

Economic News Release

Employment Situation Summary

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Technical information:
Household data: (202) 691-6378 * cpsinfo@bls.gov * www.bls.gov/cps
Establishment data: (202) 691-6555 * cesinfo@bls.gov * www.bls.gov/ces

Media contact: (202) 691-5902 * PressOffice@bls.gov

THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION -- JANUARY 2022

Total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 467,000 in January, and the unemployment rate was little changed at 4.0 percent, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Employment growth continued in leisure and hospitality, in professional and business services, in retail trade, and in transportation and warehousing.

This news release presents statistics from two monthly surveys. The household survey measures labor force status, including unemployment, by demographic characteristics. The establishment survey measures nonfarm employment, hours, and earnings by industry. For more information about the concepts and statistical methodology used in these two surveys, see the Technical Note.

Changes to The Employment Situation Data

Establishment survey data have been revised as a result of the annual benchmarking process and the updating of seasonal adjustment factors. Also, household survey data for January 2022 reflect updated population estimates. See the notes at the end of this news release for more information.

Household Survey Data

Both the unemployment rate, at 4.0 percent, and the number of unemployed persons, at 6.5 million, changed little in January. Over the year, the unemployment rate is down by 2.4 percentage points, and the number of unemployed persons declined by 3.7 million. In February 2020, prior to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the unemployment rate was 3.5 percent, and unemployed persons numbered 5.7 million. (See table A-1. See the note at the end of this news release and tables B and C for information about annual population adjustments to the household survey estimates.)

Among the major worker groups, the unemployment rates for adult men (3.8 percent) and Whites (3.4 percent) edged up in January. The jobless rates for adult women (3.6 percent), teenagers (10.9 percent), Blacks (6.9 percent), Asians (3.6 percent), and Hispanics (4.9 percent) showed little or no change over the month. (See tables A-1, A-2, and A-3.)

Among the unemployed, the number of job leavers increased to 952,000 in January, following a decrease in the prior month. The number of persons on temporary layoff, at 959,000 in January, also increased over the month but is down by 1.8 million over the year. The number of permanent job losers, at 1.6 million, changed little in January but is down by 1.9 million from a year earlier. (See table A-11.)

In January, the number of persons jobless less than 5 weeks increased to 2.4 million and accounted for 37.0 percent of the total unemployed. The number of long-term unemployed (those jobless for 27 weeks or more) declined to 1.7 million. This measure is down from 4.0 million a year earlier but is 570,000 higher than in February 2020. The long-term unemployed accounted for 25.9 percent of the total unemployed in January. (See table A-12.)

After accounting for the annual adjustments to the population controls, the labor force participation rate held at 62.2 percent in January, and the employment-population ratio was little changed at 59.7 percent. Both measures are up over the year but remain below their February 2020 levels (63.4 percent and 61.2 percent, respectively). (See table A-1. For additional information about the effects of the population adjustments, see table C.)

The number of persons employed part time for economic reasons, at 3.7 million, continued to trend down over the month. The over-the-year decline of 2.2 million brings this measure to 673,000 below its February 2020 level. These individuals, who would have preferred full-time employment, were working part time because their hours had been reduced or they were unable to find full-time jobs. (See table A-8.)

The number of persons not in the labor force who currently want a job was little changed at 5.7 million in January. This measure decreased by 1.3 million over the year but is 708,000 higher than in February 2020. These individuals were not counted as unemployed because they were not actively looking for work during the 4 weeks preceding the survey or were unavailable to take a job. (See table A-1.)

Among those not in the labor force who wanted a job, the number of persons marginally attached to the labor force, at 1.5 million, changed little in January. These individuals wanted and were available for work and had looked for a job sometime in the prior 12 months but had not looked for work in the 4 weeks preceding the survey. The number of discouraged workers, a subset of the marginally attached who believed that no jobs were available for them, was also little changed over the month, at 408,000. (See Summary table A.)

Household Survey Supplemental Data

In January, the share of employed persons who teleworked because of the coronavirus pandemic increased to 15.4 percent. These data refer to employed persons who teleworked or worked at home for pay at some point in the 4 weeks preceding the survey specifically because of the pandemic.

In January, 6.0 million persons reported that they had been unable to work because their employer closed or lost business due to the pandemic--that is, they did not work at all or worked fewer hours at some point in the 4 weeks preceding the survey due to the pandemic. This measure is considerably higher than the level of 3.1 million in December. Among those who reported in January that they were unable to work because of pandemic-related closures or lost business, 23.7 percent received at least some pay from their employer for the hours not worked, up from the prior month.

Among those not in the labor force in January, 1.8 million persons were prevented from looking for work due to the pandemic, up from 1.1 million in the prior month. (To be counted as unemployed, by definition, individuals must be either actively looking for work or on temporary layoff.)

These supplemental data come from questions added to the household survey beginning in May 2020 to help gauge the effects of the pandemic on the labor market. The data are not seasonally adjusted. Tables with estimates from the supplemental questions for all months are available online at www.bls.gov/cps/effects-of-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic.htm.

