

# St. Croix Economic Development Corp.: St. Croix Co.'s March unemployment rate at 3.7%

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On April 26th, the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) announced the preliminary March 2017 unemployment rates for Wisconsin's 72 counties and the 32 cities with populations greater than 25,000 residents. St. Croix County's rate was estimated at 3.7%. For comparison, St. Croix's final rate in February was 4.6% and January's final rate was 4.2%. One year ago, the county's unemployment rate was estimated at 4.7%.

DWD said preliminary unemployment rates for March decreased in all 72 counties when compared to March 2016 and in 71 of 72 counties when compared to February 2017. The current rates ranged from 2.5% in Dane County to 7.9% in Iron.

The March 2017 preliminary unemployment rates decreased in all of Wisconsin's 32 municipalities with population bases of least 25,000 residents when compared to March 2016. The March rates ranged from 2.3% in Madison to 5.7% in Beloit.

Dane County had the lowest rate in March at 2.5%, followed by Ozaukee (2.8%), Calumet (2.9%), Fond du Lac (3.0%), and Sheboygan (also at 3.0%). Iron County had the highest rate in March at 7.9%, followed by Bayfield (7.4%), Menominee (7.1%), Sawyer (6.8%), and Burnett (also at 6.8%).

St. Croix, Pierce, Polk, and Dunn counties comprise Wisconsin's Greater St. Croix Valley. In addition to St. Croix referenced above, Pierce County's preliminary rate

for March was estimated at 4.0%. Dunn's rate in March was estimated at 4.1% and Polk's rate was 5.1%. The current rates in all four counties are lower compared to March 2016.

St. Croix and Pierce counties are included in the 16-county Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington MN-WI metro area. The March 2017 unemployment rate for the Twin Cities was estimated at 3.8%, which is lower than February's and January's final rate of 4.2%. The unemployment rate in the Twin Cities was 4.0% in March 2016.

The preliminary (seasonally adjusted) unemployment rate for Wisconsin in March was estimated at 3.4%, which is lower than the final rates of 3.7% in February and 3.9% in January. One year ago, the state's seasonally adjusted rate was 4.1%.

The preliminary (seasonally adjusted) unemployment rate in Minnesota in March 2017 was estimated at 3.8%, which is lower than February's and January's final rate of 4.0%. Minnesota's seasonally adjusted rate one year ago was 3.9%.

The preliminary (seasonally adjusted) unemployment rate in the U.S. for March was estimated at 4.5%, which is lower than the final rate of 4.7% in February and January's final rate of 4.8%. One year ago the U.S. rate (seasonally adjusted) was estimated at 5.0%.

Wisconsin's preliminary (seasonally adjusted) labor force participation rate for March 2017 was estimated at 68.4%, which is higher than the final rate of 68.3% in February 68.1%. One year ago, Wisconsin's labor force participation rate was 68.5%. The preliminary (seasonally adjusted) labor force participation rate for the U.S. in March was estimated at 63.0% which is the same as the final rate for February but higher than higher than January's final rate of 62.9%. One year ago, the labor force participation rate in the U.S. was 63.0%.

March's estimates are preliminary and are subject to revision within the next few weeks.