Metro Area Unemployment
April 2012

National Association of REALTORS®

Research Division

Compilation of Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics
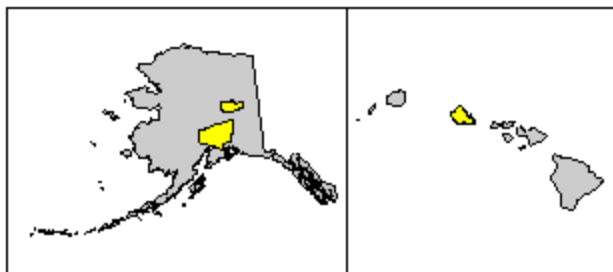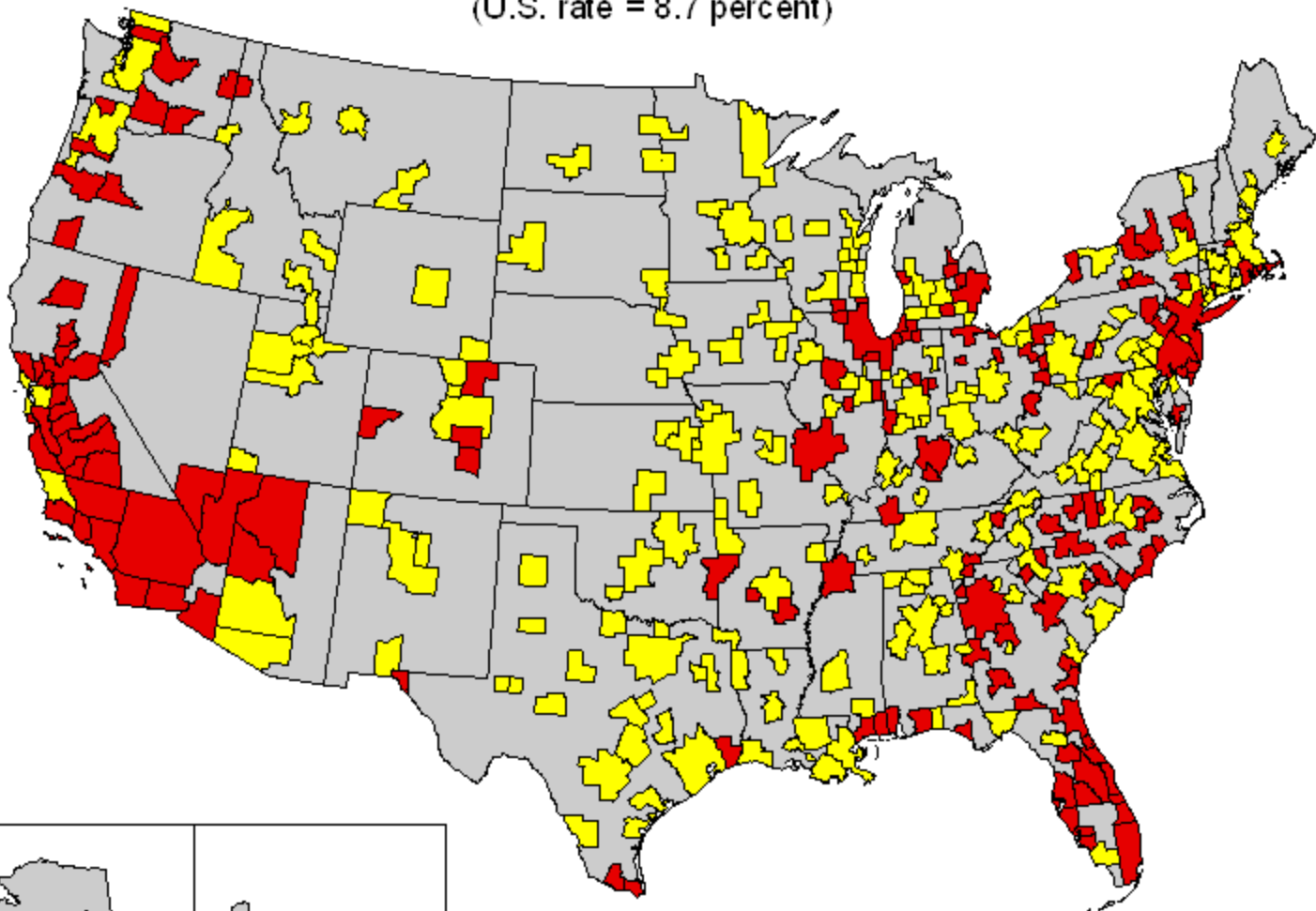
Next release: May 2, 2012

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Data Highlights

- While the unemployment rate is not yet back to normal in most areas, improvement is unmistakable. Pockets of trouble remain in California and Florida.

- From one year ago, 26 of the 27 metro areas studied have job gains. Of the 27 areas, Houston had the biggest percent growth in payrolls in the last year while only Milwaukee saw a decline of about 200 jobs.

- Among the 27 metro areas reviewed, the Washington, DC area had the lowest unemployment rate, below 6 percent in February, while Las Vegas continues to have the highest, at 12.7 percent in February.

- Looking at changes in the last year, 26 large metro areas reviewed saw improvement in the unemployment rate. Among those reviewed, only the New York metro area saw an increase, or worsening, in the unemployment rate in that time period. By comparison, the unemployment rate in the US decreased by 0.8 percentage points in the year.

- Much has been made of changes in the size of the US labor force. A growing labor force means more jobs are needed to hold the unemployment rate steady. From one year ago, the US labor force has grown by 1 percent. In that same time period, 21 metro areas reviewed saw a growth in the size of their labor force, while 6 saw a decline.

- Local unemployment rates are pictured in the graphs that follow.

- Note that the map on the next slide shows the unemployment rate for the US that is unadjusted for seasonal factors in February (8.7 percent). It was much higher than the adjusted rate that month (8.3 percent). National data for March is currently available and shows a narrower gap: 8.2 percent adjusted unemployment rate and 8.4 percent unadjusted unemployment rate.

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Unemployment rates for metropolitan areas, not seasonally adjusted, February 2012
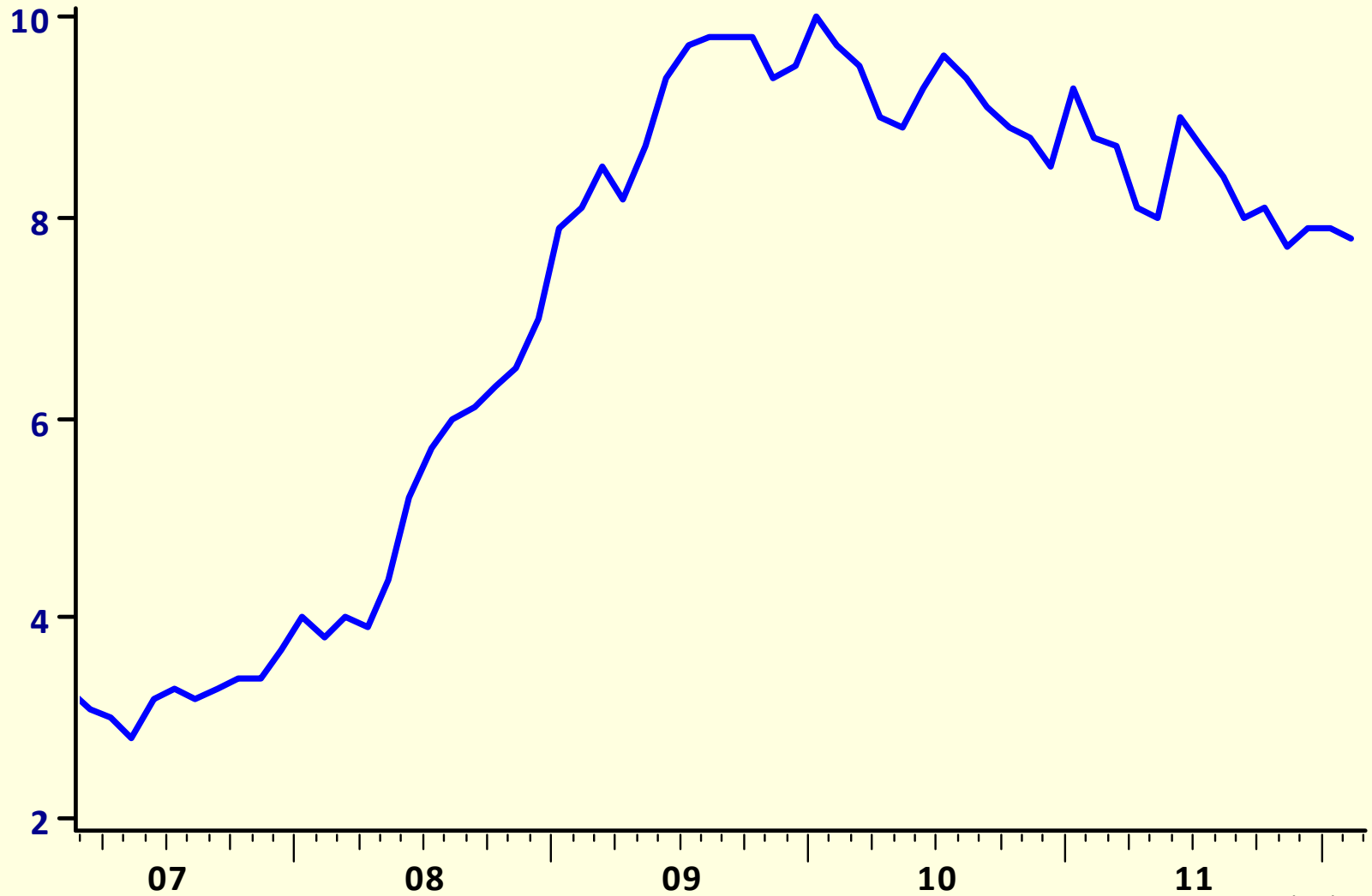
(U.S. rate = 8.7 percent)

Legend:
- Above U.S. average
- U.S. average or below

Large Metros Unemployment Rate in February 2012

Unemployment Rate, Phoenix-Mesa AZ

%

04/12/12
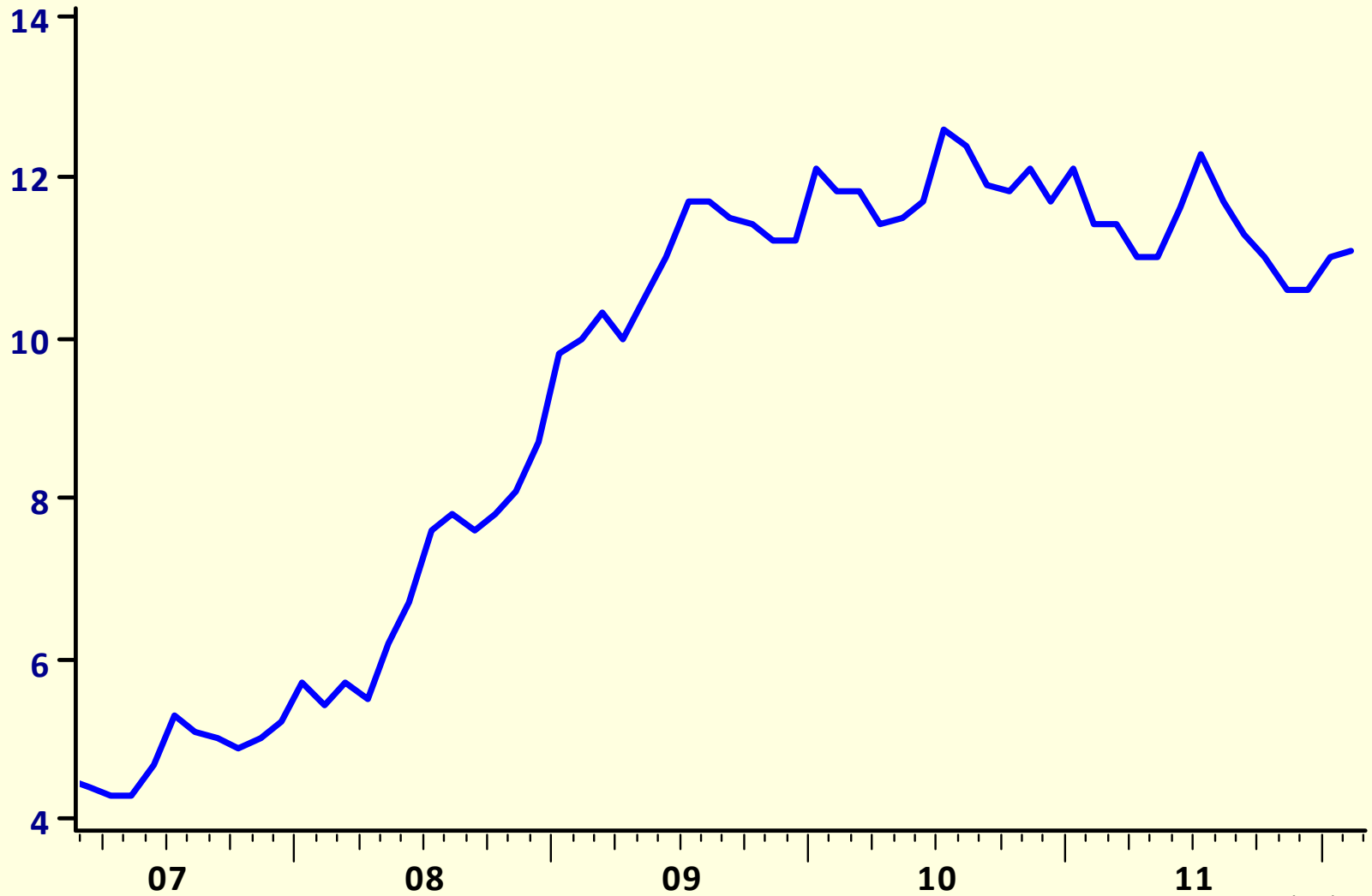
Unemployment Rate, Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA

