

Job market remains tight in 2019, as the unemployment rate falls to its lowest level since 1969

The U.S. labor market remained strong in 2019, as the unemployment rate fell to 3.5 percent, the lowest rate since 1969. Both the employment–population ratio and the civilian labor force participation rate increased over the year. Levels of long-term joblessness and involuntary part-time employment continued to trend down.

A decade after the end of the Great Recession, the U.S. economy continued to expand, and the labor market remained strong by historical standards. By the end of 2019, the economy had grown for 126 months or 42 quarters, making it the longest economic expansion on record.^[1] Most labor force measures continued to improve throughout 2019. Total employment, as measured by the Current Population Survey (CPS), expanded by 2.0 million, reaching 158.6 million by the end of the year. In addition, the employment–population ratio (the percentage of the population age 16 and over who are employed) continued to increase as well, reaching 61.0 percent. There were 5.8 million people unemployed in the fourth quarter of 2019, down 341,000 from a year earlier, and the jobless rate declined to 3.5 percent, the lowest rate in 50 years.^[2] (See the box that follows for more information about the CPS, as well as the Current Employment Statistics survey.)



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The CPS and the CES

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) produces two monthly employment series obtained from two different surveys: the estimate of total nonfarm jobs, derived from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey, also called the establishment or payroll survey; and the estimate of total civilian employment, based on the Current Population Survey (CPS), also called the household survey. The two surveys use different definitions of employment, as well as different survey and estimation methods. The CES program is a

survey of employers that provides a measure of the number of payroll jobs in nonfarm industries. The CPS is a survey of households that provides a measure of employed people age 16 and over in the civilian noninstitutional population. Employment estimates from the CPS provide information about workers in both the agricultural and nonagricultural sectors and in all types of work arrangements: workers with wage and salary jobs (including employment in a private household), those who are self-employed, and those doing unpaid work for at least 15 hours per week in a business or farm operated by a family member. CES payroll employment estimates are restricted to nonagricultural wage and salary jobs and exclude private household workers. As a result, employment estimates from the CPS are higher than those from the CES survey. In the CPS, however, workers who hold multiple jobs (referred to as “multiple jobholders”) are counted only once, regardless of how many jobs these workers held during the survey reference period. By contrast, because the CES survey counts the number of jobs rather than the number of people, each nonfarm job is counted separately even when two or more jobs are held by the same person.

The reference periods for the two surveys also differ. In the CPS, the reference period is generally the calendar week that includes the 12th day of the month. In the CES survey, employers report the number of workers on their payrolls for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. Because pay periods vary in length among employers and may be longer than 1 week, the CES employment estimates can reflect longer reference periods.

In addition to the monthly news release, *The Employment Situation*, which contains data from the CPS and the CES survey, BLS publishes a monthly report with the latest trends in and comparisons of employment as measured by the two surveys. (See “Comparing employment from the BLS household and payroll surveys,” at www.bls.gov/web/empsit/ces_cps_trends.htm.)

This article highlights important developments in key labor market measures from the CPS during 2019, both overall and for various demographic groups. The article also examines changes in usual weekly earnings and in labor force status flows, as well as the employment situations of veterans, people with a disability, and the foreign born.

Employment grew in 2019; unemployment rate fell to lowest level since 1969

The number of employed people increased by 2.0 million over the year, reaching 158.6 million in the fourth quarter of 2019. This growth was smaller than the over-the-year increase of 2.8 million in 2018, partly reflecting slower population growth.

Although employment trended up at a slower pace, both the employment–population ratio and the labor force participation rate increased in 2019. (The labor force participation rate is the percentage of the population age 16 and over who are either employed or actively seeking employment.) In the fourth quarter of 2019, the employment–population ratio was 61.0 percent, up by 0.4 percentage point over the year. Although this ratio has been trending up since 2014, it is still below its level in the years leading up to the Great Recession, having

reached 63.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2006 and the first quarter of 2007. The labor force participation rate increased by 0.3 percentage point, to 63.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019, but this measure has been fairly flat in the past 5 years, ranging from 62.5 percent to 63.2 percent. (See figure 1 and table 1.)

