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Phoenix Drops Larger Percentage of Jobs Than Any Other U.S. City

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A larger percentage of jobs disappeared in Phoenix over the past year than any other major city in the country.

According to new figures from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Phoenix area workforce shrank by 7.8 percent between July 2008 and July 2009. Also suffering declines of at least 7 percent were Detroit and Tucson (7.5 percent each), Boise, Idaho (7.4 percent), and the Florida market of Bradenton-Sarasota (7.2 percent).

The nation's three biggest labor markets were also its three largest losers in total employment during the past 12 months.

The Los Angeles area lost 240,100 jobs between July 2008 and the same month this year, the biggest decline in raw numbers anywhere in America. The Chicago and

New York City markets were the runners-up with losses of 206,200 and 157,900 jobs, respectively.

Phoenix came in fourth place in this dubious category, losing more than 140,000 jobs from July of 2008 to July of 2009.

The continuing impact of the recession was evident in the almost universal downturn in employment. Ninety-seven of the top 100 markets lost jobs during the past year.

The exceptions were the Texas border metros of McAllen-Edinburg and El Paso, and Baton Rouge, La.