%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics
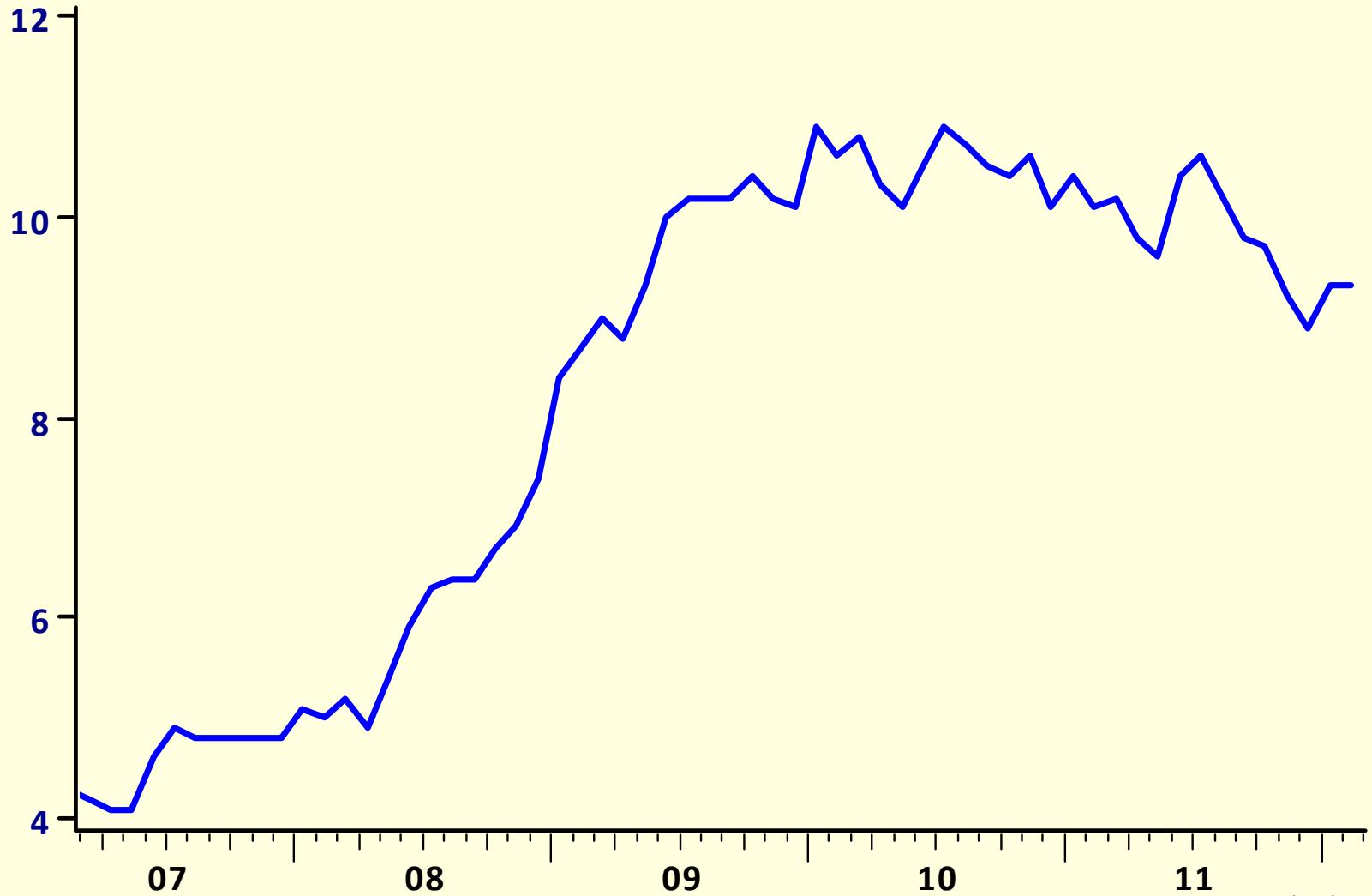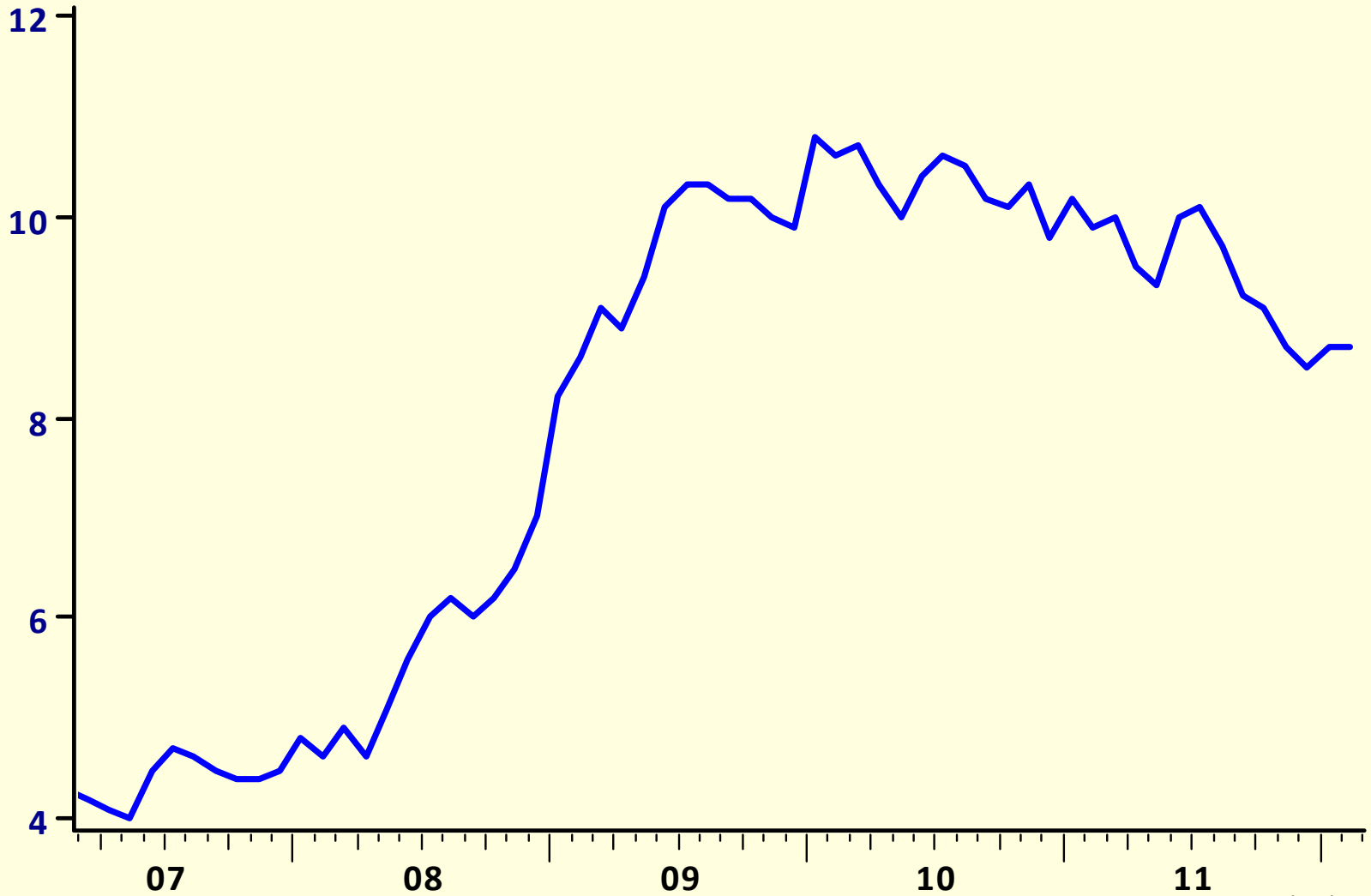
04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, San Diego CA

%

Unemployment Rate, San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA

%

04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Denver-Aurora, CO

%
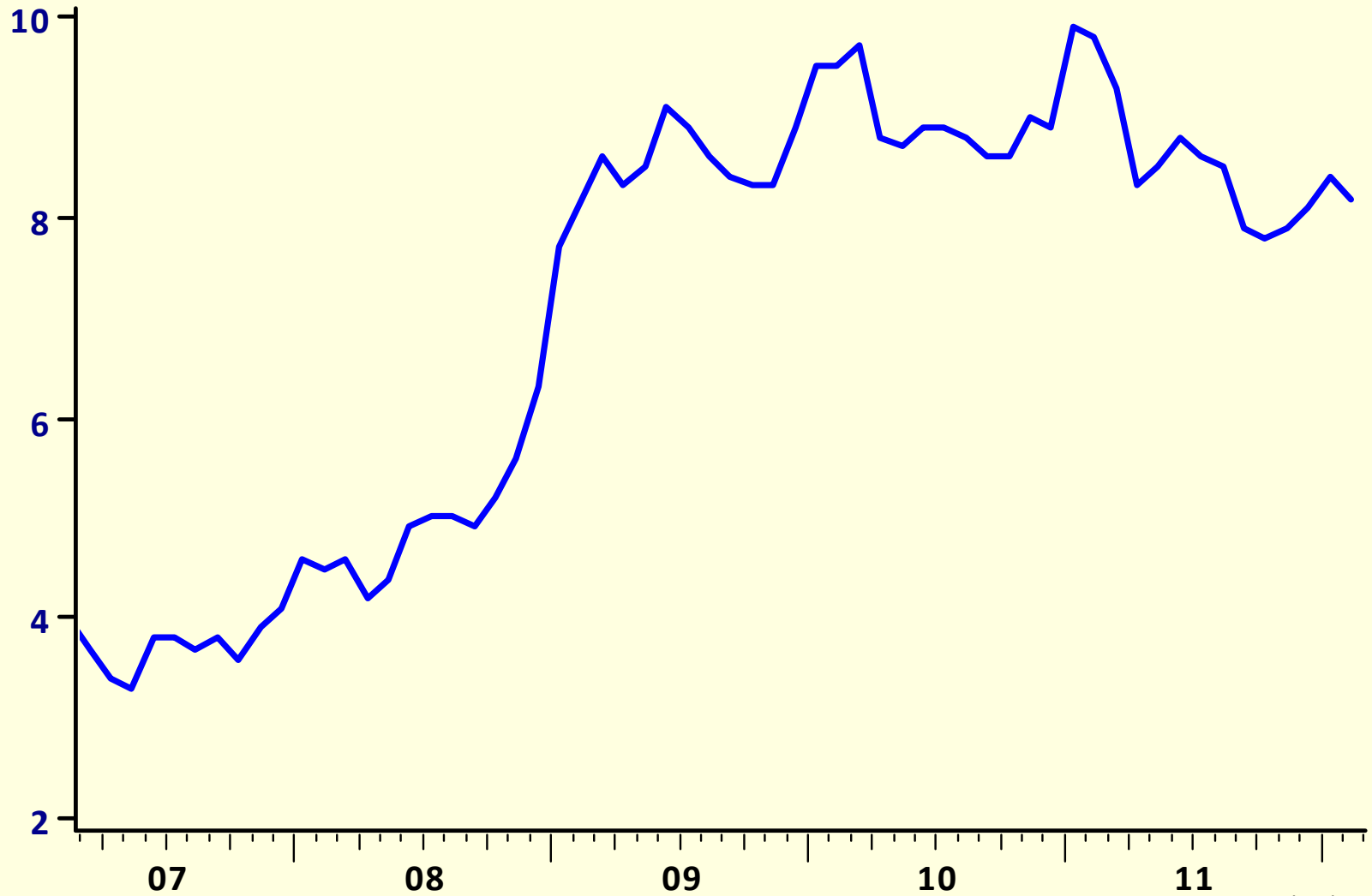
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

04/12/12

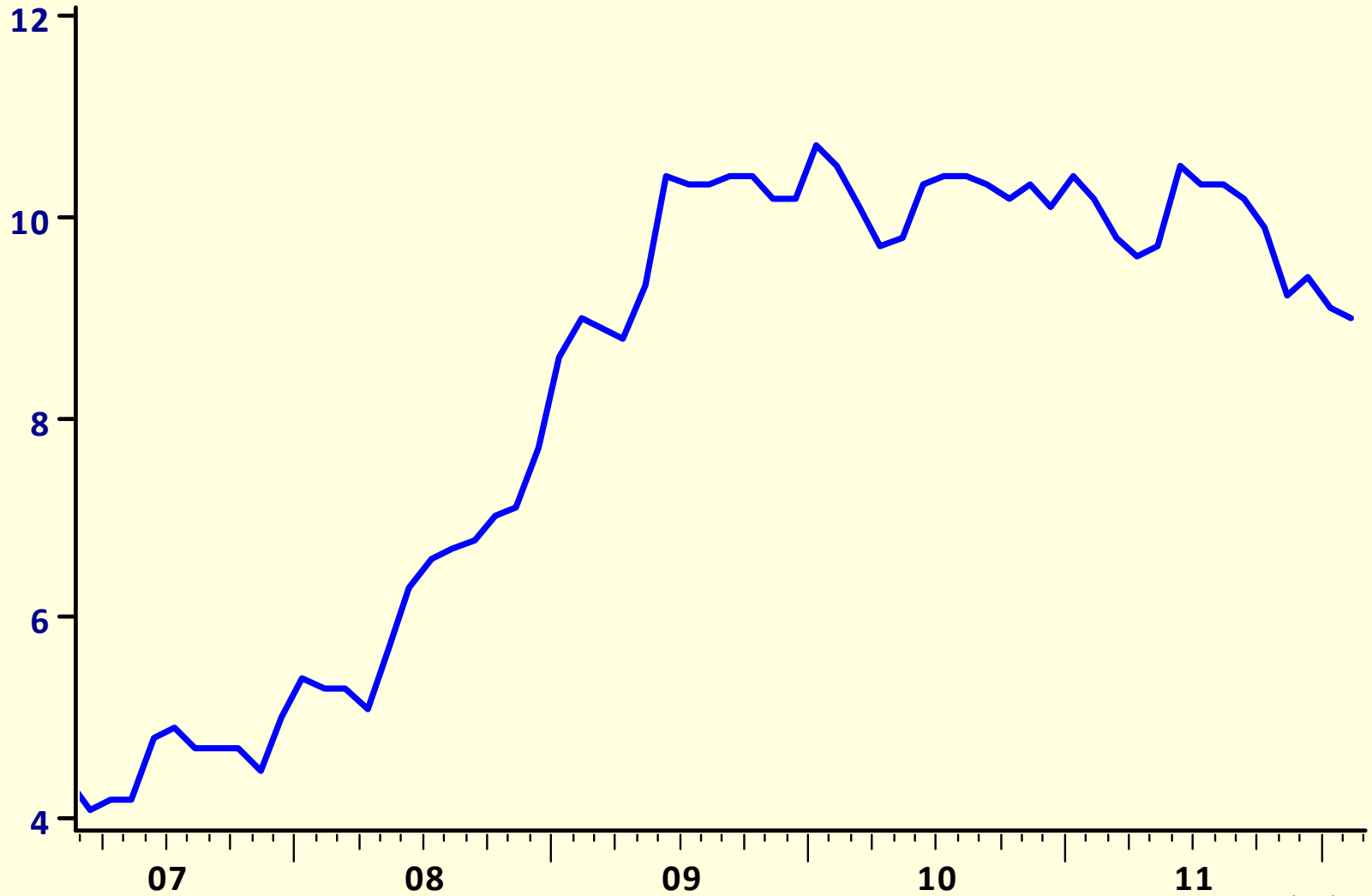# Unemployment Rate, Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV MetDiv

