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USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS FIRST QUARTER 2011

Median weekly earnings of the nation's 98.3 million full-time wage and salary workers were \$755 in the first quarter of 2011 (not seasonally adjusted), the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. This was 0.1 percent higher than a year earlier, compared with a gain of 2.1 percent in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) over the same period.

Data on usual weekly earnings are collected as part of the Current Population Survey, a nationwide sample survey of households in which respondents are asked, among other things, how much each wage and salary worker usually earns. (See the Technical Note.) Data shown in this release are not seasonally adjusted unless otherwise specified. Highlights from the first-quarter data are:

- **Seasonally adjusted median weekly earnings** were \$749 in the first quarter of 2011, about unchanged from the previous quarter, \$751. (See table 1.)
- On a not seasonally adjusted basis, **median weekly earnings** were \$755 in the first quarter of 2011. **Women** who usually worked full time had median earnings of \$683 per week, or 82.4 percent of the \$829 median for **men**. (See table 2.)
- The **female-to-male earnings ratio** varied by race and ethnicity. White women earned 81.7 percent of their male counterparts, compared with black (95.0 percent), Asian (80.4 percent), and Hispanic women (90.4 percent). (See table 2.)
- Among the major **race and ethnicity groups**, median weekly earnings for black men working at full-time jobs were \$621 per week, 72.5 percent of the median for white men (\$856). The difference was less among women, as black women's median earnings (\$590) were 84.4 percent of those for white women (\$699). Overall, median weekly earnings of Hispanics who worked full time (\$549) were lower than those of blacks (\$604), whites (\$774), and Asians (\$831). (See table 2.)
- Usual weekly earnings of full-time workers varied by **age**. Among men, those age 45 to 54 and 55 to 64 had the highest median weekly earnings, \$968 and \$975, respectively. Usual weekly earnings were highest for women age 35 to 64; weekly earnings were \$728 for women

age 35 to 44, \$740 for women age 45 to 54, and \$752 for women age 55 to 64. Workers age 16 to 24 had the lowest median weekly earnings, at \$448. (See table 3.)

- Among the major **occupational groups**, persons employed full time in management, professional, and related occupations had the highest median weekly earnings—\$1,266 for men and \$939 for women. Median weekly earnings were lowest for workers in service jobs (\$483). (See table 4.)
- By **educational attainment**, full-time workers age 25 and over without a high school diploma had median weekly earnings of \$444, compared with \$633 for high school graduates (no college) and \$1,150 for those holding at least a bachelor's degree. Among college graduates with advanced degrees (professional or master's degree and above), the highest earning 10 percent of male workers made \$3,336 or more per week, compared with \$2,291 or more for their female counterparts. (See table 5.)

Revision of Seasonally Adjusted Usual Weekly Earnings Data

Seasonally adjusted data for median usual weekly earnings in constant (1982-84) dollars have been updated using revised seasonally adjusted data for the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). (Data are shown in table 1 of the release.) Seasonally adjusted constant (1982-84) dollar estimates back to the first quarter of 2006 were subject to revision.

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides basic information on the labor force, employment, and unemployment. The survey is conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau from a scientifically selected national sample of about 60,000 households, with coverage in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The earnings data are collected from one-quarter of the CPS monthly sample and are limited to wage and salary workers (both incorporated and unincorporated self-employed are excluded). The data, therefore, exclude self-employment income.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Reliability

Statistics based on the CPS are subject to both sampling and nonsampling error. When a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed, there is a chance that the sample estimates may differ from the "true" population values they represent. The exact difference, or *sampling error*, varies depending on the particular sample selected, and this variability is measured by the standard error of the estimate. There is about a 90-percent chance, or level of confidence, that an estimate based on a sample will differ by no more than 1.6 standard errors from the "true" population value because of sampling error. BLS analyses are generally conducted at the 90-percent level of confidence.

The CPS data also are affected by *nonsampling error*. Nonsampling errors can occur for many reasons, including the failure to sample a segment of the population, inability to obtain information for all respondents in the sample, inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information on a timely basis, mistakes made by respondents, and errors made in the collection or processing of the data.

A full discussion of the reliability of data from the Current Population Survey and information on estimating standard errors is available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#reliability.

Definitions

The principal definitions used in connection with the earnings series are described briefly below.

