“He uses statistics as a drunken man uses lamp posts—for support rather than illumination.”

--Andrew Lang (1844-1912)
What people want—answers to questions

- Are people able to find work?
- Where’s the growth?
- Are there good jobs available?
What people want—answers to questions

- Who’s faring best in the job market?
- Who’s struggling?
- How does the current situation compare with the past?
Two monthly surveys

- Household survey—The Current Population Survey (CPS)
- Payroll survey—The Current Employment Statistics (CES) Survey
CPS data collection

- Collected since 1940
- Conducted by the Census Bureau for BLS
- 60,000 households each month
CPS data collection

- 2,400 interviewers and supervisors
- In-person and telephone interviews
- Voluntary survey, with a 92 percent response rate
CPS data collection

- Typically one respondent per household
- Computerized questionnaire since 1994
# CPS schedule for April 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sun</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tue</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thu</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Release day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Survey reference week**: April 12-18
- **Survey collection week**: April 24-30
- **Release day**: May 5
Current Population Survey

Housing & household
Demographics & education
Labor force status
Earnings and union membership
Nativity and disability
Supplements

Examples
Relationships of members
Household income
Age
Sex
Race
Ethnicity
Marital status
Education
Volunteering
Work at home
Veterans
Displacement

Employment status
Weekly earnings
Hourly pay
Union membership
Occupation and industry
Unemployment duration
School enrollment (<25)
Civilian noninstitutional population

Includes people:
- age 16 and older
- residing in the United States

Excludes people:
- in institutions
- in the Armed Forces
Labor force status

- Who is employed?
- Who is unemployed?
- Who is not in the labor force?
Labor force status of the population

- Employed: 139,064,000
- Not in the labor force: 83,941,000
- Unemployed: 14,825,000

2010

Total employed, 1990-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Total unemployed, 1990-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
**Labor force**: sum of the employed and unemployed
Civilian labor force, 1990-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Labor force by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Labor force by age

Labor force by race

1980
- White: 88%
- Black: 10%
- Asians and other races: 2%

2010
- White: 81%
- Black: 12%
- Asians and other races: 7%

Labor force by Hispanic or Latino ethnicity

Percent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Foreign born labor force as a percent of the total, 1996-2010

Percent

Labor force by education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>College Graduates</th>
<th>Some College</th>
<th>High School Graduate Only</th>
<th>Less than High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Common CPS terms

Labor force participation rate: labor force as a percent of the population
Labor force participation rate, 1948-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Labor force participation rate, 1948-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

Why has participation of men declined?

- Large drop in participation of less-educated men—fewer job opportunities
- Rise in Social Security Disability payments
Labor force participation rate of mothers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of youngest child</th>
<th>1975</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;18 years</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-17 years</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;3 years</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percent of families that are “traditional”

NOTE: “Traditional” families are those in which the husband is in the labor force and the wife is not in the labor force.
Why has participation of women decreased in recent years?

- Decline in participation of highly-educated mothers
- Rising immigration
Labor force participation rate, 1948-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Why has participation of teens declined?

- Rising school enrollment
- Increased competition for available jobs
- Greater demand for more-educated workers
Why has participation of teens declined?

- Rise in family incomes, especially during 1990s
- Personal choice
Labor force participation rate, 1948-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Why has participation increased for people age 55 and over?

- Changes to Social Security
- Shift from defined-benefit to defined-contribution plans
- Improving health status—longer life expectancies
Why has participation increased for people age 55 and over?

- Decline in retiree health benefits from private-sector employers
- Rising health care costs
- Increase in age at first marriage
Common CPS terms

Employment-population ratio: employed as a percent of the population
Employment-population ratio, 1948-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).

Wage and salary employment, 2000-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Why has employment growth been slow?

- Psychology—firms reluctant to hire until recovery is firm
- Productivity increases
- Production reorganization
Productivity (output per hour), 2000-2010

Percent change

Why has employment growth been slow?

- Structural changes in labor market
- Globalization
Self-employment, 2000-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Why has self-employment declined?

- Sharp rise in business failures
- Limited availability of credit has inhibited new business formation
Employment-population ratio for recent college graduates, 1985-2010

Percent

Common CPS terms

**Unemployment rate**: unemployed as a percent of the labor force
Unemployment rate, 1948-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Unemployment rate by race and ethnicity, 1973-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Unemployment rate by education


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate only</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduates</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2010
Unemployment rate by education, 1992-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Unemployment rate for recent college graduates, 1985-2010

Common CPS terms

Duration of unemployment
Length of time that people classified as unemployed have been actively looking for work
Average duration of unemployment, 1994-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Long-term unemployed (≥ 27 weeks), 1990-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Common CPS terms

**Long-term unemployment rate:** unemployed 27 weeks or more as a percent of the labor force
Long-term unemployment rate by education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate only</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college graduates</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduates</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Common CPS terms

Part time for economic reasons:
people who want and are available for full-time work but can only find part-time work
Part time for economic reasons, 1990-2011

Thousands


Common CPS terms

Marginally attached to the labor force

Discouraged workers
People not in the labor force, 1994-2011

Thousands

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Common CPS terms

Alternative measure of labor underutilization (U-6):
“underemployment rate”—adds involuntary part time and marginally attached to the unemployed
"Underemployment rate" (U-6), 1994-2011

NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers
Median weekly earnings by education

Earnings (Full-time workers)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Earnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>$444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate only</td>
<td>$626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>$734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduates</td>
<td>$1,144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2010

Change in real earnings by education, 1979-2010

Percent change

-24.4  -10.1  -6.9  19.0

Less than high school  High school graduates only  Some college  College graduates

Women's earnings as a percent of men’s, 1979-2010

NOTE: Earnings are median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers.
Current Employment Statistics (CES) Survey

- 400,000 business establishments
- Federal-State program
- Number of jobs created
- Reference period is pay period that includes the 12th day of the month
Major types of CES data

- Nonfarm payroll employment
- Detailed industry
- Hours
- Earnings
NOTE: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER).
Monthly change in total number of jobs, 2008-2011

Peak-to-trough employment decline, by downturn

Percent change

- Total Nonfarm
- Goods-Producing
- Private Service-Providing

Fastest growing occupations, 2008-2018

- Network systems and data communications analysts: 53%
- Home health aids: 50%
- Personal and home care aides: 46%
- Medical scientists, except epidemiologists: 40%
- Physician assistants: 39%
- Veterinary technologists and technicians: 36%
- Dental hygienists: 36%
- Dental assistants: 36%
- Computer software engineers: 34%
- Medical assistants: 34%

Office of Employment Projections at BLS

- Website: http://www.bls.gov/emp
Concluding thoughts

- Classification of unemployment requires active job search—not receipt of unemployment insurance

- Job market improving somewhat, but long-term unemployment still a problem
Contact Information

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