%
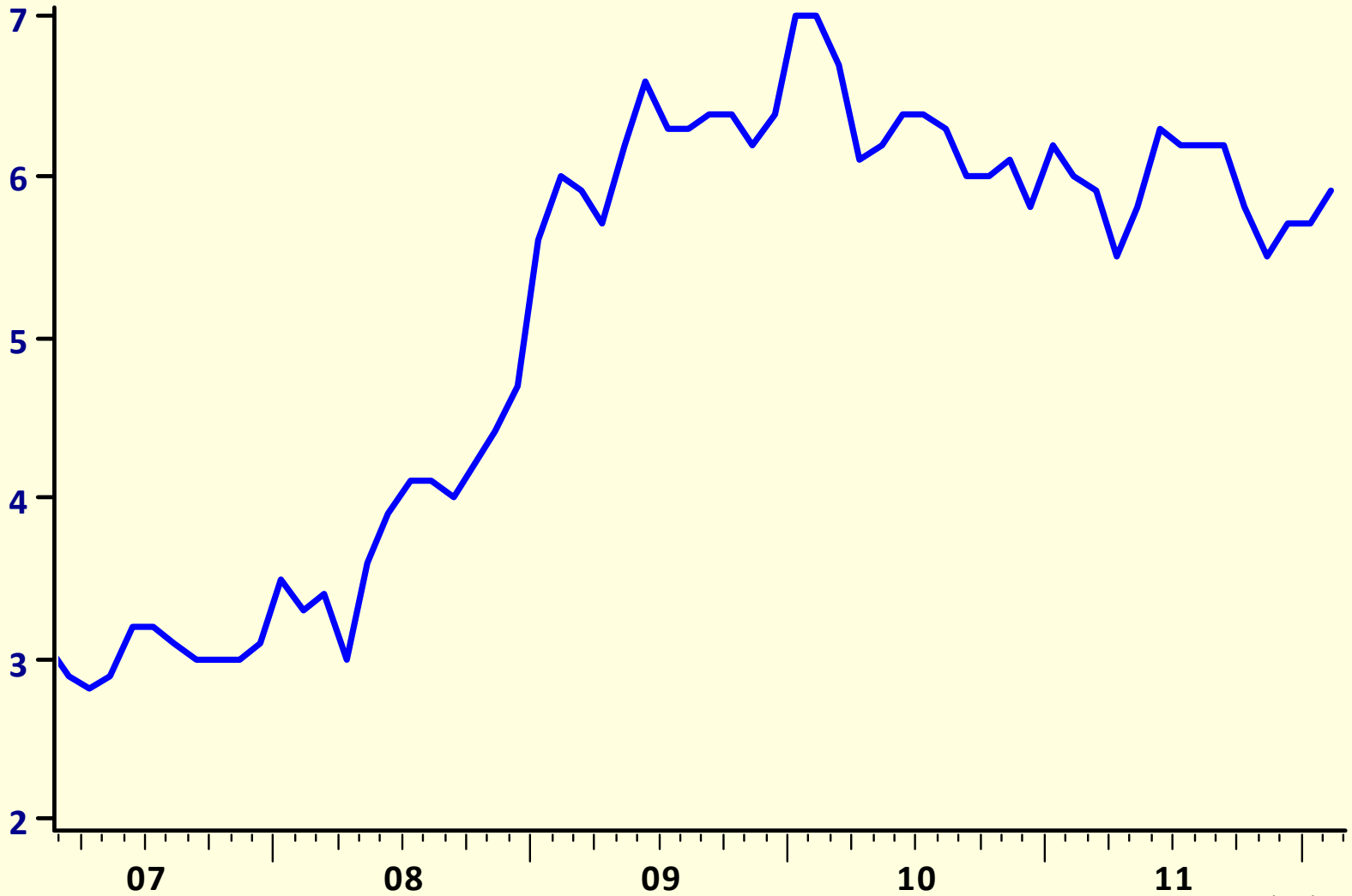
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics
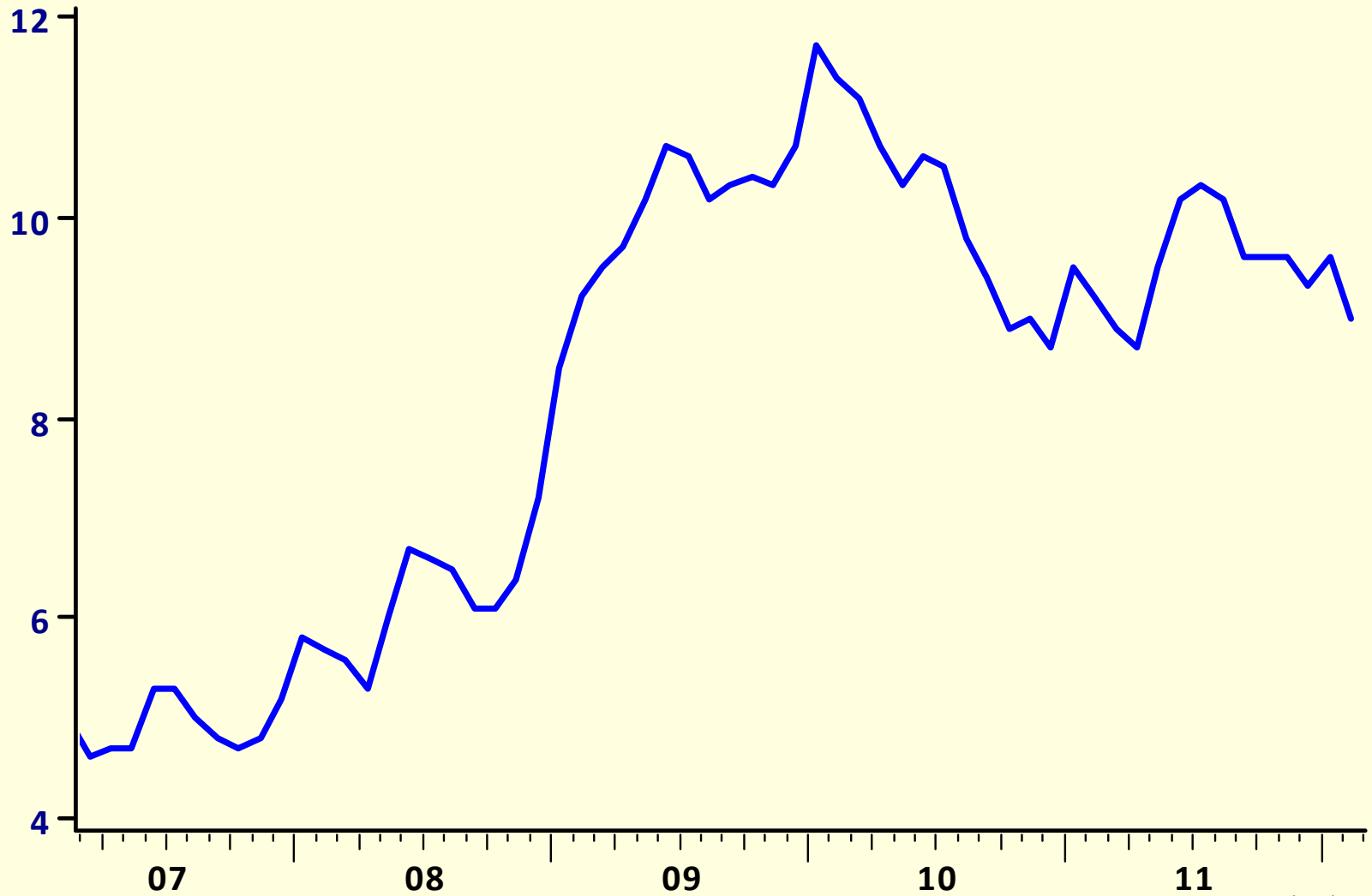
04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Atlanta GA

%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

04/12/12

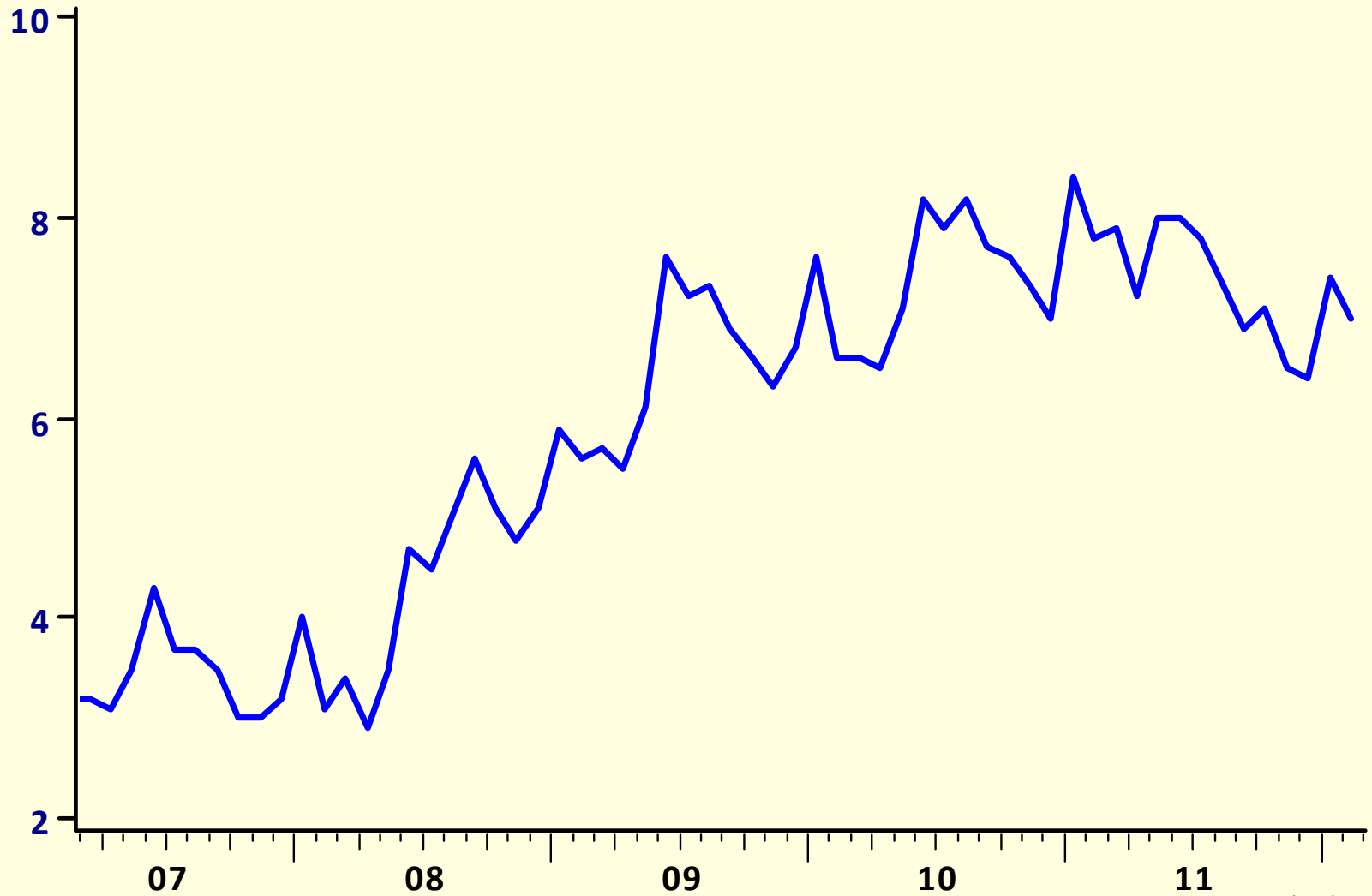# Unemployment Rate, Chicago-Naperville-Joliet, IL-IN-WI

%

04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, New Orleans-Metairie-Kenner, LA