Usual weekly earnings. Data represent earnings before taxes and other deductions and include any overtime pay, commissions, or tips usually received (at the main job in the case of multiple jobholders). Prior to 1994, respondents were asked how much they usually earned per week. Since January 1994, respondents have been asked to identify the easiest way for them to report earnings (hourly, weekly, biweekly, twice monthly, monthly, annually, other) and how much they usually earn in the reported time period.

Earnings reported on a basis other than weekly are converted to a weekly equivalent. The term "usual" is as perceived by the respondent. If the respondent asks for a definition of usual, interviewers are instructed to define the term as more than half the weeks worked during the past 4 or 5 months.

Medians (and other quantiles) of weekly earnings. The median (or upper limit of the second quartile) is the amount which divides a given earnings distribution into two equal groups, one having earnings above the median and the other having earnings below the median. Ten percent of a given distribution have earnings below the upper limit of the first decile (90 percent have higher earnings); 25 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the first quartile (75 percent have higher earnings); 75 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the third quartile (25 percent have higher earnings); and 90 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the ninth decile (10 percent have higher earnings).

The estimation procedure places each reported or calculated weekly earnings value into \$50-wide intervals which are centered around multiples of \$50. The actual value is estimated through the linear interpolation of the interval in which the quantile boundary lies.

Over-the-year changes in the medians (and other quantile boundaries) for specific groups may not necessarily be consistent with the movements estimated for the overall quantile boundary. The most common reasons for this possible anomaly are: (1) There could be a change in the relative weights of the subgroups. For example, the medians of both 16-to-24 year olds and those 25 years and over may rise; but if the lower-earning 16-to-24 group accounts for a greatly increased share of the total, the overall median could actually fall. (2) There could be a large change in the shape of the distribution of reported earnings, particularly near a quantile boundary. This could be caused by survey observations that are clustered at

rounded values, such as \$250, \$300, or \$400. An estimate lying in a \$50-wide centered interval containing such a cluster or "spike" tends to change more slowly than one in other intervals.

Wage and salary workers. Workers who receive wages, salaries, commissions, tips, payment in kind, or piece rates. The group includes employees in both the private and public sectors but, for the purposes of the earnings series, excludes all self-employed persons, regardless of whether or not their businesses are incorporated.

Full-time workers. Workers who usually work 35 hours or more per week at their sole or principal job.

Part-time workers. Workers who usually work fewer than 35 hours per week at their sole or principal job.

Constant dollars. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) is used to convert current dollars to constant (1982-84) dollars.

Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. Refers to persons who identified themselves in the enumeration process as being Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino. Persons whose ethnicity is

identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

Seasonal adjustment

Over the course of a year, the size of the nation's labor force and other measures of labor market activity undergo regularly occurring fluctuations. These recurring events include seasonal changes in weather, major holidays, and the opening and closing of schools. The effect of such seasonal variations can be very large.

Because seasonal events follow a more or less regular pattern each year, their influence on the level of a series can be tempered by adjusting for regular seasonal variation. These adjustments make nonseasonal developments easier to spot. The seasonally adjusted figures provide a more useful tool with which to analyze changes in quarter-to-quarter activity.

At the end of each calendar year, the seasonally adjusted data are revised for the past 5 years when the seasonal adjustment factors are updated. More information on seasonal adjustment is available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#sa.

Table 1. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by sex, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted

Year and quarter	Number of workers (in thousands)			Median weekly earnings					
	Total	Men	Women	In current dollars			In constant (1982-84) dollars		
				Total \$	Men \$	Women \$	Total \$	Men \$	Women \$
2002									
1st Quarter.....	99,924	56,096	43,829	607	677	525	341	380	295
2nd Quarter.....	100,286	56,640	43,646	608	678	524	339	378	292
3rd Quarter.....	100,183	56,390	43,793	608	679	531	337	376	294
4th Quarter.....	99,895	56,224	43,670	610	683	540	336	376	298
2003									
1st Quarter.....	100,136	56,079	44,057	615	689	546	335	376	297
2nd Quarter.....	100,255	56,013	44,242	619	692	551	338	378	301
3rd Quarter.....	100,139	56,178	43,961	621	697	554	337	378	300
4th Quarter.....	100,628	56,607	44,021	623	702	560	337	379	302
2004									
1st Quarter.....	100,905	56,848	44,057	629	705	562	337	378	301
2nd Quarter.....	101,135	56,914	44,221	642	715	576	341	380	306
3rd Quarter.....	101,148	56,931	44,217	635	712	574	335	376	303
4th Quarter.....	101,658	57,289	44,369	646	720	577	337	376	302
2005									
1st Quarter.....	102,091	57,710	44,381	647	723	580	336	376	302
2nd Quarter.....	103,201	58,099	45,101	647	714	584	334	369	301
3rd Quarter.....	104,310	58,843	45,467	651	723	588	331	368	299
4th Quarter.....	104,605	58,967	45,638	658	730	588	332	368	296
2006									
1st Quarter.....	104,708	58,960	45,748	662	737	594	332	370	298
2nd Quarter.....	105,798	59,831	45,966	663	732	597	329	364	296
3rd Quarter.....	107,041	60,060	46,981	678	755	603	334	372	297
4th Quarter.....	106,847	60,140	46,707	681	748	607	337	370	300
2007									
1st Quarter.....	107,134	60,063	47,072	687	751	609	336	368	298
2nd Quarter.....	106,819	60,346	46,473	693	765	610	335	370	295
3rd Quarter.....	107,156	60,220	46,936	698	774	620	336	372	298
4th Quarter.....	108,251	60,571	47,680	700	774	614	332	368	292
2008									
1st Quarter.....	107,740	60,328	47,412	712	782	633	335	368	297
2nd Quarter.....	107,061	59,588	47,473	723	801	637	335	372	296
3rd Quarter.....	106,088	59,246	46,841	724	803	636	331	367	291
4th Quarter.....	105,711	58,601	47,109	727	807	646	340	378	302
2009									
1st Quarter.....	101,612	56,231	45,381	731	814	645	344	383	304
2nd Quarter.....	100,033	55,246	44,787	737	817	655	345	383	307
3rd Quarter.....	98,949	54,425	44,525	742	820	663	345	381	308
4th Quarter.....	98,702	54,534	44,168	747	825	665	345	380	307
2010									
1st Quarter.....	98,071	54,026	44,044	747	834	662	343	383	304
2nd Quarter.....	99,674	55,062	44,612	744	813	674	342	374	310
3rd Quarter.....	100,242	55,524	44,718	745	822	668	342	377	306
4th Quarter.....	100,132	55,620	44,512	751	829	675	342	378	307
2011									
1st Quarter.....	99,698	55,312	44,385	749	820	679	337	369	306

NOTE: Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 2. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

Characteristic	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings			
	1st 2010	1st 2011	In current dollars		In constant (1982-84) dollars	
			1st 2010	1st 2011	1st 2010	1st 2011
SEX AND AGE						
Total, 16 years and over.....	96,821	98,329	\$754	\$755	\$347	\$341
Men, 16 years and over.....	53,028	54,251	844	829	389	374
16 to 24 years.....	4,209	4,418	473	470	218	212
25 years and over.....	48,818	49,834	887	880	409	397
Women, 16 years and over.....	43,794	44,077	665	683	306	308
16 to 24 years.....	3,558	3,685	422	426	195	192
25 years and over.....	40,236	40,392	698	716	322	323
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX						
White.....	78,418	79,349	772	774	356	349
Men.....	44,040	44,712	869	856	400	386
Women.....	34,378	34,636	678	699	312	316
Black or African American.....	11,375	11,453	610	604	281	272
Men.....	5,140	5,324	635	621	293	280
Women.....	6,235	6,129	584	590	269	266
Asian.....	4,802	5,219	859	831	396	375
Men.....	2,670	2,952	940	948	433	428
Women.....	2,132	2,267	767	762	353	344
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	14,319	14,572	554	549	255	248
Men.....	8,875	8,973	589	570	271	257
Women.....	5,444	5,599	504	515	232	232

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 3. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by age, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex, 1st quarter 2011 averages, not seasonally adjusted

