

U.S. jobless claims rise to 367,000

WASHINGTON, Oct. 4 (Xinhua) -- The number of U.S. people initially applying for unemployment aid last week moved higher after hitting a 9-week low in a week earlier, indicating that hiring is still modest, the U.S. Labor Department reported Thursday.

The advance figure for seasonally adjusted initial claims for jobless benefits was 367,000 in the week ending Sept. 29, up 4,000 from the previous week's up-revised figure. However, the four-week moving average, which helps smooth out week-to-week volatility, remained unchanged of 375,000.

The number of jobless claims below 375,000 generally indicates a sustained drop in the unemployment rate. Applications have mostly stayed or above that level since the spring, a level consistent with modest job growth.

The advance figure for seasonally adjusted insured unemployment during the week ending Sept. 22 was 3.281 million, unchanged from the prior week.

The U.S. private sector added 162,000 jobs in September, down from a revised figure of 189,000 in a month earlier, but better than economists' average estimate of 140,000, Automatic Data Processing (ADP) reported Wednesday.

To boost the anemic economic growth and labor market, the U.S. Federal Reserve last month announced a new round of bond buying program and other measures, but many economists believed that those moves might fail to deliver the target of bolstering the nation's weak economic recovery.