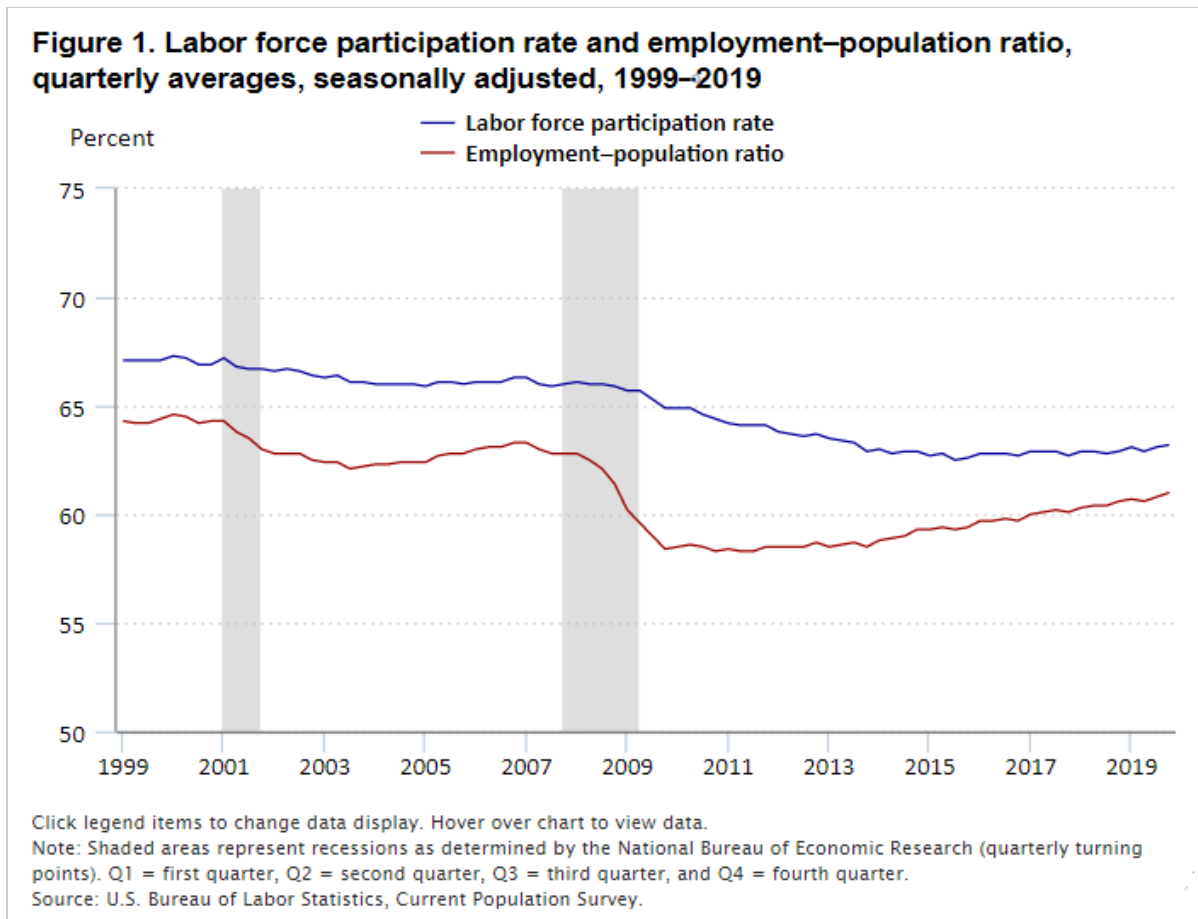


Table 1. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and older by gender, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Characteristic	Fourth quarter, 2018	2019				Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	
Total, 16 years and older						
Civilian labor force	162,793	163,041	162,820	163,773	164,435	1,642
Participation rate	62.9	63.1	62.9	63.1	63.2	0.3
Employed	156,645	156,745	156,896	157,846	158,628	1,983
Employment– population ratio	60.6	60.7	60.6	60.8	61.0	0.4
Unemployed	6,148	6,297	5,924	5,926	5,807	-341
Unemployment rate	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.6	3.5	-0.3
Men, 16 years and older						
Civilian labor force	86,264	86,461	86,398	86,824	87,018	754

