

Economic News Release

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Employment Situation Summary

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THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION -- DECEMBER 2017

Total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 148,000 in December, and the unemployment rate was unchanged at 4.1 percent, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Employment gains occurred in health care, construction, and manufacturing.

Revision of Seasonally Adjusted Household Survey Data

Seasonally adjusted household survey data have been revised using updated seasonal adjustment factors, a procedure done at the end of each calendar year. Seasonally adjusted estimates back to January 2013 were subject to revision. The unemployment rates for January 2017 through November 2017 (as originally published and as revised) appear in table A, along with additional information about the revisions.

Household Survey Data

In December, the unemployment rate was 4.1 percent for the third consecutive month. The number of unemployed persons, at 6.6 million, was essentially unchanged over the month. Over the year, the unemployment rate and the number of unemployed persons were down by 0.6 percentage point and 926,000, respectively. (See table A-1.)

Among the major worker groups, the unemployment rate for teenagers declined to 13.6 percent in December, offsetting an increase in November. In December, the unemployment rates for adult men (3.8 percent), adult women (3.7 percent), Whites (3.7 percent), Blacks (6.8 percent), Asians (2.5 percent), and Hispanics (4.9 percent) showed little or no change. (See tables A-1, A-2, and A-3.)

Among the unemployed, the number of new entrants decreased by 116,000 in December. New entrants are unemployed persons who never previously worked. (See table A-11.)

The number of long-term unemployed (those jobless for 27 weeks or more) was little changed at 1.5 million in December and accounted for 22.9 percent of the unemployed. Over the year, the number of long-term unemployed declined by 354,000. (See table A-12.)

The labor force participation rate, at 62.7 percent, was unchanged over the month and over the year. The employment-population ratio was unchanged at 60.1 percent in December but was up by 0.3 percentage point over the year. (See table A-1.)

The number of persons employed part time for economic reasons (sometimes referred to as involuntary part-time workers) was essentially unchanged at 4.9 million in December but was down by 639,000 over the year. These individuals, who would have preferred full-time employment, were working part time because their hours had been cut back or because they were unable to find a full-time job. (See table A-8.)

In December, 1.6 million persons were marginally attached to the labor force, about

unchanged from a year earlier. (The data are not seasonally adjusted.) These individuals were not in the labor force, wanted and were available for work, and had looked for a job sometime in the prior 12 months. They were not counted as unemployed because they had not searched for work in the 4 weeks preceding the survey. (See table A-16.)

Among the marginally attached, there were 474,000 discouraged workers in December, little changed from a year earlier. (The data are not seasonally adjusted.) Discouraged workers are persons not currently looking for work because they believe no jobs are available for them. The remaining 1.1 million persons marginally attached to the labor force in December had not searched for work for reasons such as school attendance or family responsibilities. (See table A-16.)

Establishment Survey Data

Total nonfarm payroll employment rose by 148,000 in December. Job gains occurred in health care, construction, and manufacturing. In 2017, payroll employment growth totaled 2.1 million, compared with a gain of 2.2 million in 2016. (See table B-1.)

Employment in health care increased by 31,000 in December. Employment continued to trend up in ambulatory health care services (+15,000) and hospitals (+12,000). Health care added 300,000 jobs in 2017, compared with a gain of 379,000 jobs in 2016.

Construction added 30,000 jobs in December, with most of the increase among specialty trade contractors (+24,000). In 2017, construction employment increased by 210,000, compared with a gain of 155,000 in 2016.

In December, manufacturing employment rose by 25,000, largely reflecting a gain in durable goods industries (+21,000). Manufacturing added 196,000 jobs in 2017, following little net change in 2016 (-16,000).

Employment in food services and drinking places changed little in December (+25,000). Over the year, the industry added 249,000 jobs, about in line with an increase of 276,000 in 2016.

In December, employment changed little in professional and business services (+19,000). In 2017, the industry added an average of 44,000 jobs per month, in line with its average monthly gain in 2016.

Employment in retail trade was about unchanged in December (-20,000). Within the industry, employment in general merchandise stores declined by 27,000 over the month. Retail trade employment edged down in 2017 (-67,000), after increasing by 203,000 in 2016.

Employment in other major industries, including mining, wholesale trade, transportation and warehousing, information, financial activities, and government, changed little over the month.