Age, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total		Men		Women	
	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings
TOTAL						
16 years and over.....	98,329	\$755	54,251	\$ 829	44,077	\$683
16 to 24 years.....	8,103	448	4,418	470	3,685	426
16 to 19 years.....	673	360	396	374	277	346
20 to 24 years.....	7,429	459	4,021	481	3,408	437
25 years and over.....	90,226	791	49,834	880	40,392	716
25 to 54 years.....	72,190	776	40,284	856	31,906	709
25 to 34 years.....	23,678	683	13,463	703	10,215	658
35 to 44 years.....	23,579	836	13,428	933	10,152	728
45 to 54 years.....	24,932	854	13,393	968	11,539	740
55 years and over.....	18,036	863	9,550	970	8,486	741
55 to 64 years.....	15,297	881	8,118	975	7,179	752
65 years and over.....	2,739	754	1,432	898	1,307	665
White						
16 years and over.....	79,349	774	44,712	856	34,636	699
16 to 24 years.....	6,475	460	3,612	482	2,862	435
25 years and over.....	72,874	818	41,100	902	31,774	732
25 to 54 years.....	57,784	801	33,002	876	24,783	725
55 years and over.....	15,090	898	8,098	1,009	6,991	753
Black or African American						
16 years and over.....	11,453	604	5,324	621	6,129	590
16 to 24 years.....	1,053	409	515	420	538	390
25 years and over.....	10,400	625	4,809	657	5,591	610
25 to 54 years.....	8,606	618	4,037	648	4,569	604
55 years and over.....	1,795	677	772	718	1,023	662
Asian						
16 years and over.....	5,219	831	2,952	948	2,267	762
16 to 24 years.....	307	430	157	420	149	453
25 years and over.....	4,912	883	2,795	987	2,118	776
25 to 54 years.....	4,077	913	2,311	1,021	1,766	787
55 years and over.....	835	772	484	798	351	703
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
16 years and over.....	14,572	549	8,973	570	5,599	515
16 to 24 years.....	1,642	408	1,059	411	583	403
25 years and over.....	12,930	577	7,914	596	5,016	538
25 to 54 years.....	11,390	568	7,037	581	4,353	542
55 years and over.....	1,540	648	876	743	663	509

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 4. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by occupation and sex, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

Occupation and sex	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings	
	1st 2010	1st 2011	1st 2010	1st 2011
TOTAL				
Management, professional, and related occupations.....	39,105	39,034	\$1,068	\$1,072
Management, business, and financial operations occupations.....	15,593	15,433	1,167	1,152
Professional and related occupations.....	23,512	23,600	1,007	1,031
Service occupations.....	13,906	13,830	476	483
Sales and office occupations.....	22,274	22,918	632	640
Sales and related occupations.....	8,713	9,209	674	674
Office and administrative support occupations.....	13,561	13,709	619	624
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.....	9,342	9,499	736	732
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.....	611	764	403	427
Construction and extraction occupations.....	4,832	4,706	719	707
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.....	3,900	4,029	796	821
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations.....	12,194	13,048	600	608
Production occupations.....	6,299	7,037	602	599
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	5,894	6,011	598	621
Men				
Management, professional, and related occupations.....	18,874	18,767	1,268	1,266
Management, business, and financial operations occupations.....	8,469	8,263	1,407	1,368
Professional and related occupations.....	10,405	10,504	1,176	1,222
Service occupations.....	6,825	6,953	558	565
Sales and office occupations.....	8,469	8,878	743	736
Sales and related occupations.....	4,848	5,191	832	808
Office and administrative support occupations.....	3,621	3,687	651	640
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.....	8,926	9,109	742	743
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.....	484	601	427	453
Construction and extraction occupations.....	4,722	4,602	717	710
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.....	3,720	3,905	798	823
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations.....	9,933	10,544	637	653
Production occupations.....	4,778	5,239	670	655
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	5,155	5,305	611	650
Women				
Management, professional, and related occupations.....	20,231	20,267	915	939
Management, business, and financial operations occupations.....	7,124	7,171	974	987
Professional and related occupations.....	13,107	13,096	887	915
Service occupations.....	7,081	6,877	420	431
Sales and office occupations.....	13,804	14,040	594	607
Sales and related occupations.....	3,864	4,018	508	549
Office and administrative support occupations.....	9,940	10,022	612	621
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.....	416	390	632	446
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.....	127	162	342	365
Construction and extraction occupations.....	109	104	828	490
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.....	180	124	744	744
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations.....	2,261	2,504	481	491
Production occupations.....	1,522	1,798	482	488
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	739	705	480	499