%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics
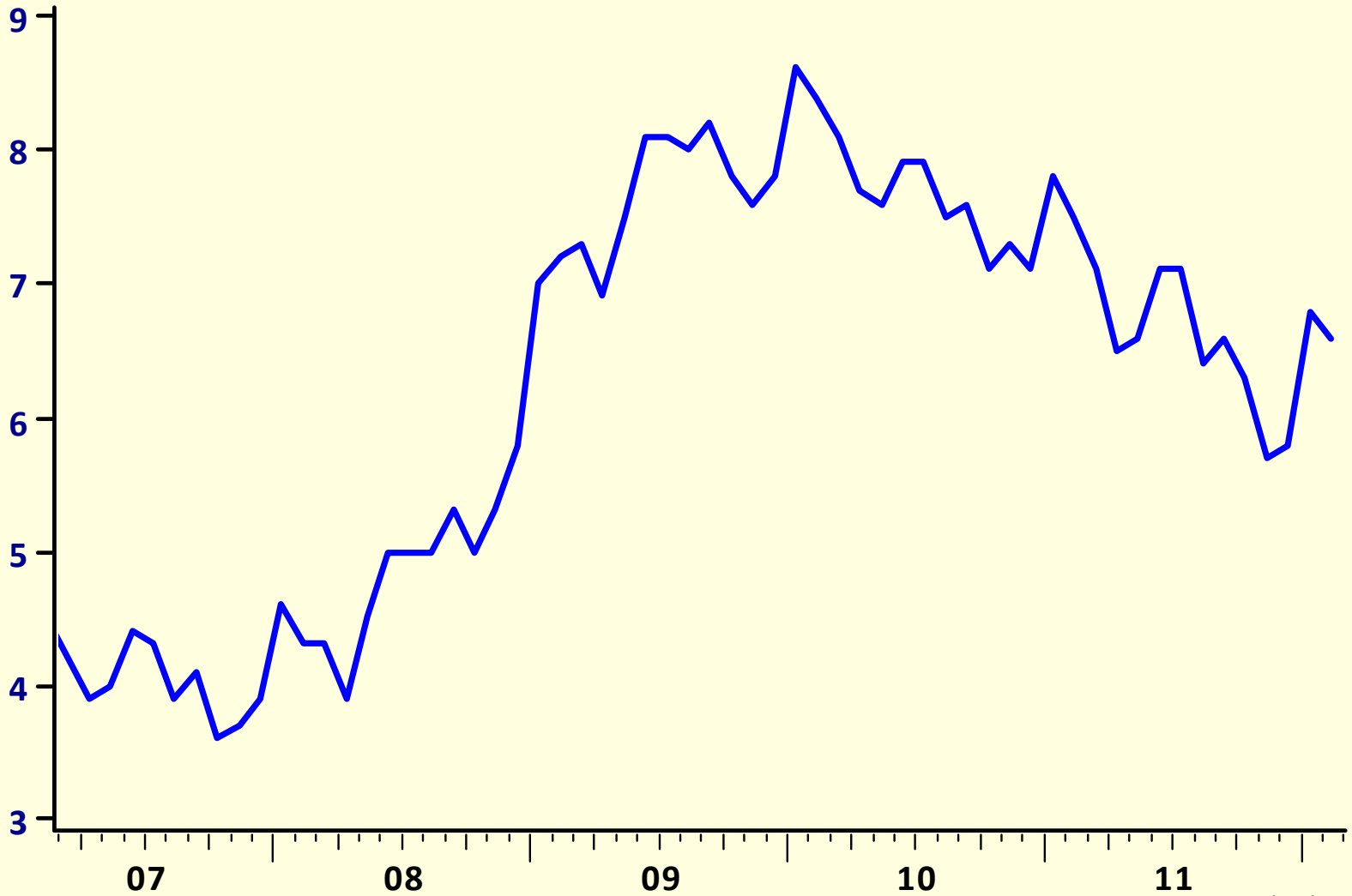
04/12/12

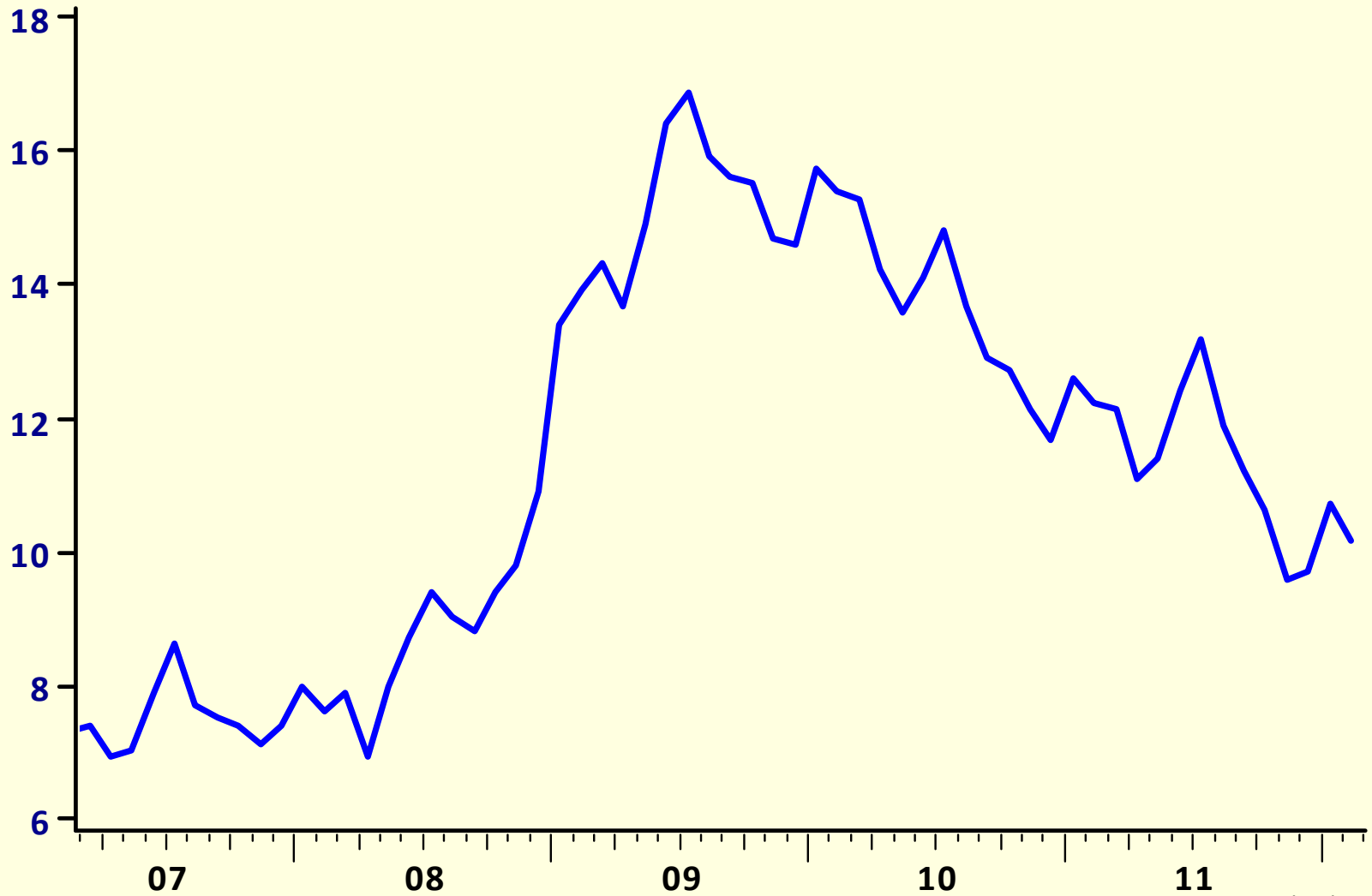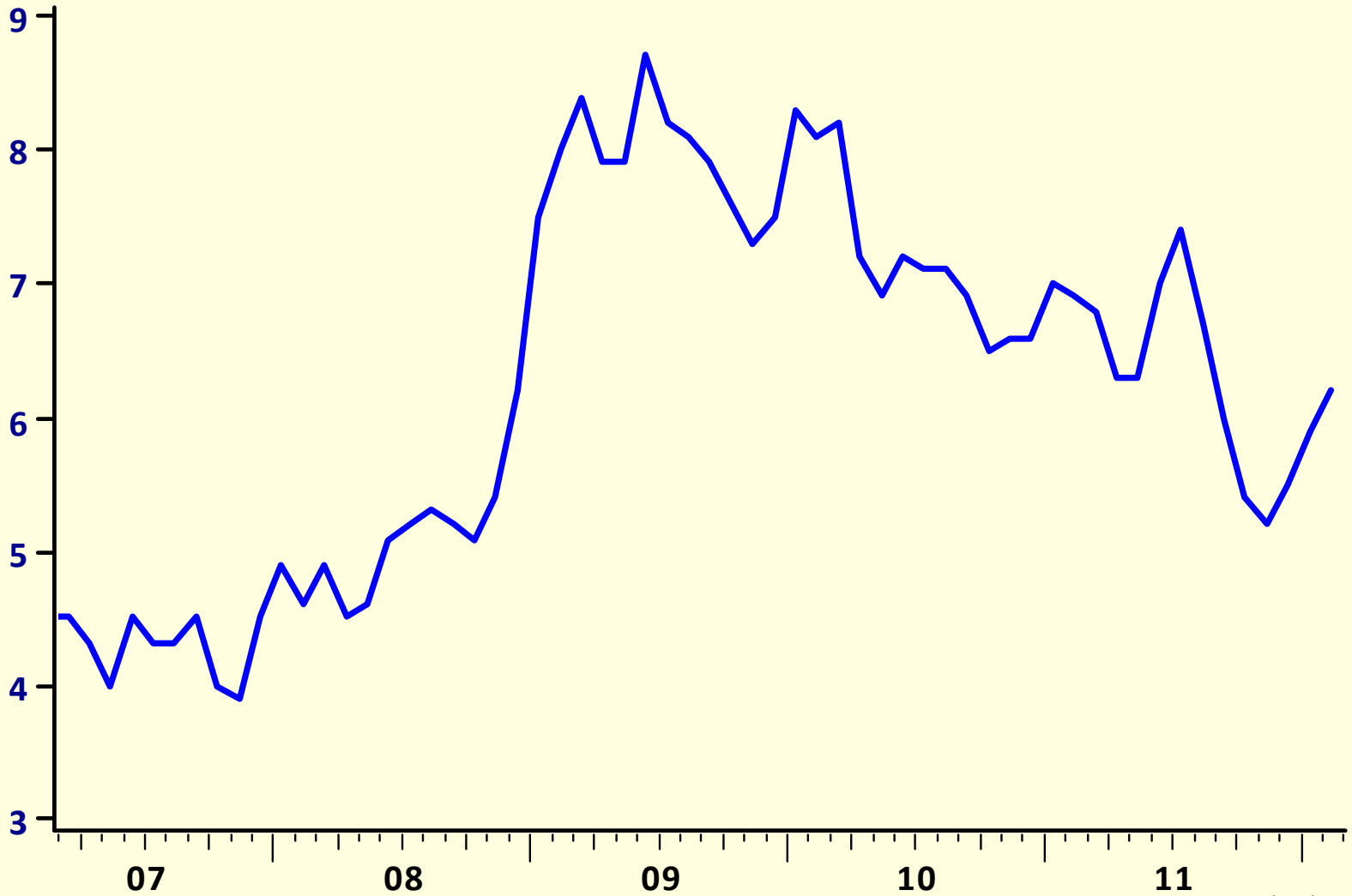# Unemployment Rate, Boston-Cambridge-Quincy, MA NECTA Division

%

04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Detroit-Warren-Livonia, MI

