

Federal Housing Finance Agency Home Price Index  
through Q1 2013

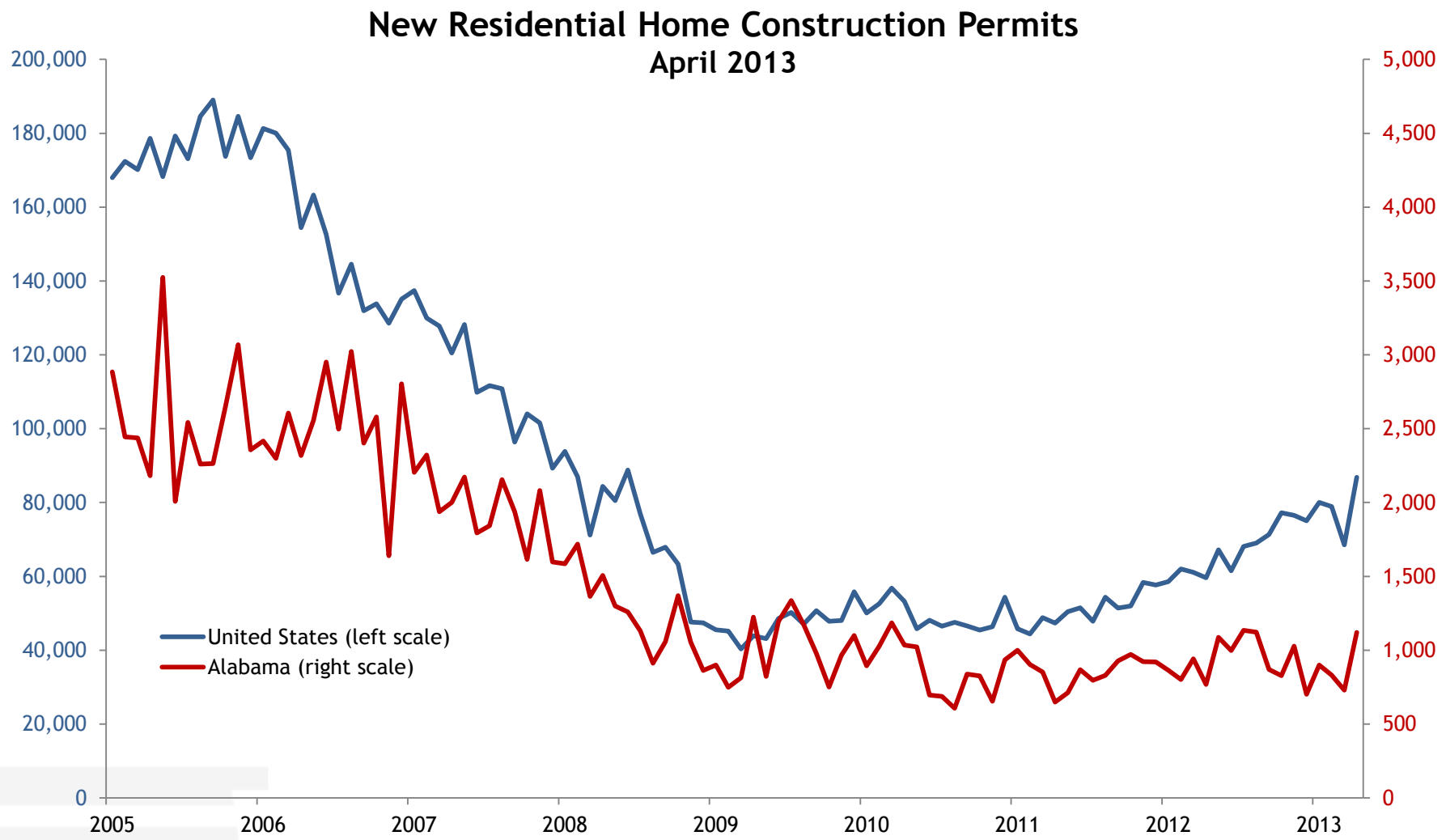


FHFA House Price Index: Q1 2013	1-yr % change	5-yr % change	10-yr % change
USA	2.0	-14.1	14.5
Alabama	-1.3	-9.4	17.4
Anniston-Oxford	-2.4	-9.8	15.0
Auburn-Opelika	-0.7	-13.5	18.9
Birmingham	-0.2	-11.1	12.9
Decatur	-0.6	-3.8	16.7
Dothan	-3.9	-11.2	18.3
Florence-Muscle Shoals	3.5	2.8	28.1
Gadsden	1.2	-0.8	24.7
Huntsville	-2.2	-3.4	24.1
Mobile	-2.7	-17.9	13.2
Montgomery	-2.4	-12.8	10.4
Tuscaloosa	1.4	-0.8	23.7

Source: Federal Housing Finance Agency, Haver Analytics

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

The number of new home construction permits issued in Alabama has been basically flat and remains near historically low levels of activity.



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

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For additional sources of information, see our Local Economic Analysis Research Network membership at [www.frbatlanta.org/rein/learn/map/learn\\_members.cfm](http://www.frbatlanta.org/rein/learn/map/learn_members.cfm).