The average workweek for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls was unchanged at 34.5 hours in December. In manufacturing, the workweek edged down by 0.1 hour to 40.8 hours, while overtime remained at 3.5 hours. The average workweek for production and nonsupervisory employees on private nonfarm payrolls was unchanged at 33.8 hours. (See tables B-2 and B-7.)

In December, average hourly earnings for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls rose by 9 cents to \$26.63. Over the year, average hourly earnings have risen by 65 cents, or 2.5 percent. Average hourly earnings of private-sector production and nonsupervisory employees increased by 7 cents to \$22.30 in December. (See tables B-3 and B-8.)

The change in total nonfarm payroll employment for October was revised down from +244,000 to +211,000, and the change for November was revised up from +228,000 to +252,000. With these revisions, employment gains in October and November combined were 9,000 less 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.) After revisions, job gains have averaged 204,000 over the last 3 months.

The Employment Situation for January is scheduled to be released on Friday, February 2, 2018, at 8:30 a.m. (EST).

Upcoming Changes to the Household Survey

Effective with the release of The Employment Situation for January 2018 on

February 2, 2018, new population controls will be used in the household survey estimation process. These new controls reflect the annual updating of intercensal population estimates by the U.S. Census Bureau. In accordance with usual practice, historical data will not be revised to incorporate the new controls; consequently, household survey data for January 2018 will not be directly comparable with data for December 2017 or earlier periods. A table showing the effects of the new controls on the major labor force series will be included in the January 2018 release.

Upcoming Changes to Establishment Survey Data

Effective with the release of The Employment Situation for January 2018 on February 2, 2018, the establishment survey will introduce revisions to nonfarm payroll employment, hours, and earnings data to reflect the annual benchmark adjustment for March 2017 and updated seasonal adjustment factors. Not seasonally adjusted data beginning with April 2016 and seasonally adjusted data beginning with January 2013 are subject to revision. Consistent with standard practice, some historical data may be subject to revisions resulting from issues identified during the benchmark process.

The establishment survey will also revise the basis for industry classification from the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to the 2017 NAICS. The conversion will result in minor revisions reflecting content changes within the mining and logging, retail trade, information, financial activities, and professional and business services sectors. Additionally, some smaller industries will be combined within the mining and logging, durable goods manufacturing, retail trade, and information sectors. Several industry titles and descriptions also will be updated.

Approximately 4 percent of employment will be reclassified into different industries as a result of the revision. Details of new, discontinued, and combined industries due to the 2017 NAICS update, as well as changes due to the annual benchmarking process, are available at www.bls.gov/web/empst/cesnewseries.htm.

For more information on the 2017 NAICS update, visit www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/.

Upcoming Changes to The Employment Situation News Release

Effective with the release of January 2018 data on February 2, 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics will introduce a minor change to The Employment Situation news release table B-1. As a result of the update to the 2017 NAICS, the industry title for general merchandise stores will change to general merchandise stores, including warehouse clubs and supercenters. A listing of all series changes as a result of the 2017 NAICS update, including the industries published in news release table B-1, are available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/web/empst/cesnewseries.htm.

Revision of Seasonally Adjusted Household Survey Data

At the end of each calendar year, BLS routinely updates the seasonal adjustment factors for the labor force series derived from the Current Population Survey (CPS), or household survey. As a result of this process, seasonally adjusted data for January 2013 through November 2017 were subject to revision. (Not seasonally adjusted data were not subject to revision.)

Table A shows the unemployment rates for January 2017 through November 2017, as first published and as revised. The rates changed by one-tenth of a percentage point in 1 of the 11 months and were unchanged in the remaining 10 months. Revised seasonally adjusted data for other major labor force series beginning in December 2016 appear in table B.

An article describing the seasonal adjustment methodology for the household survey data and revised data for January 2017 through November 2017 is available at www.bls.gov/web/empst/cps-seas-adjustment-methodology.pdf.

