



Economic News Release



Employment Situation News Release

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THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION -- MAY 2022

Total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 390,000 in May, and the unemployment rate remained at 3.6 percent, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Notable job gains occurred in leisure and hospitality, in professional and business services, and in transportation and warehousing. Employment in retail trade declined.

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.

Household Survey Data

In May, the unemployment rate was 3.6 percent for the third month in a row, and the number of unemployed persons was essentially unchanged at 6.0 million. These measures are little different from their values in February 2020 (3.5 percent and 5.7 million, respectively), prior to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. (See table A-1.)

Among the major worker groups, the unemployment rate for Asians declined to 2.4 percent in May. The jobless rates for adult men (3.4 percent), adult women (3.4 percent), teenagers (10.4 percent), Whites (3.2 percent), Blacks (6.2 percent), and Hispanics (4.3 percent) showed little or no change over the month. (See tables A-1, A-2, and A-3.)

Among the unemployed, the number of permanent job losers remained at 1.4 million in May. The number of persons on temporary layoff was little changed at 810,000. Both measures are little different from their values in February 2020. (See table A-11.)

In May, the number of long-term unemployed (those jobless for 27 weeks or more)

edged down to 1.4 million. This measure is 235,000 higher than in February 2020. The long-term unemployed accounted for 23.2 percent of all unemployed persons in May. (See table A-12.)

Both the labor force participation rate, at 62.3 percent, and the employment-population ratio, at 60.1 percent, were little changed over the month. Both measures are 1.1 percentage points below their February 2020 values. (See table A-1.)

The number of persons employed part time for economic reasons increased by 295,000 to 4.3 million in May, reflecting an increase in the number of persons whose hours were cut due to slack work or business conditions. The number of persons employed part time for economic reasons is little different from 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 May. This measure remains above its February 2020 level of 5.0 million. 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 May. 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. Discouraged workers, a subset of the marginally attached who believed that no jobs were available for them, numbered 415,000 in May, also little changed from the prior month. (See Summary table A.)

Household Survey Supplemental Data

In May, 7.4 percent of employed persons teleworked because of the coronavirus pandemic, down from 7.7 percent in the prior month. 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 May, 1.8 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 little changed from the previous month. Among those who reported in May that they were unable to work because of pandemic-related closures or lost business, 19.9 percent received at least some pay from their employer for the hours not worked, also little different from the prior month.

Among those not in the labor force in May, 455,000 persons were prevented from looking for work due to the pandemic, down from 586,000 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

Establishment Survey Data

Total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 390,000 in May. Notable job gains occurred in leisure and hospitality, in professional and business services, and in transportation and warehousing. Employment in retail trade declined over the month. Nonfarm employment is down by 822,000, or 0.5 percent, from its pre-pandemic level in February 2020. (See table B-1.)

Employment in leisure and hospitality increased by 84,000 in May, as job growth continued in food services and drinking places (+46,000) and accommodation (+21,000). Employment in leisure and hospitality is down by 1.3 million, or 7.9 percent, compared with February 2020.

Employment in professional and business services rose by 75,000 in May. Within the industry, job gains occurred in accounting and bookkeeping services (+16,000), computer systems design and related services (+13,000), and scientific research and development services (+6,000). Employment in professional and business services is 821,000 higher than in February 2020.

In May, transportation and warehousing added 47,000 jobs. Employment rose in warehousing and storage (+18,000), truck transportation (+13,000), and air transportation (+6,000). Employment in transportation and warehousing is 709,000 above its February 2020 level.

Employment in construction increased by 36,000 in May, following no change in April. In May, job gains occurred in specialty trade contractors (+17,000) and heavy and civil engineering construction (+11,000). Construction employment is 40,000 higher than in February 2020.

In May, employment increased by 36,000 in state government education and by 33,000 in private education. Employment changed little in local government education (+14,000). Compared with February 2020, employment in state government education is up by 27,000, while employment in private education has essentially recovered. Employment in local government education is down by 308,000, or 3.8 percent, compared with February 2020.

Employment in health care rose by 28,000 in May, including a gain in hospitals (+16,000). Employment in health care overall is 223,000, or 1.3 percent, lower than in February 2020.

Manufacturing employment continued to trend up in May (+18,000). Job gains occurred in fabricated metal products (+7,000), wood products (+4,000), and electronic instruments (+3,000). Employment in manufacturing overall is slightly below (-17,000 or -0.1 percent) its February 2020 level.

Wholesale trade added 14,000 jobs in May, including gains in durable goods (+10,000) and electronic markets and agents and brokers (+6,000). Employment in wholesale trade is down by 41,000, or 0.7 percent, compared with February 2020.

Mining employment increased by 6,000 in May and is 80,000 higher than a recent low in February 2021.

Employment in retail trade declined by 61,000 in May but is 159,000 above

its February 2020 level. Over the month, job losses occurred in general merchandise stores (-33,000), clothing and clothing accessories stores (-9,000), food and beverage stores (-8,000), building material and garden supply stores (-7,000), and health and personal care stores (-5,000).

In May, employment showed little change in other major industries, including information, financial activities, and other services.

Average hourly earnings for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls rose by 10 cents, or 0.3 percent, to \$31.95 in May. Over the past 12 months, average hourly earnings have increased by 5.2 percent. In May, average hourly earnings of private-sector production and nonsupervisory employees rose by 15 cents, or 0.6 percent, to \$27.33. (See tables B-3 and B-8.)

In May, the average workweek for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls was 34.6 hours for the third month in a row. In manufacturing, the average workweek for all employees was little changed at 40.4 hours, and overtime fell by 0.1 hour to 3.2 hours. The average workweek for production and nonsupervisory employees on private nonfarm payrolls remained unchanged at 34.1 hours. (See tables B-2 and B-7.)

The change in total nonfarm payroll employment for March was revised down by 30,000, from +428,000 to +398,000, and the change for April was revised up by 8,000, from +428,000 to +436,000. With these revisions, employment in March and April combined is 22,000 lower than previously reported. (Monthly revisions result from additional reports received from businesses and government agencies since the last published estimates and from the recalculation of seasonal factors.)

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

HOUSEHOLD DATA

Summary table A. Household data, seasonally adjusted

[Numbers in thousands]

Category	May 2021	Mar. 2022	Apr. 2022	May 2022	Change from: Apr. 2022- May 2022
Employment status					
Civilian noninstitutional population	261,210	263,444	263,559	263,679	120
Civilian labor force	160,801	164,409	164,046	164,376	330
Participation rate	61.6	62.4	62.2	62.3	0.1
Employed	151,550	158,458	158,105	158,426	321
Employment-population ratio	58.0	60.1	60.0	60.1	0.1