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and older by gender, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Characteristic	Fourth quarter, 2018	2019				Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	
Participation rate	68.9	69.2	69.0	69.2	69.2	0.3
Employed	83,006	83,042	83,190	83,650	83,942	936
Employment– population ratio	66.3	66.5	66.4	66.7	66.7	0.4
Unemployed	3,258	3,419	3,208	3,174	3,076	-182
Unemployment rate	3.8	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.5	-0.3
Women, 16 years and older						
Civilian labor force	76,529	76,580	76,422	76,949	77,416	887
Participation rate	57.3	57.4	57.2	57.4	57.7	0.4
Employed	73,639	73,703	73,706	74,197	74,685	1,046
Employment– population ratio	55.1	55.2	55.1	55.4	55.6	0.5
Unemployed	2,890	2,878	2,716	2,752	2,731	-159
Unemployment rate	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.5	-0.3
White						
Civilian labor force	126,257	126,311	126,107	126,756	127,170	913
Participation rate	62.9	63.0	62.8	63.1	63.2	0.3
Employed	121,992	122,014	122,044	122,578	123,093	1,101
Employment– population ratio	60.8	60.9	60.8	61.0	61.2	0.4
Unemployed	4,265	4,297	4,062	4,178	4,077	-188
Unemployment rate	3.4	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.2	-0.2
Black or African American						
Civilian labor force	20,492	20,536	20,531	20,670	20,776	284
Participation rate	62.2	62.4	62.2	62.5	62.6	0.4
Employed	19,197	19,148	19,251	19,512	19,603	406
Employment– population ratio	58.3	58.2	58.4	59.0	59.1	0.8
Unemployed	1,294	1,388	1,280	1,158	1,173	-121
Unemployment rate	6.3	6.8	6.2	5.6	5.6	-0.7
Asian						
Civilian labor force	10,290	10,358	10,346	10,500	10,632	342
Participation rate	64.0	64.3	63.1	64.0	64.5	0.5
Employed	9,977	10,040	10,109	10,217	10,351	374
Employment– population ratio	62.0	62.3	61.6	62.3	62.8	0.8
Unemployed	313	319	237	283	282	-31
Unemployment rate	3.0	3.1	2.3	2.7	2.7	-0.3
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
Civilian labor force	28,712	28,874	28,713	29,099	29,525	813
Participation rate	66.5	67.0	66.2	66.7	67.3	0.8
Employed	27,441	27,539	27,497	27,881	28,301	860
Employment– population ratio	63.6	63.9	63.4	63.9	64.5	0.9

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and older by gender, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

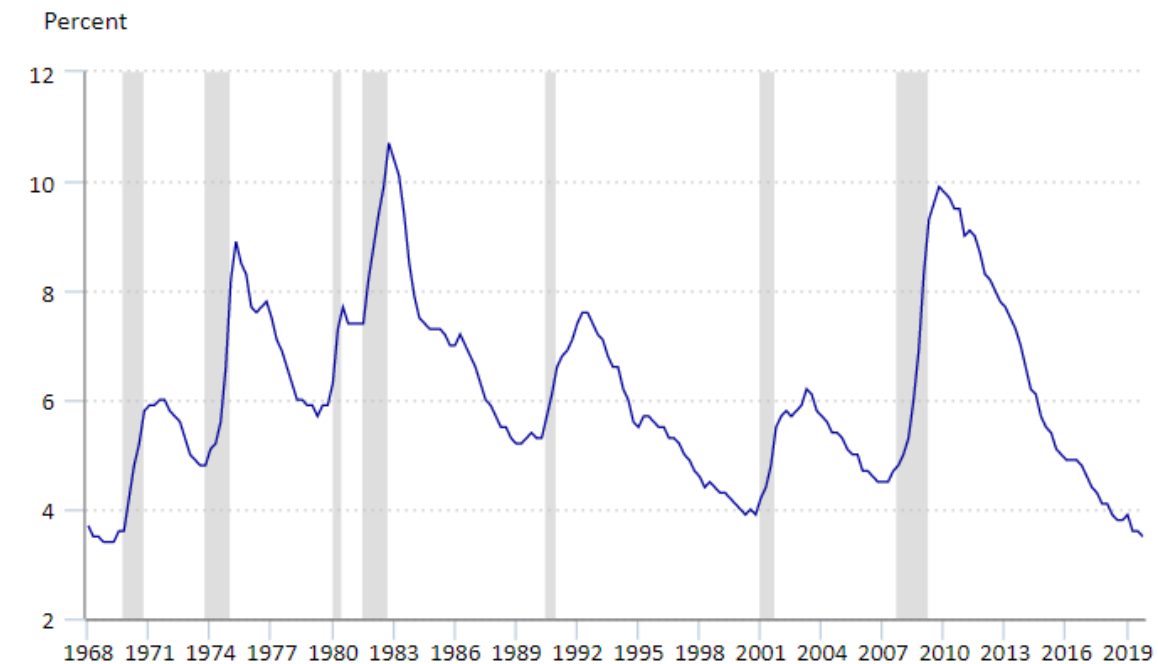
Characteristic	Fourth quarter, 2018	2019				Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	
Unemployed	1,272	1,335	1,215	1,218	1,223	-49
Unemployment rate	4.4	4.6	4.2	4.2	4.1	-0.3