Establishment Survey Data

Total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 467,000 in January, compared with an average monthly gain of 555,000 in 2021. Nonfarm employment has increased by 19.1 million since April 2020 but is down by 2.9 million, or 1.9 percent, from its pre-pandemic level in February 2020. In January, employment growth continued in leisure and hospitality, in professional and business services, in retail trade, and in

transportation and warehousing. (See table B-1. See the note at the end of this news release and table A for information about the annual benchmark process.)

Employment in leisure and hospitality expanded by 151,000 in January, reflecting job gains in food services and drinking places (+108,000) and in the accommodation industry (+23,000). Since February 2020, employment in leisure and hospitality is down by 1.8 million, or 10.3 percent.

In January, professional and business services added 86,000 jobs. Job gains occurred in management and technical consulting services (+16,000), computer systems design and related services (+15,000), architectural and engineering services (+8,000), and other professional and technical services (+7,000). Employment in temporary help services continued to trend up (+26,000). Employment in professional and business services is 511,000 higher than in February 2020, largely in temporary help services (+185,000), computer systems design and related services (+161,000), and management and technical consulting services (+151,000).

Retail trade employment rose by 61,000 in January. Job growth occurred in general merchandise stores (+29,000); health and personal care stores (+11,000); sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores (+7,000); and building material and garden supply stores (+6,000). Retail trade employment is 61,000 above its level in February 2020.

Employment in transportation and warehousing increased by 54,000 in January and is 542,000 higher than in February 2020. In January, job gains occurred in couriers and messengers (+21,000), warehousing and storage (+13,000), truck transportation (+8,000), and air transportation (+7,000). All four of these component industries have surpassed their February 2020 employment levels, with particularly strong growth in warehousing and storage (+410,000) and couriers and messengers (+236,000).

Employment in local government education rose by 29,000 in January but is down by 359,000, or 4.4 percent, since February 2020.

Employment in health care continued to trend up (+18,000) over the month but is down by 378,000, or 2.3 percent, from its level in February 2020.

Wholesale trade added 16,000 jobs in January, with gains in both durable goods (+11,000) and nondurable goods (+8,000). Employment in wholesale trade is 125,000, or 2.1 percent, lower than in February 2020.

Employment showed little change over the month in mining, construction, manufacturing, information, financial activities, and other services.

In January, average hourly earnings for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls increased by 23 cents to \$31.63. Over the past 12 months, average hourly earnings have increased by 5.7 percent. In January, average hourly earnings of private-sector production and nonsupervisory employees rose by 17 cents to \$26.92. (See tables B-3 and B-8.)

The average workweek for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls fell by 0.2 hour to 34.5 hours in January. In manufacturing, the average workweek edged down by 0.1 hour to 40.2 hours, and overtime edged up by 0.1 hour to 3.3 hours. The average workweek for production and nonsupervisory employees on private nonfarm payrolls decreased by 0.2 hour to 33.9 hours. (See tables B-2 and B-7.)

In accordance with usual practice, the seasonal adjustment models are updated as part of the annual benchmark process. As a result of the updates, there were some large revisions to seasonally adjusted data that mostly offset each other. (See the note at the end of this news release and table A for information about the revisions, the annual benchmark process, and the seasonal adjustment model updates.)

The Employment Situation for February is scheduled to be released on Friday, March 4, 2022, at 8:30 a.m. (ET).

Revisions to Establishment Survey Data

In accordance with annual practice, the establishment survey data released today have been benchmarked to reflect comprehensive counts of payroll jobs for March 2021. These counts are derived principally from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), which counts jobs covered by the Unemployment Insurance (UI) tax system. The benchmark process results in revisions to not seasonally adjusted data from April 2020 forward. Seasonally adjusted data from January 2017 forward are subject to revision. In addition, data for some series prior to 2017, both seasonally adjusted and unadjusted, incorporate other revisions.

The total nonfarm employment level for March 2021 was revised upward by 374,000. On a not seasonally adjusted basis, total nonfarm employment for March 2021 was revised downward by 7,000, or less than -0.05 percent. Not seasonally adjusted, the absolute average benchmark revision over the past 10 years is 0.1 percent.

As part of the benchmark process, the seasonal adjustment models are also updated. These models remove normal seasonal fluctuations--such as regular employment changes due to major holidays--from the data series, making it easier to observe cyclical and other economic trends. Now that there are more monthly observations related to the historically large job losses and gains seen in the pandemic-driven recession and recovery, the models can better distinguish normal seasonal movements from underlying trends. As a result, some large revisions to seasonally adjusted data occurred with the updated models; however, these monthly changes mostly offset each other. For example, the over-the-month employment change for November and December 2021 combined is 709,000 higher than previously reported, while the over-the-month employment change for June and July 2021 combined is 807,000 lower. Overall, the 2021 over-the-year change is 217,000 higher than previously reported. Going forward, the updated models should produce more reliable estimates of seasonal movements. Table A presents revised total nonfarm employment data on a seasonally adjusted basis from January to December 2021.

