

THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION -- MAY 2019

Total nonfarm payroll employment edged up in May (+75,000), and the unemployment rate remained at 3.6 percent, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Employment continued to trend up in professional and business services and in health care.

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

The unemployment rate remained at 3.6 percent in May, and the number of unemployed persons was little changed at 5.9 million. (See table A-1.)

Among the major worker groups, the unemployment rates for adult men (3.3 percent), adult women (3.2 percent), teenagers (12.7 percent), Whites (3.3 percent), Blacks (6.2 percent), Asians (2.5 percent), and Hispanics (4.2 percent) showed little or no change in May. (See tables A-1, A-2, and A-3.)

In May, the number of persons unemployed less than 5 weeks increased by 243,000 to 2.1 million, following a decline in April. The number of long-term unemployed (those jobless for 27 weeks or more), at 1.3 million, changed little over the month and accounted for 22.4 percent of the unemployed. (See table A-12.)

Both the labor force participation rate, at 62.8 percent, and the employment-population ratio, at 60.6 percent, were unchanged in May. (See table A-1.)

The number of persons employed part time for economic reasons (sometimes referred to as involuntary part-time workers) declined by 299,000 in May to 4.4 million. 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. Over the past 12 months, the number of involuntary part-time workers has declined by 565,000. (See table A-8.)

In May, 1.4 million persons were marginally attached to the labor force, little changed from a year earlier. (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 338,000 discouraged workers in May, little changed from a year earlier. (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 May 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 edged up in May (+75,000). Monthly job gains have averaged 164,000 in 2019, compared with an average gain of 223,000 per month in 2018. In May, employment continued to trend up in professional and business services and in health care. (See table B-1.)

Employment in professional and business services continued to trend up over the month (+33,000) and has increased by 498,000 over the past 12 months.

Employment in health care continued its upward trend in May (+16,000). The industry has added 391,000 jobs over the past 12 months.

Construction employment changed little in May (+4,000), following an increase of 30,000 in April. The industry has added 215,000 jobs over the past 12 months.

Employment showed little change in May in other major industries, including mining, manufacturing, wholesale trade, retail trade, transportation and warehousing, information, financial activities, leisure and hospitality, and government.

In May, average hourly earnings for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls increased by 6 cents to \$27.83. Over the year, average hourly earnings have increased by 3.1 percent. Average hourly earnings of

private-sector production and nonsupervisory employees increased by 7 cents to \$23.38 in May. (See tables B-3 and B-8.)

The average workweek for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls was unchanged at 34.4 hours in May. In manufacturing, the average workweek and overtime hours were unchanged at 40.6 hours and 3.4 hours, respectively. The average workweek for production and nonsupervisory employees on private nonfarm payrolls edged down by 0.1 hour to 33.6 hours. (See tables B-2 and B-7.)

The change in total nonfarm payroll employment for March was revised down from +189,000 to +153,000, and the change for April was revised down from +263,000 to +224,000. With these revisions, employment gains in March and April combined were 75,000 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 151,000 per month over the last 3 months.

The Employment Situation for June is scheduled to be released on Friday, July 5, 2019, at 8:30 a.m. (EDT).