%

07   08   09   10   11

04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Minneapolis-St Paul MN-WI

%

07   08   09   10   11

04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, St Louis MO-IL

%

12

10

8

6

4

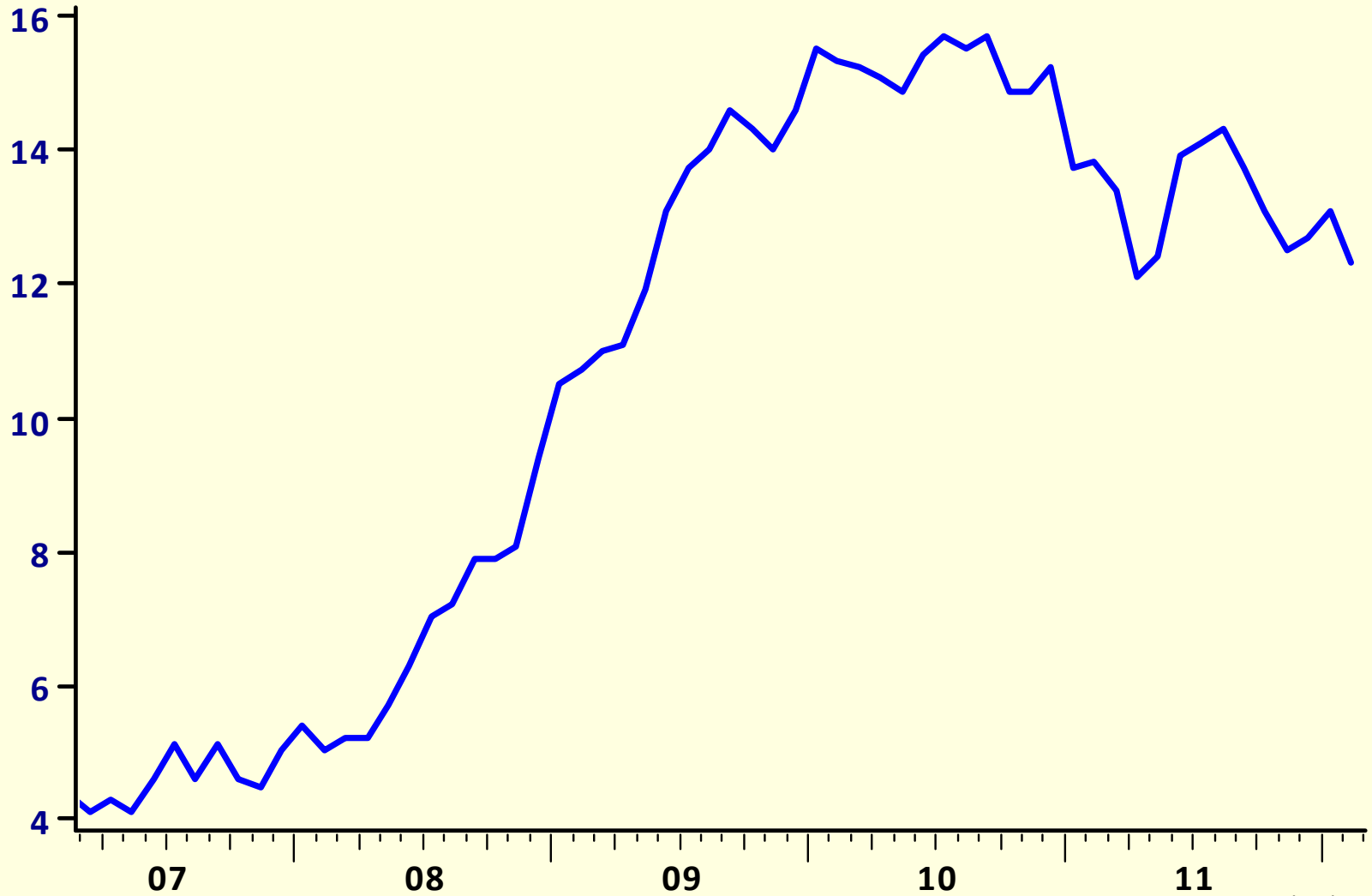07   08   09   10   11
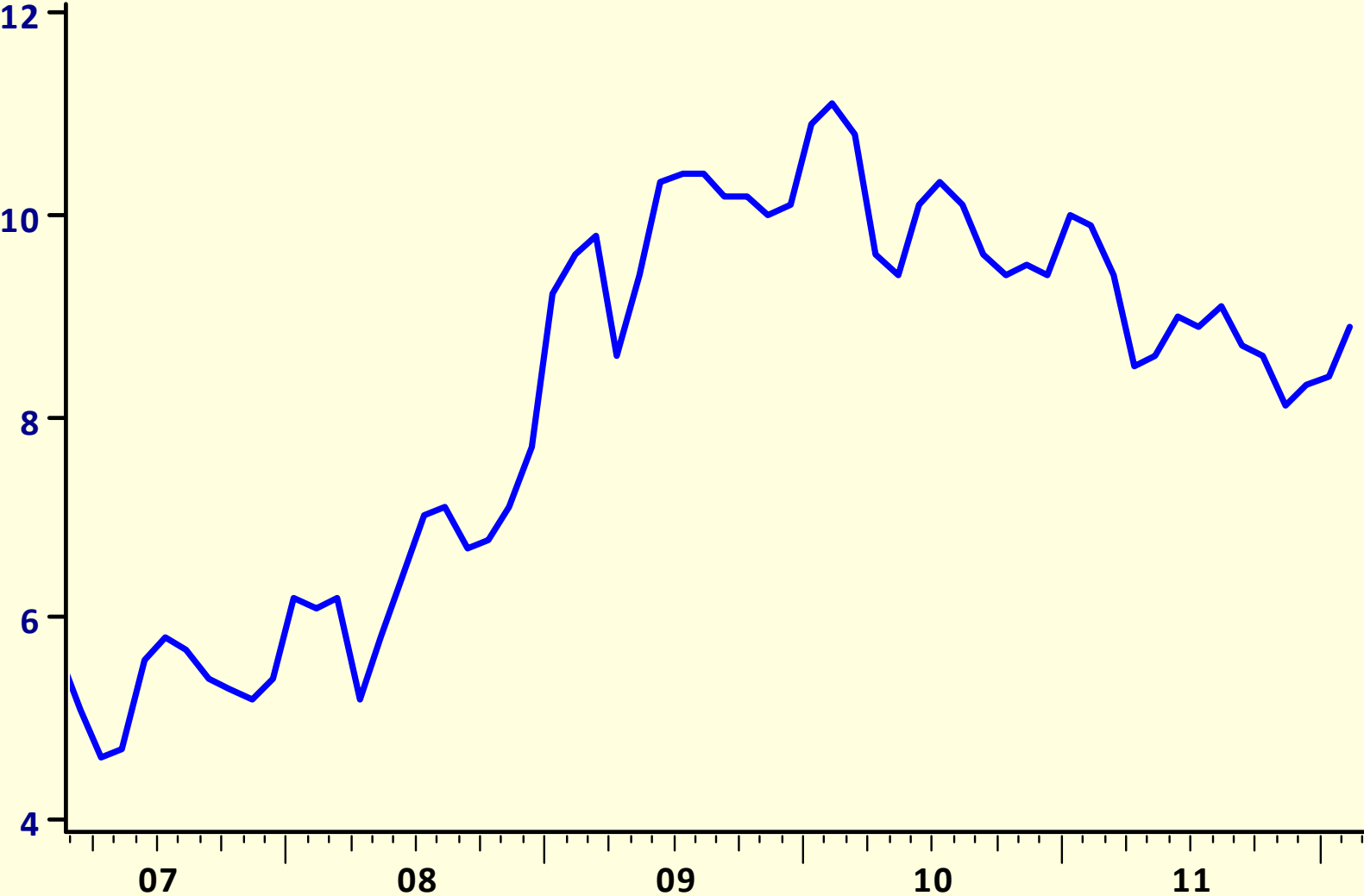
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics   04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Las Vegas-Paradise-Pahrump, NV CSA

%
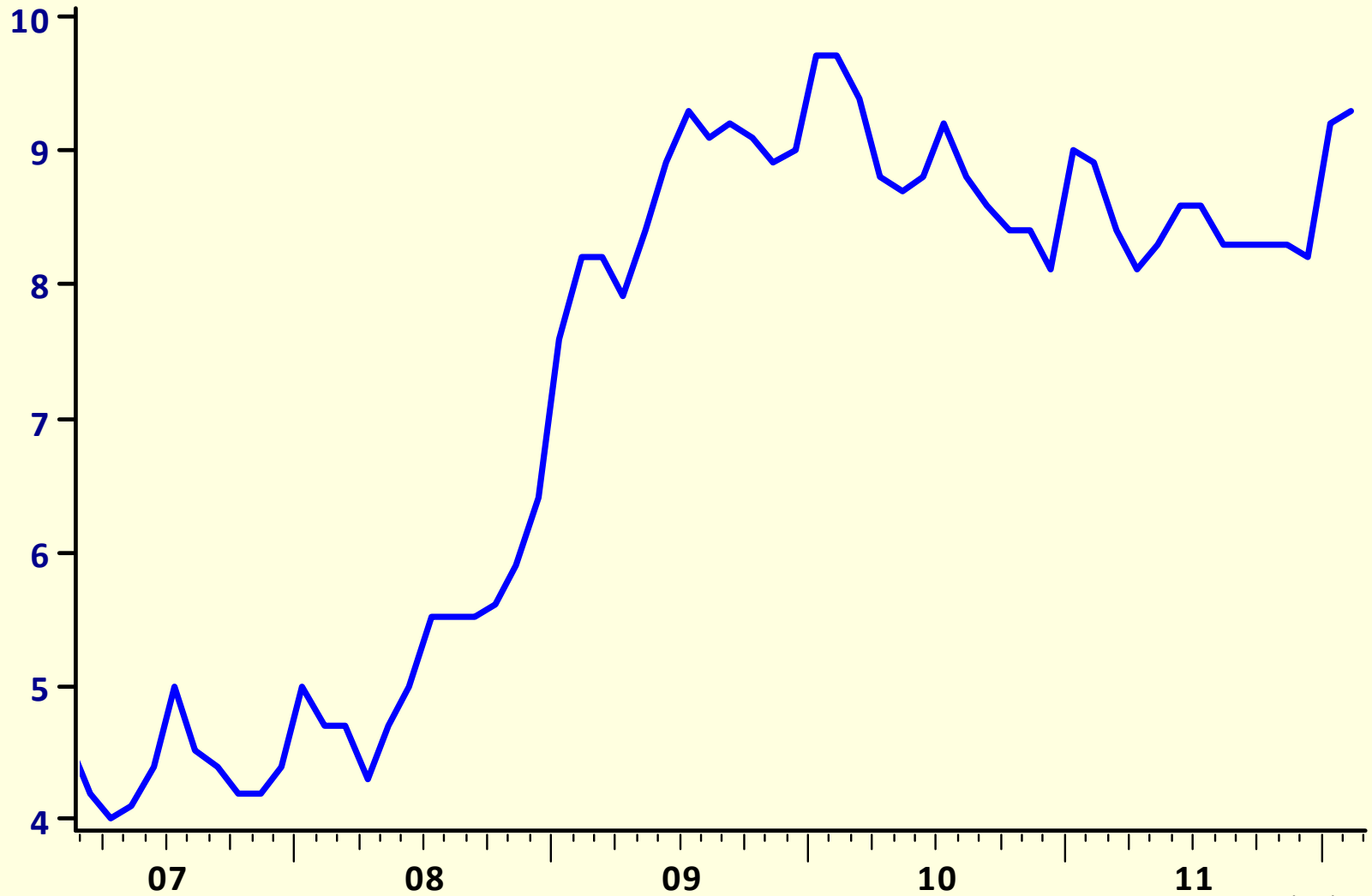

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

04/12/12

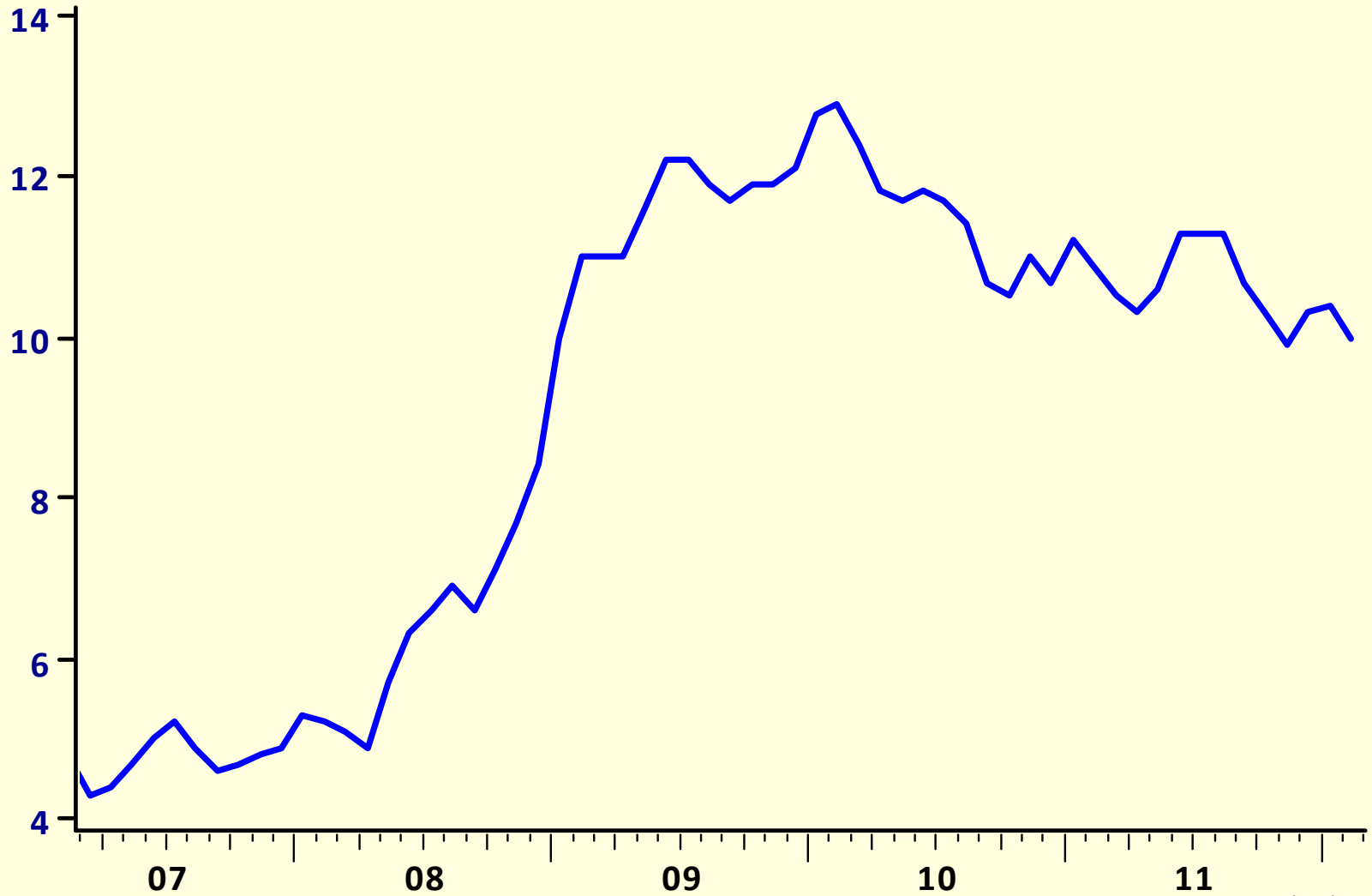**Unemployment Rate, New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island NY-NJ**