All revised historical establishment survey data are available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/ces/data/home.htm. In addition, an article that discusses the benchmark and post-benchmark revisions and other technical issues is available at www.bls.gov/web/empisit/cesbmart.htm.

Table A. Revisions to total nonfarm employment, January to December 2021, seasonally adjusted
(Numbers in thousands)

Year and month	Level			Over-the-month change		
	As revised	As previously published	Difference	As revised	As previously published	Difference
2021						
January.....	143,017	142,736	281	520	233	287
February.....	143,727	143,272	455	710	536	174
March.....	144,431	144,057	374	704	785	-81
April.....	144,694	144,326	368	263	269	-6
May.....	145,141	144,940	201	447	614	-167
June.....	145,698	145,902	-204	557	962	-405
July.....	146,387	146,993	-606	689	1,091	-402
August.....	146,904	147,476	-572	517	483	34
September.....	147,328	147,855	-527	424	379	45
October.....	148,005	148,503	-498	677	648	29
November.....	148,652	148,752	-100	647	249	398
December(p).....	149,162	148,951	211	510	199	311

(p) = preliminary

Adjustments to Population Estimates for the Household Survey

Effective with data for January 2022, updated population estimates were incorporated into the household survey. Population estimates for the household survey are developed by the U.S. Census Bureau. Each year, the Census Bureau updates the estimates to reflect new information and assumptions about the growth of the population since the previous decennial census. The change in population reflected in the new estimates results from the introduction of a blended 2020 population base, which combines population totals from the 2020 Census and demographic characteristics from other sources. It also reflects adjustments for net international migration, updated vital statistics, and estimation methodology improvements. The vast majority of the population change, however, is due to the change in the base population from Census 2010 to the blended Census 2020 base.

In accordance with usual practice, BLS will not revise the official household survey estimates for December 2021 and earlier months. To show the impact of the population adjustments, however, differences in selected December 2021 labor force series based on the old and new population estimates are shown in table B.

The adjustments increased the estimated size of the civilian noninstitutional population in December by 973,000, the civilian labor force by 1,530,000, employment by 1,471,000, and unemployment by 59,000. The number of persons not in the labor force decreased by 557,000. Although the total unemployment rate was unaffected, the employment-population ratio and labor force participation rate were each increased by 0.3 percentage point. This was mostly due to an increase in the size of the population in age groups that participate in the labor force at high rates (those ages 35 to 64) and a large decrease in the size of the population age 65 and older, which participates at a low rate.

Data users are cautioned that these annual population adjustments can affect the comparability of household data series over time. Table C shows the effect of the introduction of new population estimates on the comparison of selected labor force measures between December 2021 and January 2022. Additional information on the population adjustments and their effect on national labor force estimates is available at www.bls.gov/web/empsit/cps-pop-control-adjustments.pdf.

Table B. Effect of the updated population controls on December 2021 estimates by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, not seasonally adjusted (Numbers in thousands)

Category	Total	Men	Women	White	Black or African American
Civilian noninstitutional population	973	1,359	-386	538	205
Civilian labor force	1,530	1,239	291	1,180	173
Participation rate	0.3	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.2
Employed	1,471	1,198	273	1,142	162
Employment-population ratio	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.2
Unemployed	59	42	18	39	11
Unemployment rate	0	0	0	0	0
Not in labor force	-557	120	-677	-643	32

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Estimates for the above race groups (White, Black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose

Table C. December 2021-January 2022 changes in selected labor force measures, with adjustments for population control effects (Numbers in thousands)

Category	Dec.-Jan. change, as published	2022 population control effect	Dec.-Jan. change, after removing the population control effect ⁽¹⁾
Civilian noninstitutional population	1,066	973	93
Civilian labor force	1,393	1,530	-137
Participation rate	0.3	0.3	0
Employed	1,199	1,471	-272
Employment-population ratio	0.2	0.3	-0.1
Unemployed	194	59	135
Unemployment rate	0.1	0	0.1

⁽¹⁾ This Dec.-Jan. change is calculated by subtracting the population control effect from the over-the-month change in the published seasonally adjusted estimates.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Category	Dec.-Jan. change, as published	2022 population control effect	Dec.-Jan. change, after removing the population control effect(1)
Not in labor force	-326	-557	231
(1) This Dec.-Jan. change is calculated by subtracting the population control effect from the over-the-month change in the published seasonally adjusted estimates.			
NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.			

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U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS Division of Labor Force Statistics PSB Suite 4675 2 Massachusetts Avenue NE Washington, DC 20212-0001

Telephone:1-202-691-6378_ [www.bls.gov/CPS](#) [Contact CPS](#)

U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS Division of Current Employment Statistics PSB Suite 4860 2 Massachusetts Avenue NE Washington, DC 20212-0001

Telephone:1-202-691-6555_ [www.bls.gov/CES](#) [Contact CES](#)