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.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

In the fourth quarter of 2019, the number of unemployed people, at 5.8 million, was down by 341,000 from a year earlier.^[3] The national unemployment rate fell by 0.3 percentage point over the year, to 3.5 percent, the lowest jobless rate since 1969.^[4] (See figure 2.)

Figure 2. Unemployment rate for people 16 years and over, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 1968–2019



Hover over chart to view data.

Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (quarterly turning points). Q1 = first quarter, Q2 = second quarter, Q3 = third quarter, and Q4 = fourth quarter.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Employment grew for most demographic groups; labor force participation increased for Whites and Hispanics but changed little for Blacks and Asians

Over the year, the employment–population ratio for women increased by 0.5 percentage point, to 55.6 percent, and the ratio for men increased by 0.4 percentage point, to 66.7 percent. Both measures have increased in recent years and are at their highest levels since 2008. The labor force participation rate for women rose by 0.4 percentage point, to 57.7 percent, following a similar increase in 2018. The labor force participation rate for men, at 69.2 percent, was little changed over the year and has shown little movement since the end of 2014.

In 2019, the employment–population ratios increased for Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians.^[5] The ratio for Hispanics increased by 0.9 percentage point, to 64.5 percent, and the ratio for Whites increased by 0.4 percentage point, to 61.2 percent. The employment–population ratio for Blacks increased by 0.8 percentage point, to 59.1 percent, the highest it has been since the third quarter of 2001. The ratio for Asians increased to 62.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019, a gain of 0.8 percentage point over the year.

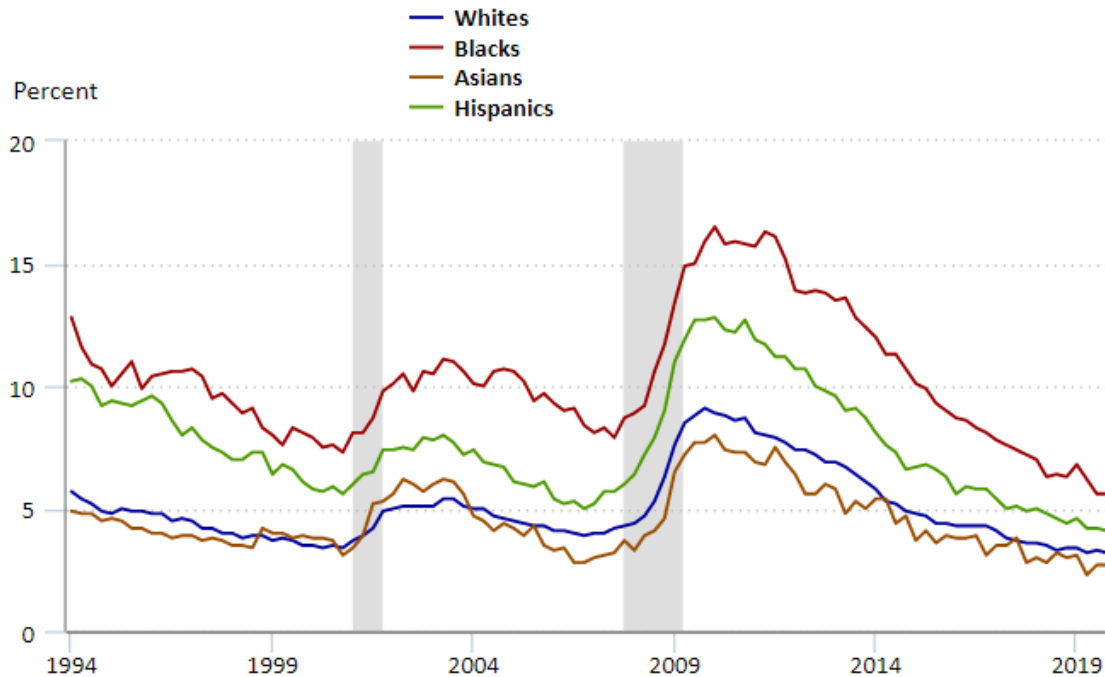
The labor force participation rates increased over the year for Whites, by 0.3 percentage point, to 63.2 percent, and for Hispanics, by 0.8 percentage point, to 67.3 percent, but these rates were about unchanged for Asians (64.5 percent) and Blacks (62.6 percent).

