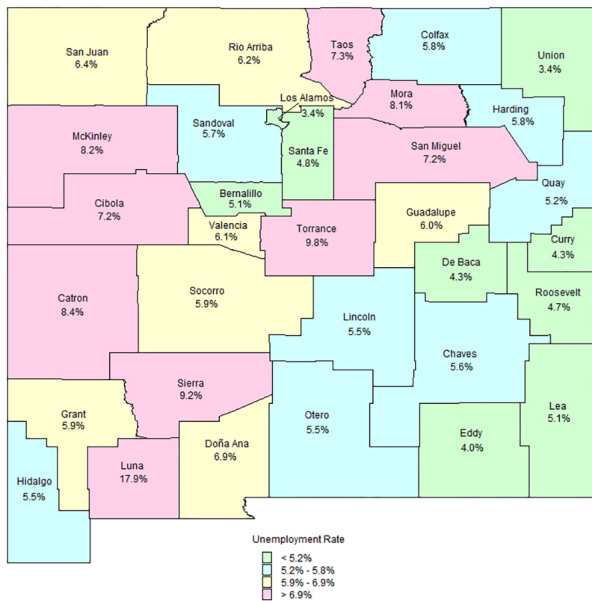


## McKinley, Cibola unemployment rates go up, slightly

Written by By Bernie Dotson For the Sun  
Friday, 30 March 2018 05:39

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New Mexico's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.9 percent in January 2018, down from 6.0 percent in December and 6.5 percent a year ago. The national unemployment rate was 4.1 percent, unchanged from December and down from 4.8 percent in January 2017, according to information from the New Mexico Department of Work Force Solutions.

In McKinley County, the unemployment rate for January was 8.2 percent, a slight increase from December 2017, which was 7.9 percent. There is a lag in reporting the data due to end-of-the-year compilations.

"I'd say the data is consistent with like data from around the state," Tracy Shaleen, an economist focusing on the work force, said. "I think the same can be said regarding Cibola County."

Shaleen said the construction industry reported the largest numeric and percentage increase among all industries. The industry added 4,100 jobs over the year, representing a 9.6 percent growth rate, Shaleen said. Shaleen added that leisure and hospitality experienced the second largest numeric growth of all industries in January.

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Also, Shaleen said, employment in the information industry decreased by 1,800 jobs, or 14.0 percent. Retail trade reported a loss of 1,600 jobs, or 1.7 percent.

Retail trade, education and health care are a few of the largest employers in McKinley County. In neighboring Cibola County, about a 55-minute drive from McKinley, the primary employment industries are tourism, government and health care. Parts of Laguna Pueblo, the Pueblo of Zuni and the Navajo nation are situated in Cibola County.

There are 33 counties in New Mexico. Shaleen noted that February unemployment data should be released in about a week.

By Bernie Dotson

For the Sun