%

04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill NC-SC
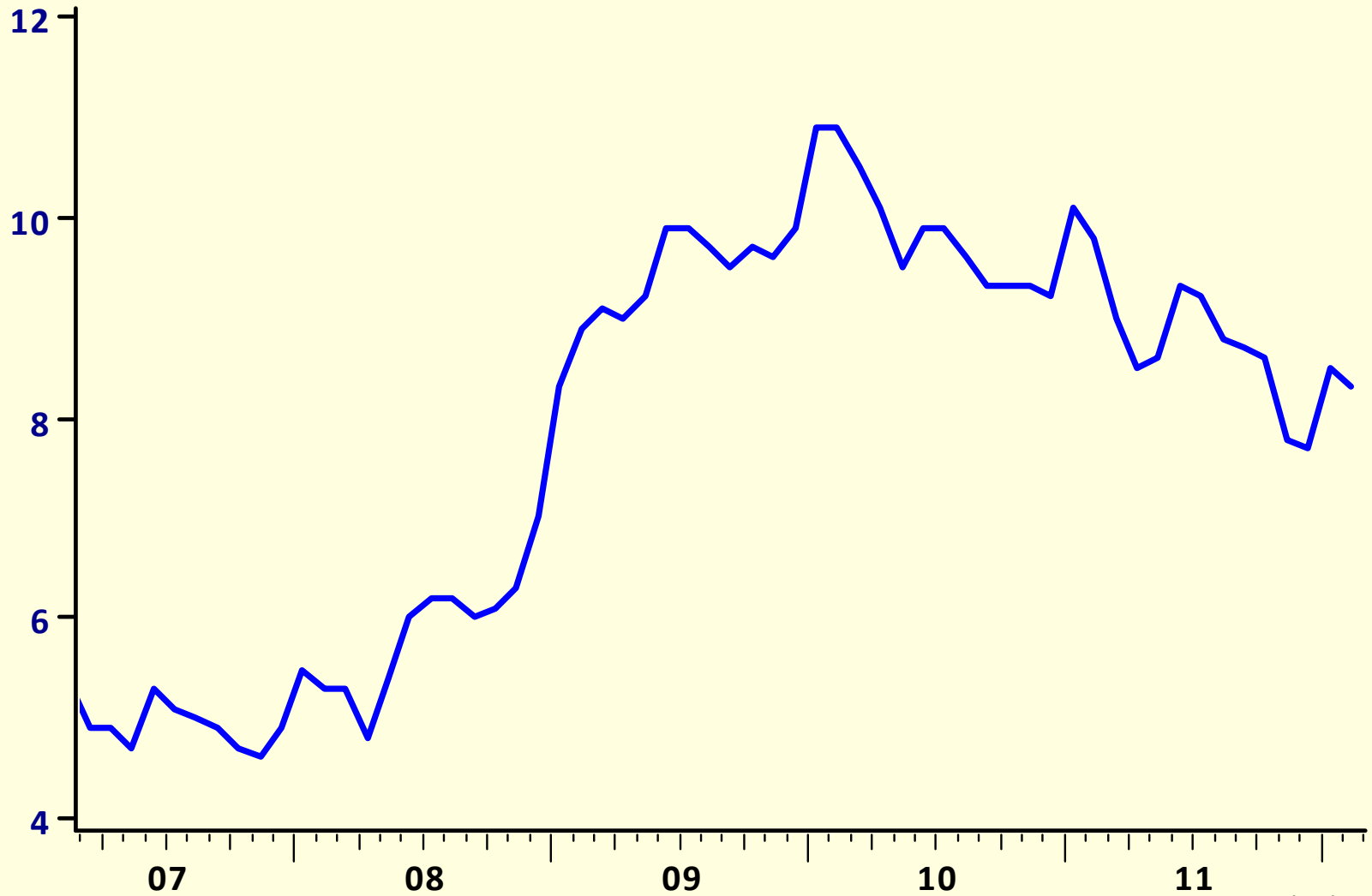
%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

04/12/12

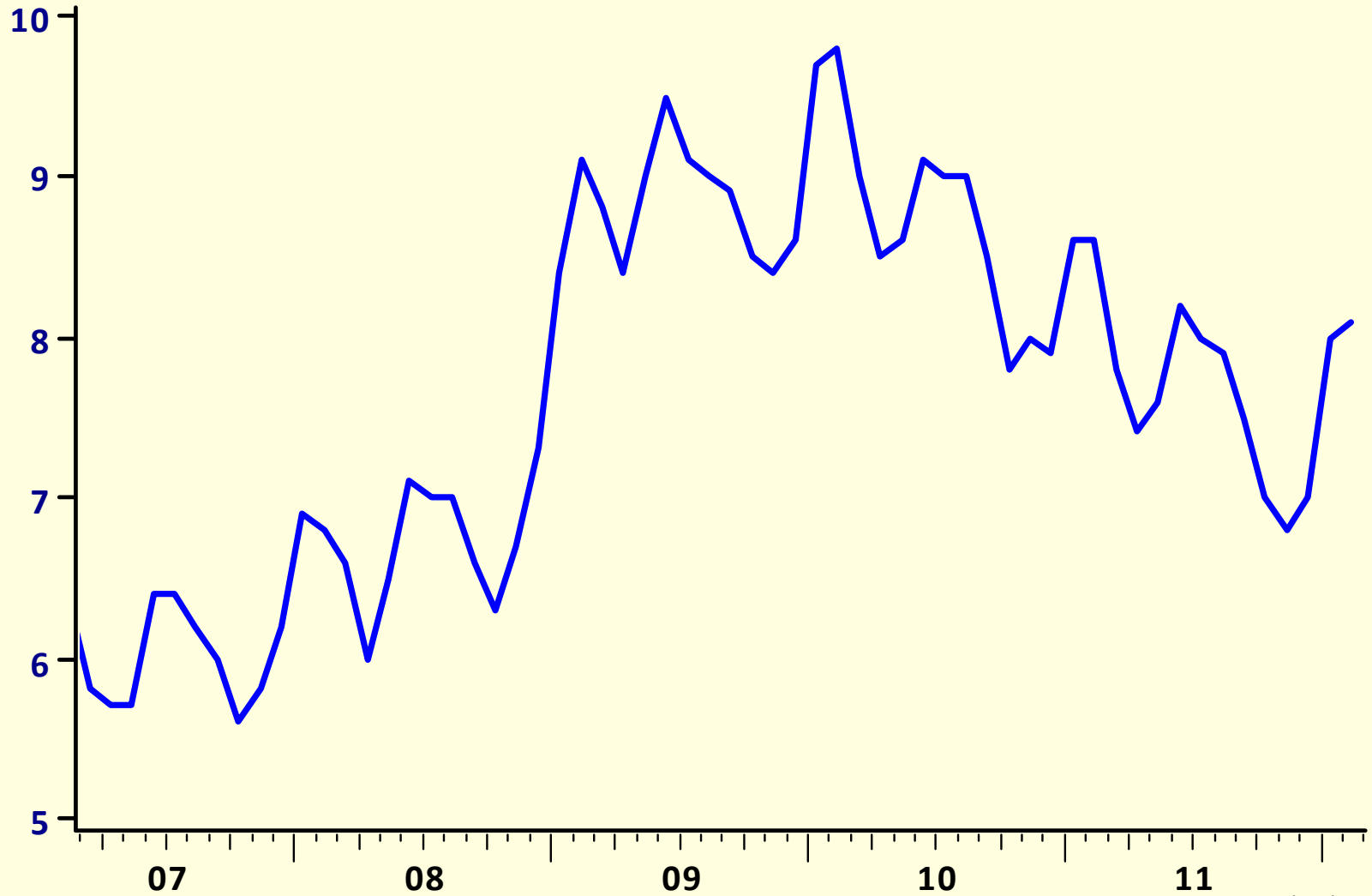**Unemployment Rate, Cincinnati-Middletown-Wilmington, OH-KY-IN CSA**

%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

04/12/12

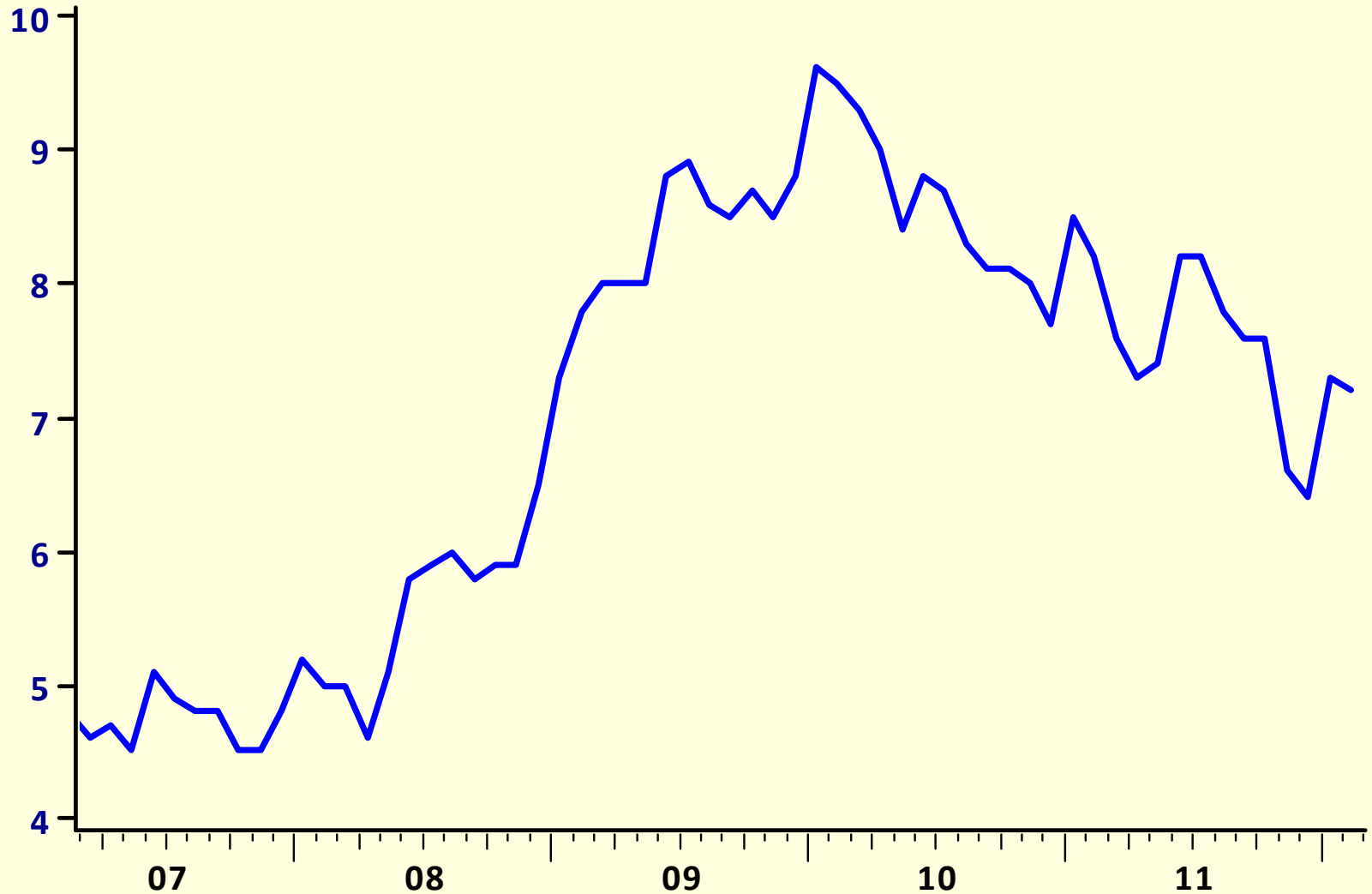# Unemployment Rate, Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, OH

%

04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Columbus OH

%

07   08   09   10   11
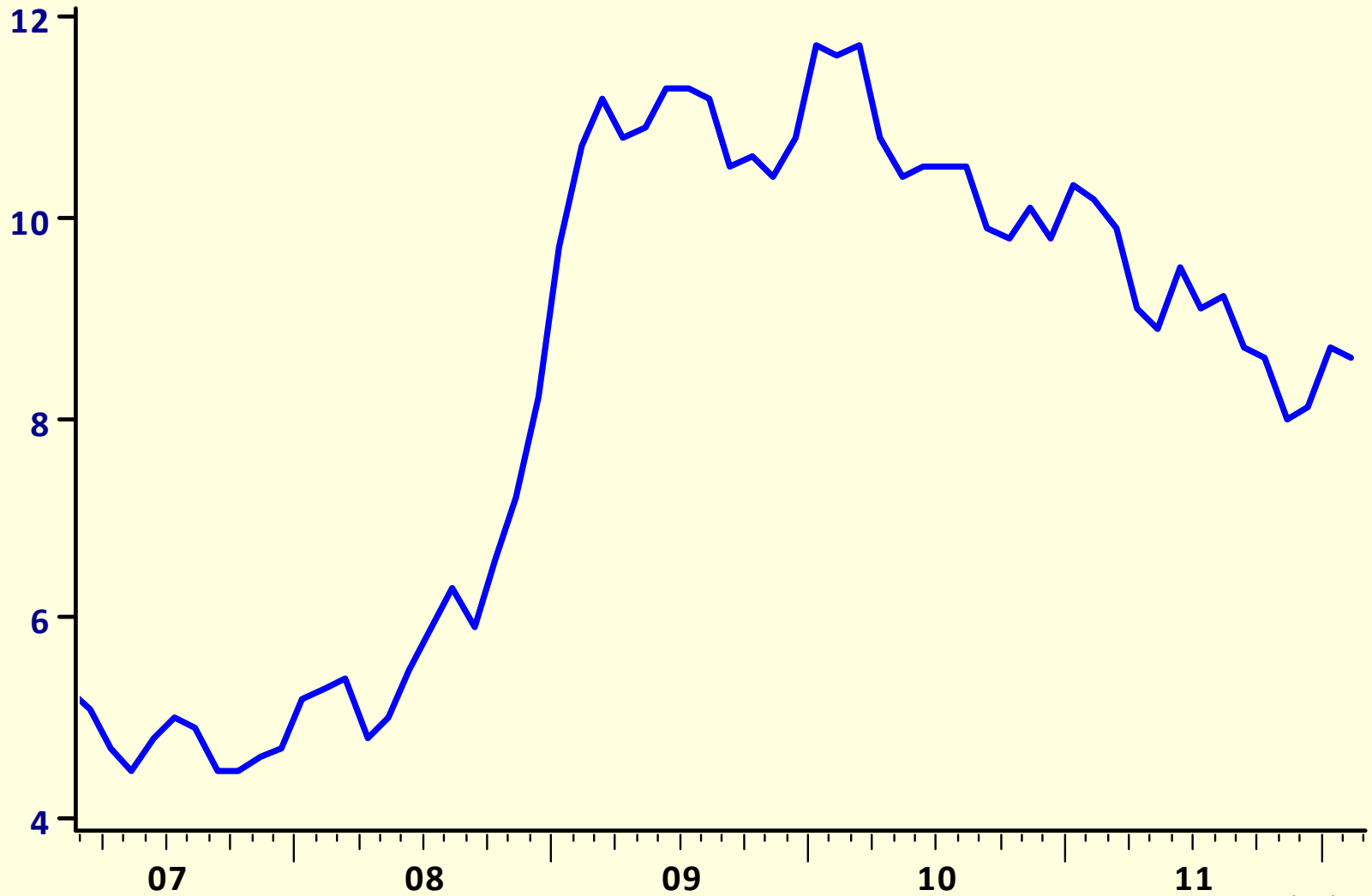
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