Unemployment rate reached lowest level since 1969

The number of people unemployed was 5.8 million in the fourth quarter of 2019, down by 341,000 from a year earlier. The change in the number of unemployed people followed 2 years of larger declines. The national unemployment rate declined by 0.3 percentage point over the year, to 3.5 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019. Although the decrease in the number of unemployed people was relatively small by historical standards, the jobless rate fell to its lowest level since 1969, when it was 3.4 percent.

In 2019, the unemployment rates declined to 3.5 percent for both men and women. Among the major race and ethnicity groups, the unemployment rates for Blacks (5.6 percent) and Hispanics (4.1 percent) were at record lows in the fourth quarter of 2019. The rates for both groups had been at double-digit levels for several years following the 2007–09 recession. Over the year, the unemployment rate for Whites decreased by 0.2 percentage point, to 3.2 percent, and the jobless rate for Asians was little changed, at 2.7 percent. (See figure 3.)

Figure 3. Unemployment rates, by race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 1994–2019



Click legend items to change data display. Hover over chart to view data.

Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (quarterly turning points). People of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity may be of any race. Data for Asians are not available before 2000 and are not seasonally adjusted before 2010. Q1 = first quarter, Q2 = second quarter, Q3 = third quarter, and Q4 = fourth quarter.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Jobless rate decreased, employment increased for older workers

Much of the labor market improvement in 2019 occurred among older workers. Among workers age 55 and over, the unemployment rate was 2.5 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019, a decline of 0.4 percentage point from 2018. For older men, the unemployment rate declined by 0.4 percentage point, to 2.4 percent, while the rate for older women was little changed, at 2.7 percent. Nearly half of the increase in employment over the year occurred among workers age 55 and over, with 927,000 more employed people in that age group than in the previous year. (See table 2.)

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and over, by age and gender, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Characteristic	Fourth quarter, 2018	2019				Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	
Total, 16 to 24 years						
Civilian labor force	20,897	20,988	21,061	21,150	21,134	237

