

News

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BLS RELEASES 2002-12 EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), U.S. Department of Labor, today released projections on future job growth by industry and occupation and on the likely composition of the workforce pursuing those jobs.

The 10-year projections of economic growth, employment by industry and occupation, and labor force are widely used in career guidance, in planning education and training programs, and in studying long-range employment trends. Covering the 2002-12 decade, these projections reflect the 2000 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS).

Employment

Over the 2002-12 decade, total employment is projected to increase by 21.3 million jobs, or 15 percent. Over the previous decade (1992-2002), total employment grew by 20.7 million jobs but at a slightly faster rate, 17 percent. (The definition of employment used in these projections differs from the definitions used in other BLS programs. See table 1.)

Industry employment

- Employment growth will be concentrated in the service-providing sector of the economy. Education and health services and professional and business services represent the industry divisions with the strongest projected employment growth: projected to grow twice as fast as the overall economy. Information, leisure and hospitality, and transportation and warehousing are other service-providing industries that are projected to grow faster than average. (See table 1.)
- Construction is the only goods-producing sector in which employment is projected to grow. Manufacturing, however, is expected to decline by 1 percent, a much smaller decline than what occurred in the previous decade. Nonetheless, employment in goods-producing industries is expected to decrease from 16 percent to 14 percent of total employment. Apparel

manufacturing, textile mills, and computer and electronic product manufacturing are the goods-producing industries with the largest projected employment declines.

- The 10 fastest growing detailed industries, led by software publishers, are in the service-providing sector. (See table 3a.)

Occupational employment

- Professional and related occupations and service occupations—two groups at opposite ends of educational and earnings ranges—are projected to increase the fastest and to add the most jobs, accounting for more than half of total job growth over the 2002-12 decade. (See table 2.)
- Construction and extraction occupations are projected to grow at the same rate as the average for all occupations—15 percent.
- Office and administrative support occupations, production occupations, and farming, fishing, and forestry occupations are projected to grow much more slowly than average.
- Nine of the 10 fastest growing occupations are health or computer (information technology) occupations. (See table 3b.)
- The 10 occupations adding the most jobs employ a large number of workers and come from a wide range of occupational groups. (See table 3c.)

Education and training categories

- An associate or bachelor's degree is the most significant source of postsecondary education or training for 6 of the 10 fastest growing occupations. (See table 3b.)
- Short-term on-the-job training is the most significant source of postsecondary education or training for 6 of the 10 occupations with the largest job growth. (See table 3c.)

Labor force

- The civilian labor force is projected to increase by 17.4 million over the 2002-12 decade, reaching 162.3 million by 2012. This 12-percent increase is greater than the 11.3-percent increase over the previous decade, 1992-2002, when the labor force grew by 14.4 million. (See table 4.) Changes in the demographic composition of the labor force are expected because of changes both in the composition of the population and in the rates of labor force participation across demographic groups.
- The projected growth of the labor force will be affected by the aging of the baby-boom generation—persons born between 1946 and 1964. In 2012, baby-boomers will be 48 to 66 years old. The number of workers in this age group is expected to increase significantly over the 2002-12 decade. The labor force will continue to age, with the number of workers in the 55-and-older group projected to grow by 49.3 percent, 4 times the 12-percent growth projected

for the overall labor force. In 2012, youths—those between the ages of 16 and 24—will constitute 15 percent of the labor force, and prime-age workers—those between the ages of 25 and 54—will make up 66 percent of the labor force. The share of the 55-and-older age group will increase from 14.3 percent to 19.1 percent of the labor force.

- The labor force participation rates of women in nearly all age groups are projected to increase. The number of women in the labor force is projected to grow by 14.3 percent, faster than the 10-percent growth projected for men. As a result, women's share of the labor force is expected to increase by 1 percent, from 46.5 percent in 2002 to 47.5 percent by 2012. In contrast, men's share is projected to decline by 1 percent—from 53.5 percent to 52.5 percent—over the 2002-12 decade.
- By 2012, the Hispanic labor force is expected to reach 23.8 million, due to faster population growth resulting from a younger population, higher fertility rates, and increased immigration levels. Despite relatively slow growth, white non-Hispanics will remain the largest group, composing 66 percent of the labor force. Asians will continue to be the fastest growing of the four labor force groups.

Notes

More detailed information on the 2002-12 projections appears in five articles in the February 2004 issue of the *Monthly Labor Review*, published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. A graphic presentation of the highlights of the projections will appear in the forthcoming Winter 2003-04 *Occupational Outlook Quarterly*.

The *Monthly Labor Review* and *Occupational Outlook Quarterly* are sold by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. The *Review* costs \$49 a year; single copies are \$15. The *Quarterly* costs \$15 a year; single copies are \$6. Make checks payable to the Superintendent of Documents.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone: 1-800-877-8339.