Historical data for the household series contained in the A tables of this release can be accessed at www.bls.gov/cps/cpsatabs.htm. Revised historical seasonally

Table A. Seasonally adjusted unemployment rates in 2017 and changes due to revision
January - November 2017

Month	As first published	As revised	Change
January.....	4.8	4.8	0.0
February.....	4.7	4.7	.0
March.....	4.5	4.5	.0
April.....	4.4	4.4	.0
May.....	4.3	4.3	.0
June.....	4.4	4.3	-.1
July.....	4.3	4.3	.0
August.....	4.4	4.4	.0
September.....	4.2	4.2	.0
October.....	4.1	4.1	.0
November.....	4.1	4.1	.0

HOUSEHOLD DATA

Table B. Employment status of the civilian population by sex and age, seasonally adjusted

[Numbers in thousands]

Employment status, sex, and age	2016	2017											
	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
TOTAL													
Civilian noninstitutional population⁽¹⁾	254,742	254,082	254,246	254,414	254,588	254,767	254,957	255,151	255,357	255,562	255,766	255,949	256,109
Civilian labor force	159,736	159,718	159,997	160,235	160,181	159,729	160,214	160,467	160,598	161,082	160,371	160,533	160,597
Participation rate	62.7	62.9	62.9	63.0	62.9	62.7	62.8	62.9	62.9	63.0	62.7	62.7	62.7
Employed	152,233	152,076	152,511	153,064	153,161	152,892	153,250	153,511	153,471	154,324	153,846	153,917	154,021
Employment-population ratio	59.8	59.9	60.0	60.2	60.2	60.0	60.1	60.2	60.1	60.4	60.2	60.1	60.1
Unemployed	7,502	7,642	7,486	7,171	7,021	6,837	6,964	6,956	7,127	6,759	6,524	6,616	6,576
Unemployment rate	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.4	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1
Men, 20 years and over													
Civilian noninstitutional population⁽¹⁾	114,603	114,297	114,375	114,455	114,538	114,627	114,721	114,817	114,918	115,020	115,120	115,212	115,292
Civilian labor force	81,996	82,051	82,054	82,007	82,054	81,915	82,022	82,128	82,297	82,561	82,366	82,375	82,548
Participation rate	71.5	71.8	71.7	71.7	71.6	71.5	71.5	71.5	71.6	71.8	71.5	71.5	71.6
Employed	78,396	78,448	78,515	78,548	78,839	78,794	78,753	78,863	78,887	79,393	79,248	79,324	79,431
Employment-population ratio	68.4	68.6	68.6	68.6	68.8	68.7	68.6	68.7	68.6	69.0	68.8	68.9	68.9
Unemployed	3,600	3,603	3,539	3,459	3,215	3,120	3,269	3,266	3,410	3,168	3,118	3,050	3,117
Unemployment rate	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.2	3.9	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.1	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8
Women, 20 years and over													
Civilian noninstitutional population⁽¹⁾	123,383	123,052	123,131	123,212	123,296	123,386	123,480	123,577	123,679	123,781	123,882	123,975	124,057
Civilian labor force	71,898	71,720	72,050	72,233	72,144	71,979	72,187	72,499	72,406	72,497	72,187	72,302	72,293
Participation rate	58.3	58.3	58.5	58.6	58.5	58.3	58.5	58.7	58.5	58.6	58.3	58.3	58.3
Employed	68,835	68,572	68,978	69,337	69,218	69,087	69,289	69,586	69,502	69,692	69,576	69,665	69,614
Employment-population ratio	55.8	55.7	56.0	56.3	56.1	56.0	56.1	56.3	56.2	56.3	56.2	56.2	56.1
Unemployed	3,062	3,148	3,072	2,896	2,927	2,892	2,898	2,912	2,903	2,804	2,611	2,637	2,679
Unemployment rate	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.7
Both sexes, 16 to 19 years													
Civilian noninstitutional population⁽¹⁾	16,756	16,734	16,740	16,747	16,754	16,754	16,756	16,757	16,759	16,761	16,763	16,762	16,760
Civilian labor force	5,842	5,947	5,894	5,995	5,983	5,836	6,006	5,840	5,895	6,024	5,818	5,857	5,757
Participation rate	34.9	35.5	35.2	35.8	35.7	34.8	35.8	34.9	35.2	35.9	34.7	34.9	34.4
Employed	5,002	5,056	5,018	5,179	5,104	5,010	5,209	5,062	5,082	5,238	5,022	4,928	4,977
Employment-population ratio	29.9	30.2	30.0	30.9	30.5	29.9	31.1	30.2	30.3	31.3	30.0	29.4	29.7
Unemployed	840	891	876	816	879	825	797	778	813	786	796	929	780
Unemployment rate	14.4	15.0	14.9	13.6	14.7	14.1	13.3	13.3	13.8	13.0	13.7	15.9	13.6

Footnotes

(1) The population figures are not adjusted for seasonal variation.

NOTE: Seasonally adjusted data have been revised to reflect updated seasonal adjustment factors.

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