NOTE: Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 5. Quartiles and selected deciles of usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, 1st quarter 2011 averages, not seasonally adjusted

Characteristic	Number of workers (in thousands)	Upper limit of:				
		First decile	First quartile	Second quartile (median)	Third quartile	Ninth decile
SEX, RACE, AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY						
Total, 16 years and over.....	98,329	\$358	\$ 500	\$ 755	\$1,171	\$1,767
Men.....	54,251	378	537	829	1,320	1,921
Women.....	44,077	339	469	683	1,022	1,502
White.....	79,349	367	513	774	1,204	1,812
Men.....	44,712	386	562	856	1,348	1,983
Women.....	34,636	347	480	699	1,053	1,518
Black or African American.....	11,453	313	416	604	927	1,351
Men.....	5,324	323	424	621	1,007	1,433
Women.....	6,129	303	408	590	841	1,237
Asian.....	5,219	372	532	831	1,415	1,977
Men.....	2,952	386	565	948	1,559	2,123
Women.....	2,267	351	515	762	1,168	1,833
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	14,572	304	388	549	850	1,271
Men.....	8,973	310	395	570	893	1,348
Women.....	5,599	296	378	515	772	1,158
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
Total, 25 years and over.....	90,226	377	526	791	1,220	1,844
Less than a high school diploma.....	6,737	282	339	444	605	852
High school graduates, no college ¹	24,941	345	461	633	900	1,237
Some college or associate degree.....	24,794	388	521	736	1,049	1,463
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	33,754	575	786	1,150	1,733	2,424
Bachelor's degree only.....	21,474	518	734	1,054	1,555	2,221
Advanced degree.....	12,279	673	925	1,336	1,900	2,884
Men, 25 years and over.....	49,834	396	578	880	1,370	1,993
Less than a high school diploma.....	4,542	293	361	487	673	936
High school graduates, no college ¹	14,784	373	500	714	1,007	1,389
Some college or associate degree.....	12,796	425	587	825	1,175	1,606
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	17,712	619	896	1,338	1,907	2,889
Bachelor's degree only.....	11,397	586	828	1,225	1,804	2,515
Advanced degree.....	6,315	729	1,034	1,550	2,171	3,336
Women, 25 years and over.....	40,392	354	492	716	1,067	1,541
Less than a high school diploma.....	2,196	258	309	388	511	625
High school graduates, no college ¹	10,157	319	416	555	741	986
Some college or associate degree.....	11,999	360	481	650	911	1,249
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	16,041	516	722	1,007	1,434	1,977
Bachelor's degree only.....	10,077	485	663	934	1,295	1,851
Advanced degree.....	5,964	618	854	1,162	1,622	2,291

1 Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent.

2 Includes persons with bachelor's, master's, professional, and doctoral degrees.

NOTE: Ten percent of all full-time wage and salary workers earn less than the upper limit of the first decile; 25 percent earn less than the upper limit of the first quartile; 50 percent earn less than the upper limit of the second quartile, or median; 75 percent earn less than the upper limit of the third quartile; and 90 percent earn less than the upper limit of the ninth decile. Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 6. Median usual weekly earnings of part-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

Characteristic	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings	
	1st 2010	1st 2011	1st 2010	1st 2011
SEX AND AGE				
Total, 16 years and over.....	25,242	24,947	\$228	\$231
Men, 16 years and over.....	8,673	8,846	224	224
16 to 24 years.....	3,593	3,763	169	167
25 years and over.....	5,080	5,083	281	284
Women, 16 years and over.....	16,569	16,101	231	234
16 to 24 years.....	4,632	4,364	161	165
25 years and over.....	11,937	11,737	269	269
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX				
White.....	20,982	20,639	229	232
Men.....	7,092	7,267	224	225
Women.....	13,890	13,372	231	236
Black or African American.....	2,568	2,637	224	227
Men.....	982	972	221	225
Women.....	1,586	1,665	227	229
Asian.....	919	922	257	217
Men.....	329	323	261	223
Women.....	590	599	254	212
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	3,732	3,721	228	223
Men.....	1,529	1,583	237	241
Women.....	2,204	2,138	222	214

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.