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and over, by age and gender, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Characteristic	Fourth quarter, 2018	2019				Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	
Participation rate	55.1	55.5	55.8	56.1	56.0	0.9
Employed	19,135	19,123	19,316	19,383	19,442	307
Employment– population ratio	50.4	50.6	51.2	51.4	51.5	1.1
Unemployed	1,762	1,864	1,745	1,768	1,693	-69
Unemployment rate	8.4	8.9	8.3	8.4	8.0	-0.4
Total, 16 to 19 years						
Civilian labor force	5,934	5,856	5,790	5,947	5,970	36
Participation rate	35.4	35.1	34.7	35.6	35.8	0.4
Employed	5,199	5,094	5,052	5,199	5,236	37
Employment– population ratio	31.0	30.5	30.3	31.2	31.4	0.4
Unemployed	735	761	738	748	734	-1
Unemployment rate	12.4	13.0	12.8	12.6	12.3	-0.1
Total, 20 to 24 years						
Civilian labor force	14,963	15,132	15,271	15,203	15,164	201
Participation rate	70.6	71.8	72.5	72.2	72.1	1.5
Employed	13,936	14,029	14,265	14,184	14,205	269
Employment– population ratio	65.8	66.5	67.7	67.4	67.5	1.7
Unemployed	1,027	1,103	1,007	1,020	958	-69
Unemployment rate	6.9	7.3	6.6	6.7	6.3	-0.6
Total, 25 to 54 years						
Civilian labor force	104,080	104,120	103,813	104,082	104,669	589
Participation rate	82.2	82.5	82.2	82.4	82.8	0.6
Employed	100,783	100,761	100,692	100,905	101,536	753
Employment– population ratio	79.6	79.8	79.7	79.9	80.4	0.8
Unemployed	3,297	3,359	3,121	3,177	3,133	-164
Unemployment rate	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.1	3.0	-0.2
Men, 25 to 54 years						
Civilian labor force	55,546	55,639	55,370	55,468	55,632	86
Participation rate	89.0	89.4	88.9	89.0	89.2	0.2
Employed	53,812	53,863	53,717	53,783	54,019	207
Employment– population ratio	86.2	86.5	86.2	86.3	86.6	0.4
Unemployed	1,735	1,775	1,652	1,685	1,613	-122
Unemployment rate	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.0	2.9	-0.2
Women, 25 to 54 years						
Civilian labor force	48,534	48,482	48,443	48,614	49,037	503
Participation rate	75.7	75.8	75.7	76.0	76.6	0.9
Employed	46,971	46,898	46,975	47,122	47,516	545
Employment– population ratio	73.2	73.3	73.4	73.7	74.3	1.1

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and over, by age and gender, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Characteristic	Fourth quarter, 2018	2019				Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	
Unemployed	1,563	1,584	1,468	1,492	1,521	-42
Unemployment rate	3.2	3.3	3.0	3.1	3.1	-0.1
Total, 55 years and over						
Civilian labor force	37,825	37,996	37,910	38,503	38,642	817
Participation rate	40.2	40.2	40.0	40.3	40.3	0.1
Employed	36,745	36,908	36,860	37,512	37,672	927
Employment– population ratio	39.0	39.1	38.9	39.3	39.3	0.3
Unemployed	1,080	1,088	1,051	991	970	-110
Unemployment rate	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.5	-0.4
Men, 55 years and over						
Civilian labor force	20,147	20,221	20,269	20,541	20,616	469
Participation rate	46.2	46.2	46.1	46.5	46.4	0.2
Employed	19,580	19,623	19,738	20,052	20,123	543
Employment– population ratio	44.9	44.9	44.9	45.4	45.3	0.4
Unemployed	567	597	532	489	493	-74
Unemployment rate	2.8	3.0	2.6	2.4	2.4	-0.4
Women, 55 years and over						
Civilian labor force	17,673	17,768	17,652	17,953	18,028	355
Participation rate	34.9	35.1	34.7	35.1	35.0	0.1
Employed	17,166	17,284	17,122	17,460	17,549	383
Employment– population ratio	33.9	34.1	33.6	34.1	34.1	0.2
Unemployed	507	484	530	493	479	-28
Unemployment rate	2.9	2.7	3.0	2.7	2.7	-0.2
Note: Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.						
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.						

Although the labor force participation rate for older workers (those age 55 and over) was little changed over the year, there was an increase in the labor force participation rate among people age 65 and over. The rate for those age 65 and over increased by 0.7 percentage point, to 20.5 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019. (Data for those age 65 and over are not seasonally adjusted.) (See table 3.)