04/12/12

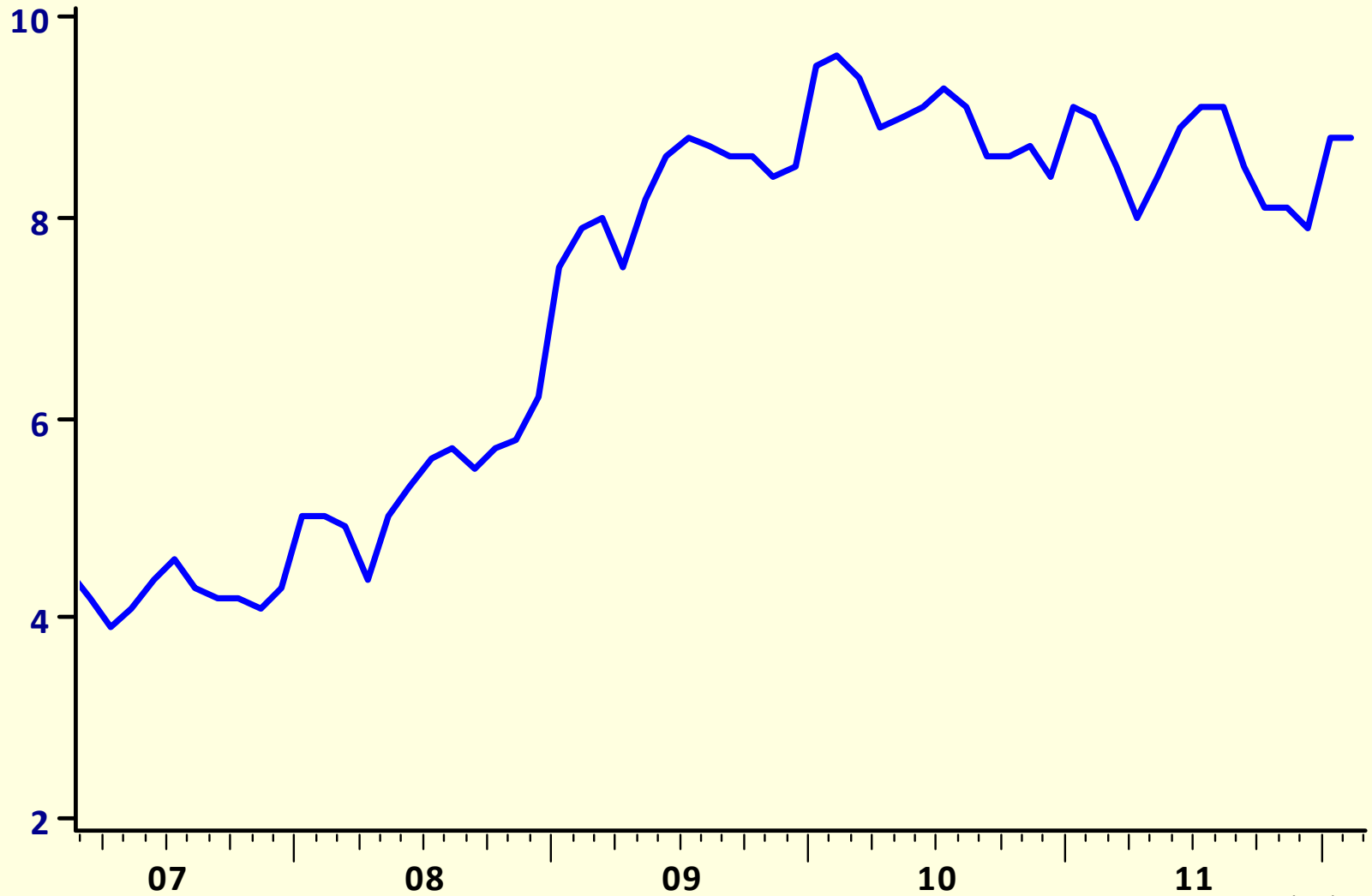# Unemployment Rate, Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton OR-WA

%

04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD

%

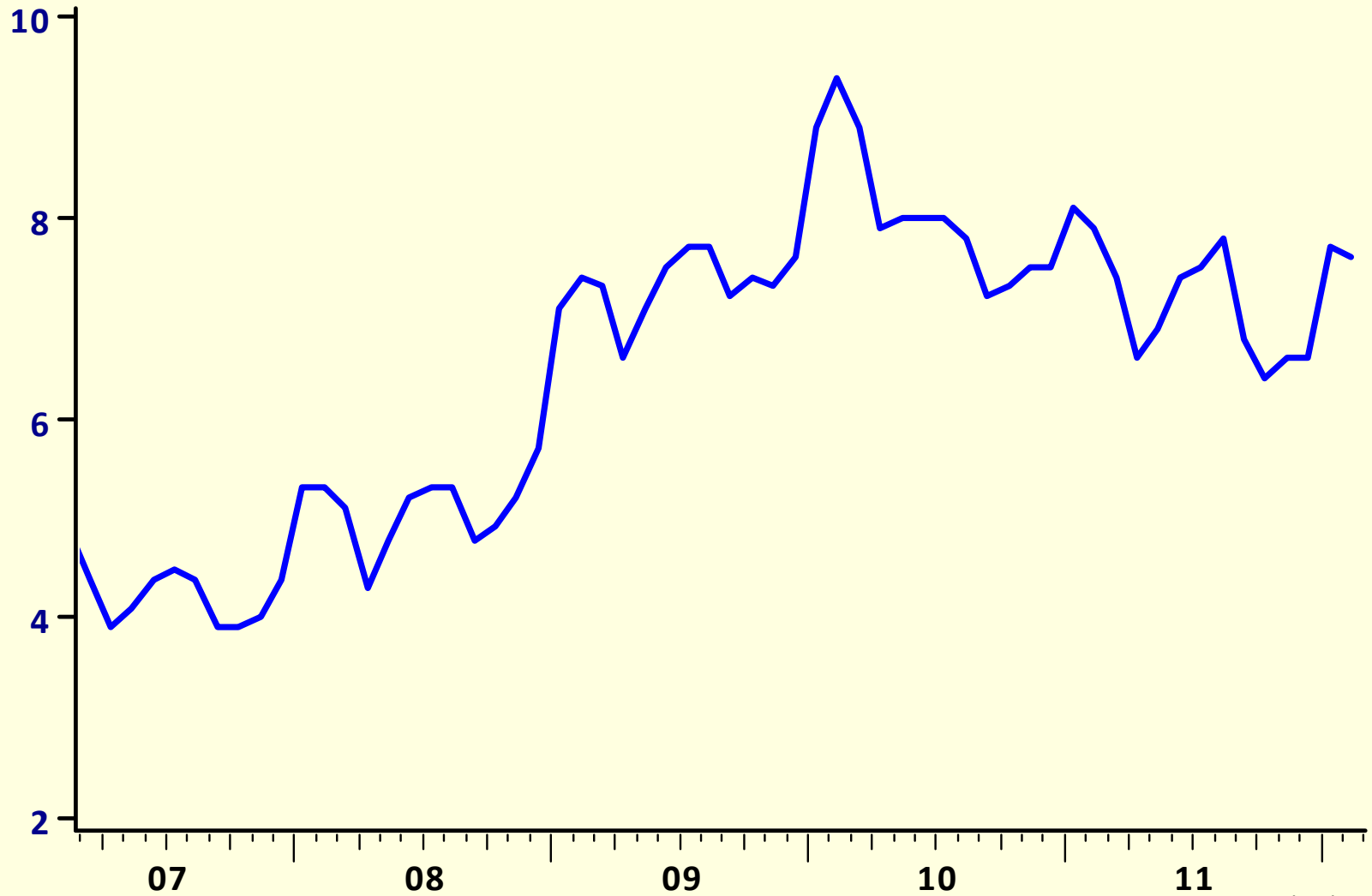Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

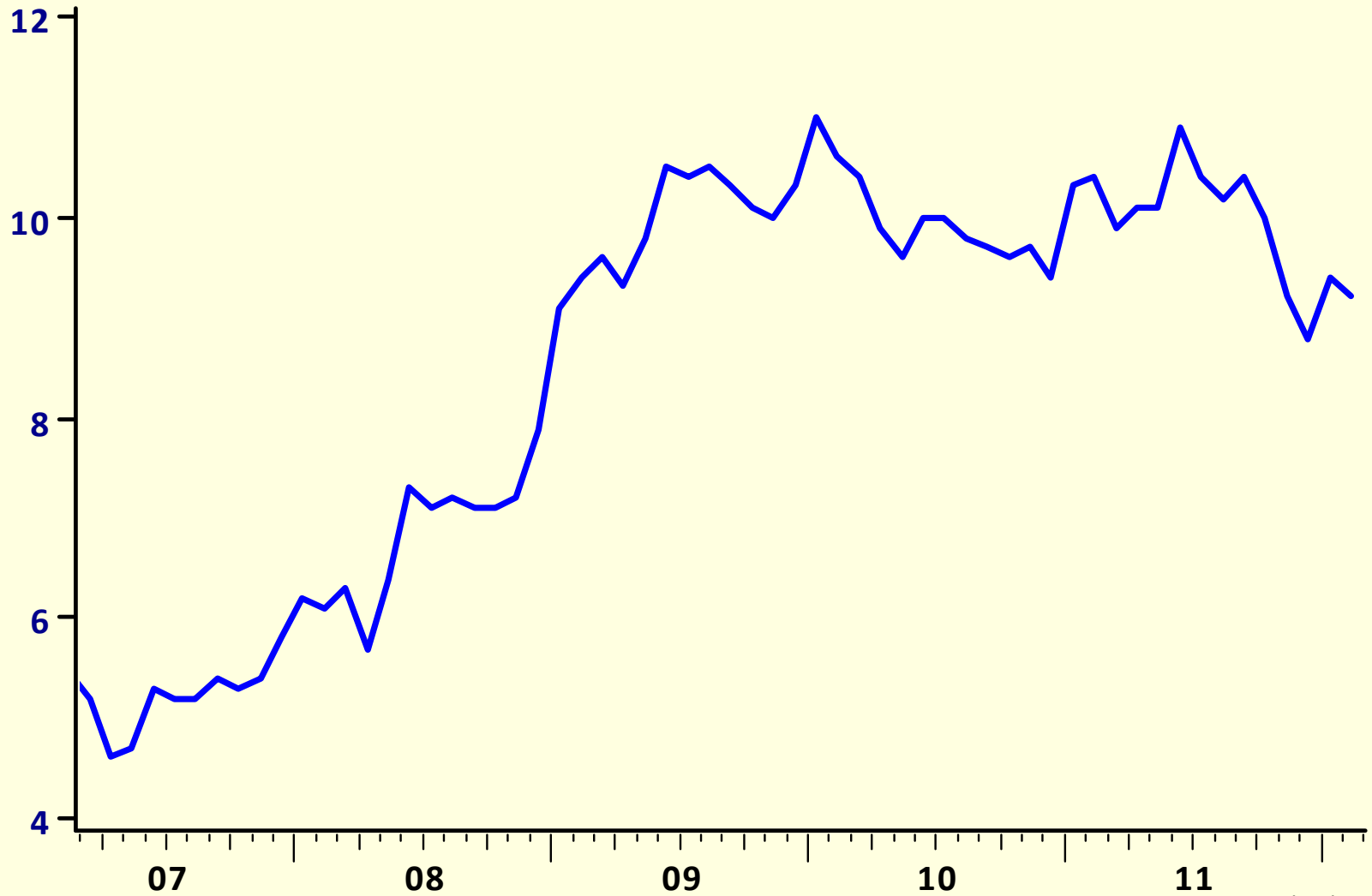04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Pittsburgh PA

