

February unemployment rates flat across the Valley

<http://www.fresnobee.com/2014/03/21/3834774/february-unemployment-rates-flat.html>

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Unemployment trickled down in Fresno County between January and February, settling at 13.5% and marking the 29th straight month in which unemployment was lower than it was a year earlier.

Businesses across the county added about 2,400 jobs during the month, according to [figures released Friday](#) by the state Employment Development Department. Jobs on farms fell by about 1,500, according to a state survey of employers, while non-farm occupations increased by about 3,900 positions.

Industry sectors showing the strongest month-over-month job gains were government agencies and the education/health, construction, professional/business services and leisure/hospitality.

February's estimated 13.5% unemployment rate in Fresno County was a very slight improvement from the 13.6% reported in January, but was 1.4 percentage points lower than February 2013, when joblessness was estimated at 14.9%.

Across neighboring central San Joaquin Valley counties, similar effects were seen as the needle barely moved between January and February.

Kings County: 15.0% in February, unchanged from 15.0% in January and down from 15.6% in February 2013.

Madera County: 12.0% in February, down from 12.1% in January and down from 12.8% in February 2013.

Merced County: 16.1% in February, up from 16.0% in January and down from 17.7% in February 2013.

Tulare County: 15.1% in February, down from 15.2% in January and down from 15.7% in February 2013.

Statewide, the unemployment rate in February was estimated at 8.0%, down from 8.1% in January. The national jobless rate nudged up to 6.7% from January's 6.6%, the EDD reported.

This story will be updated.

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