

The February Review

The Bureau of Labor Statistics' Producer Price Index (PPI) program publishes measures of the average change over time in the selling prices received by domestic producers for their output. During the past two decades, PPI coverage has been updated and expanded to capture price changes for many service and construction activities. However, the process used to aggregate PPI data has, until now, included only goods price indexes. Jonathan C. Weinhausen, an economist in the PPI program, presents a newly developed, experimental aggregation system that includes both goods price indexes and services and construction price indexes for products sold to all portions of final demand and to intermediate demand. This new aggregation system was first introduced with the release of January 2011 PPI data. Given that the new indexes are experimental, the Bureau is currently soliciting feedback and suggestions from data users. Contact information can be found at the conclusion of the article.

As regular *Monthly Labor Review* readers are aware, a number of articles have been published in these pages during the last couple of years related to the recession that ran from December 2007 to June 2009. Robert Dixon, John Freebairn, and Guay C. Lim, all of the University of Melbourne in Australia, continue this trend with an article analyzing net flows in the U.S. labor market from 1990 to 2010, a period with both economic expansions and contractions. The authors examine the relationship between worker flows (people moving among the categories of employed, unemployed, and not in the labor force) and move-

ments in the unemployment rate. The authors then use the results of this examination to investigate the behavior of worker flows in an attempt to "increase economists' understanding of the progression of unemployment over the business cycle and aid in identifying the characteristics that make the most recent recession different from previous ones."

Since the early 1970s, BLS has published estimates of nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses among workers at private sector establishments and for some public sector workers. However, the data were available only for selected States and at varying levels of industry coverage and detail for each State. Thus, the tabulation of State and local government nonfatal injuries and illnesses at the national level was not possible. To address this, BLS began collecting data for public sector workers in all States in 2008. BLS economist Jeffery D. Brown presents this data series as well as a comparison between private sector and public sector (State and local government) data. Brown's analysis of the data finds, among other results, that public sector employees experienced a significantly higher incidence of work-related injuries and illnesses in 2008 than did private industry employees.

The Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) is a monthly BLS survey that produces data on job openings, hires, and separations. This issue of the *Review* concludes with an overview of a symposium about the JOLTS program held on December 10, 2010. The symposium marked a 10-year milestone of publishing monthly data for the JOLTS program and brought together leading academic and policy-oriented users of JOLTS data. In all, five research

papers were presented and discussed. The symposium also included a roundtable session where participants discussed strengths and weaknesses of the JOLTS program, as well as recommendations for the program.

Young adults at 23

This month, BLS released its latest findings from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 regarding school enrollment, training, and employment transitions of young people. The survey is a nationally representative study of about 9,000 young men and women who were born from 1980 to 1984. Among its many findings, the report indicates that a gender gap exists in educational attainment, with nearly 1 in 4 women having earned a bachelor's degree by age 23 but only 1 in 7 men having done so. The data also indicate that the labor force status of 23-year-olds differed significantly by educational attainment—89 percent of those with a bachelor's degree who were no longer enrolled in school were employed, as compared with 60 percent of high school dropouts. The news release containing these findings can be found on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/nlsyth.htm>. Additional information can be found on the National Longitudinal Surveys Web site at <http://www.bls.gov/nls/>. □

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