%

10

8

6

4

2

07   08   09   10   11

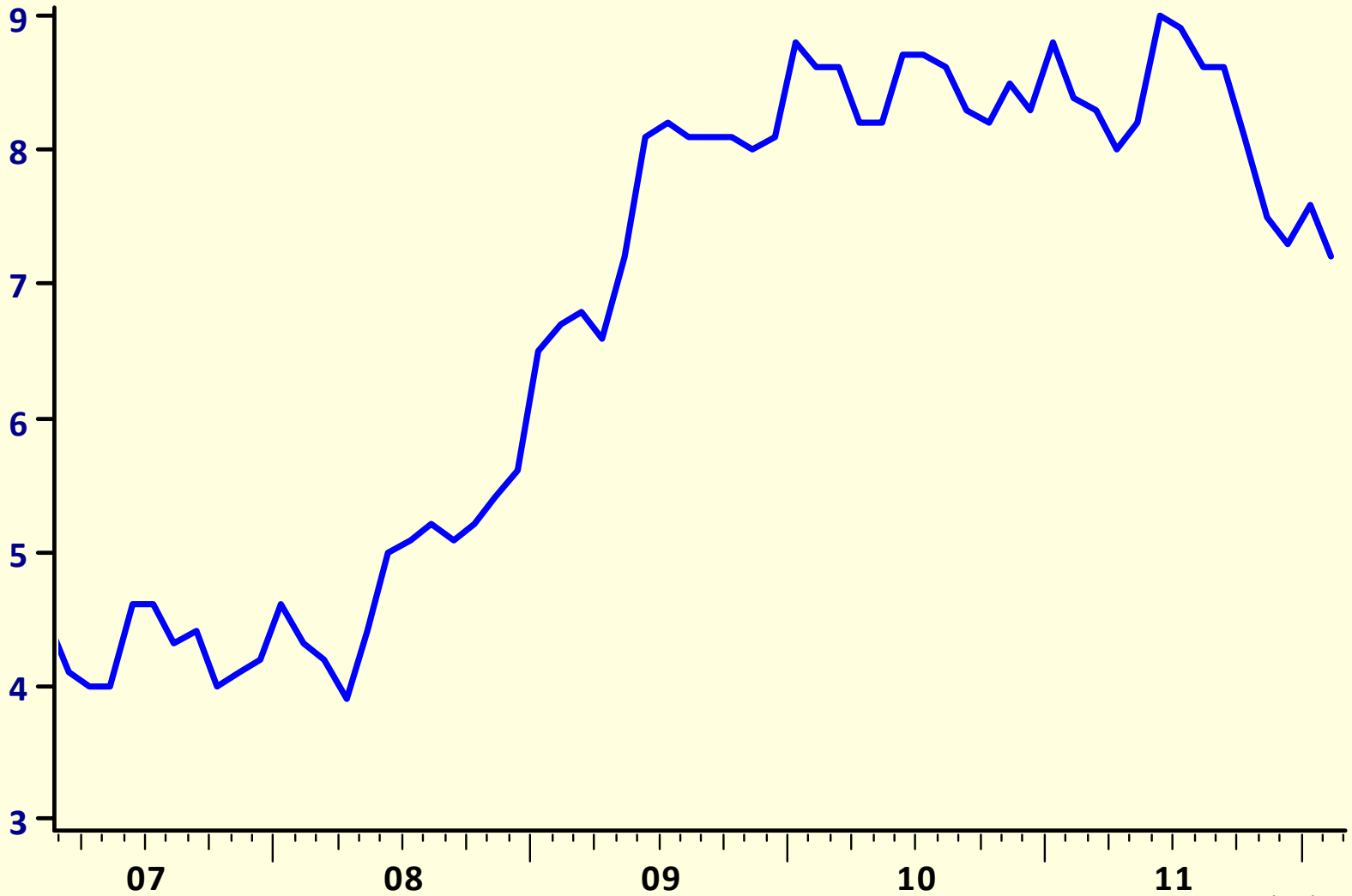Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics   04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Memphis TN-AR-MS

%

04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Houston-Baytown-Sugar Land, TX
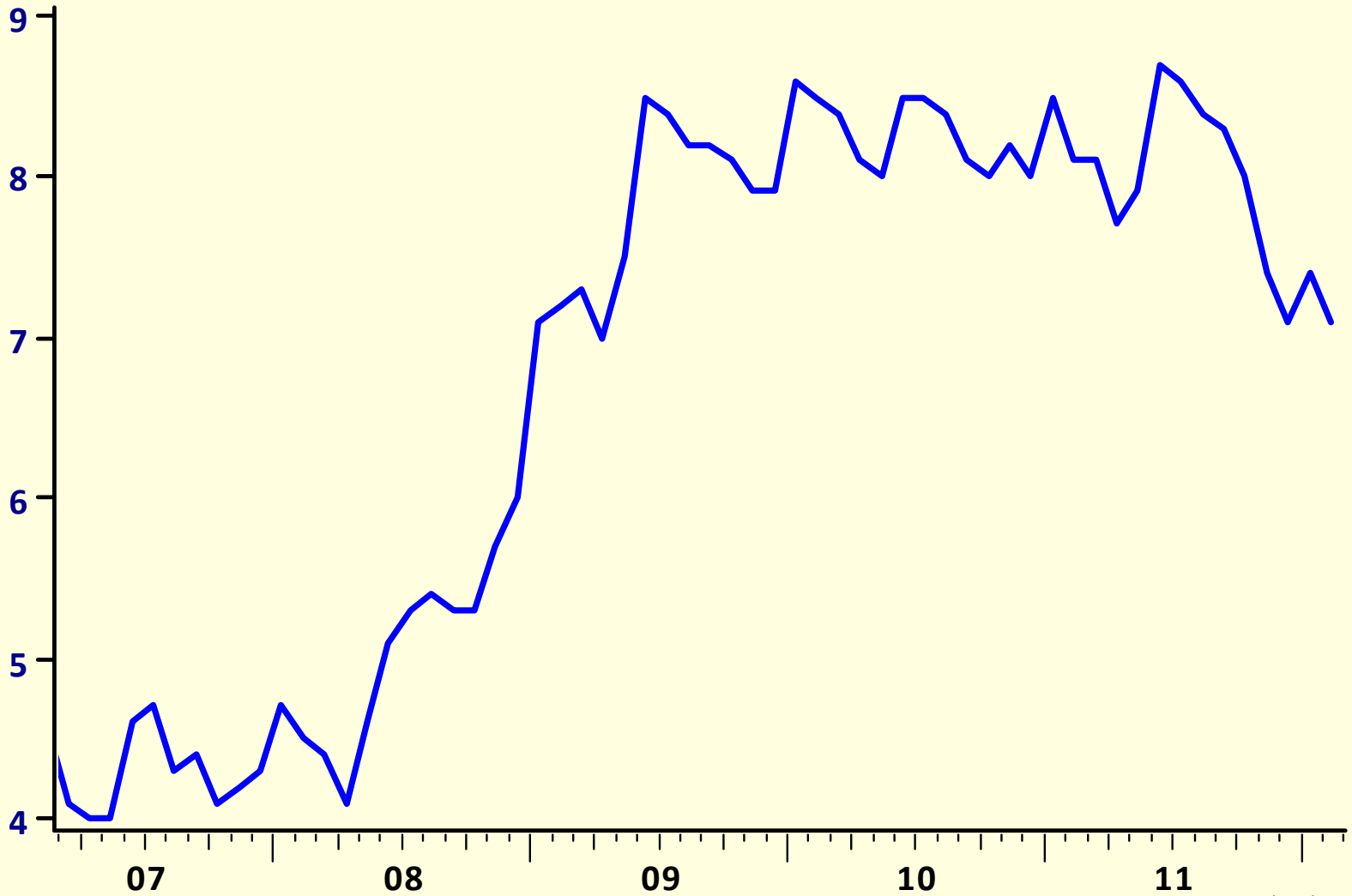
%

04/12/12

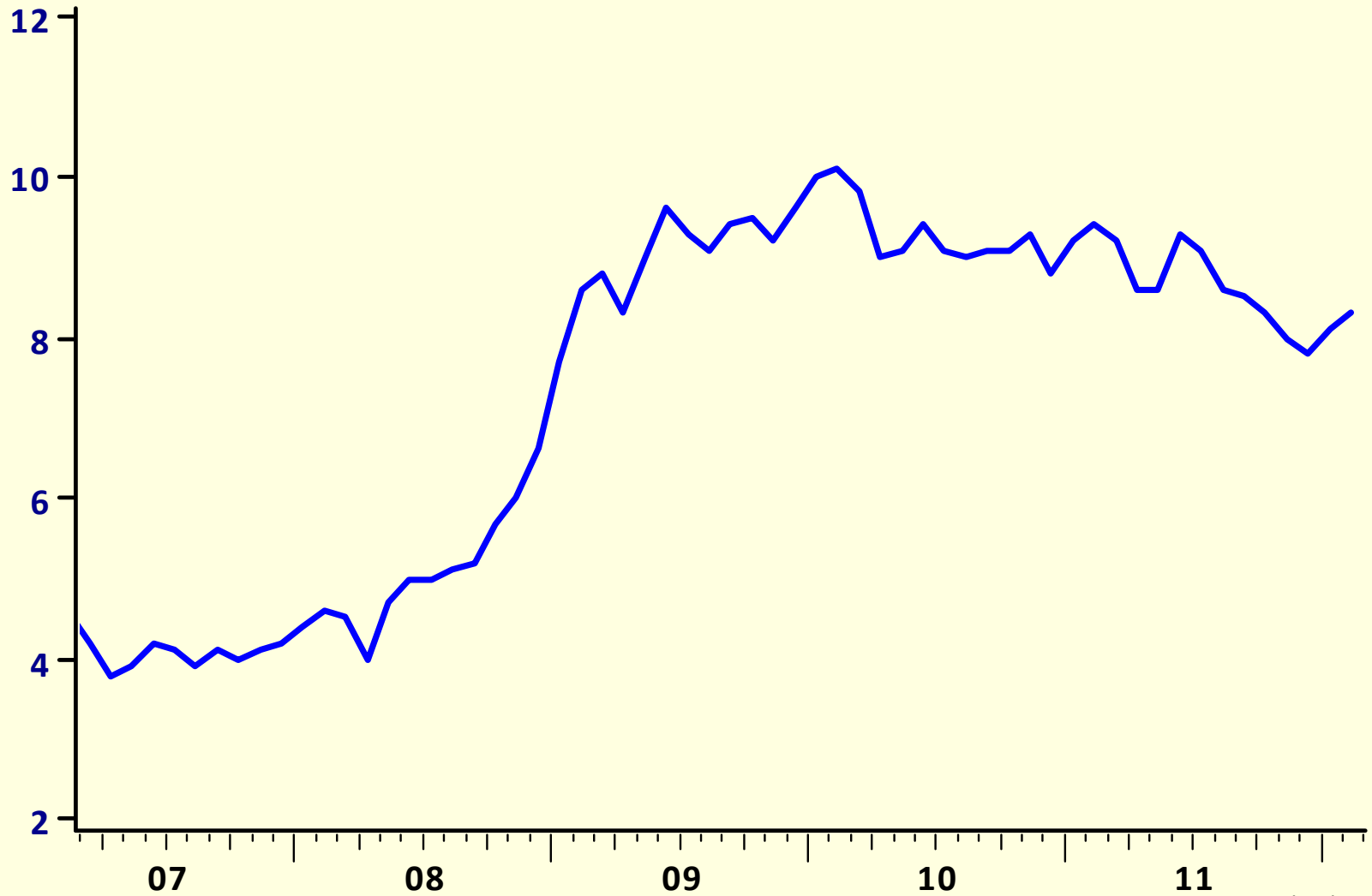# Unemployment Rate, Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX

%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

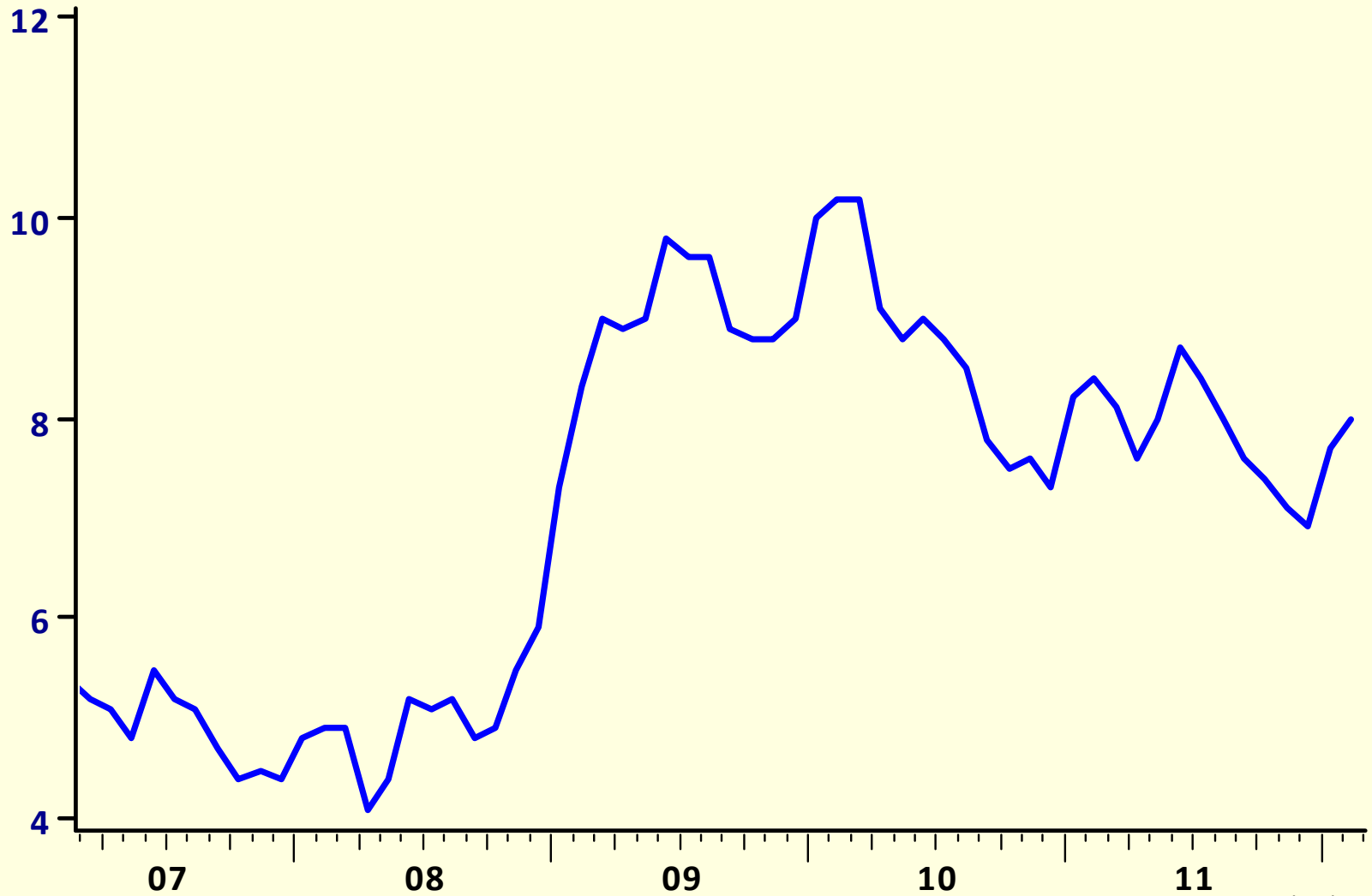04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA

%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

04/12/12

Unemployment Rate, Milwaukee-Waukesha WI

%

07   08   09   10   11

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

04/12/12