Table 3. Labor force participation rates of the civilian noninstitutional population, by age and gender, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 2018–19

Age and gender	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, 2018–19
Total			
16 years and over	62.9	63.2	0.3

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Labor force participation rates of the civilian noninstitutional population, by age and gender, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 2018–19

Age and gender	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, 2018–19
16 to 24 years	55.1	56.0	0.9
16 to 19 years	35.4	35.8	0.4
20 to 24 years	70.6	72.1	1.5
25 to 54 years	82.2	82.8	0.6
25 to 34 years	82.7	83.4	0.7
35 to 44 years	82.9	83.3	0.4
45 to 54 years	81.1	81.7	0.6
55 years and over	40.2	40.3	0.1
55 to 64 years	65.3	65.5	0.2
65 years and over	19.8	20.5	0.7
Men			
16 years and over	68.9	69.2	0.3
16 to 24 years	55.3	56.8	1.5
16 to 19 years	34.1	35.8	1.7
20 to 24 years	72.3	73.6	1.3
25 to 54 years	89.0	89.2	0.2
25 to 34 years	89.1	89.5	0.4
35 to 44 years	90.8	90.6	-0.2
45 to 54 years	87.1	87.3	0.2
55 years and over	46.2	46.4	0.2
55 to 64 years	71.6	71.5	-0.1
65 years and over	24.0	25.1	1.1
Women			
16 years and over	57.3	57.7	0.4
16 to 24 years	54.8	55.2	0.4
16 to 19 years	36.7	35.7	-1.0
20 to 24 years	68.9	70.6	1.7
25 to 54 years	75.7	76.6	0.9
25 to 34 years	76.4	77.3	0.9
35 to 44 years	75.2	76.3	1.1
45 to 54 years	75.3	76.2	0.9
55 years and over	34.9	35.0	0.1
55 to 64 years	59.5	59.8	0.3
65 years and over	16.3	16.8	0.5

Note: Data for people age 55 to 64 and for those 65 years and over are not seasonally adjusted.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

The labor force participation rate for people 65 years and over has been trending up for more than 30 years. The rate was 28.1 percent in the fourth quarter of 1948, before showing a downward trend in the years that followed. The participation rate for this group reached a low of 10.7 percent for three nonconsecutive quarters from 1985 to 1987, before it began to increase. This upward trend continued during both the Great Recession and the economic expansion that followed. The labor force participation rate for workers age 65 and over reached 20.5 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019, the highest rate since 1961.

The labor force participation rate for people in the prime working age of 25 to 54 was 82.8 percent in 2019. The number of employed people in this age group increased by 753,000, and their unemployment rate decreased by 0.2 percentage point, to 3.0 percent. For 25- to 54-year-olds, the jobless rates edged down over the year to 2.9 percent for men and changed little for women (3.1 percent).

For women in the prime-working-age group, the labor force participation rate rose by 0.9 percentage point, to 76.6 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019, and the employment–population ratio increased by 1.1 percentage points, to 74.3 percent. For prime-working-age men, these indicators were little changed.

The unemployment rate for young adults (age 20 to 24) decreased by 0.6 percentage point, to 6.3 percent. For teenagers (age 16 to 19), the unemployment rate was little changed over the year, at 12.3 percent, almost twice the rate for young adults. (See table 2.)

The labor force participation rate for people age 16 to 24 was 56.0 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019, an increase of 0.9 percentage point from a year earlier. Much of this increase was among 20- to 24-year-olds. Overall, employment among younger workers (those age 16 to 24) increased by 307,000 in 2019, and their employment–population ratio rose by 1.1 percentage points, to 51.5 percent.

Unemployment rates decreased for workers with less education

Among workers age 25 and over, unemployment rates tend to be lower for people with more education.^[6] The unemployment rate for people with a bachelor’s degree and higher was 2.0 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019, less than half the unemployment rate for people with less than a high school diploma (5.3 percent).

The unemployment rate for those with some college or associate’s degree declined by 0.4 percentage point, to 2.8 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019, representing the lowest level since the first quarter of 2001, when it was also 2.8 percent. The jobless rate for people with less than a high school diploma reached a series low of 5.1 percent in the third quarter of 2019, but the rate changed little in the fourth quarter. The unemployment rates for high school graduates, no college (3.7 percent), and for those with a bachelor’s degree and higher (2.0 percent) were little changed, compared with the previous year. (See table 4 and figure 4.)

Table 4. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 25 years and older, by educational attainment, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Characteristic	Fourth quarter, 2018	2019				Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	
Less than a high school diploma						
Civilian labor force	10,247	10,142	9,972	9,971	9,813	-434
Participation rate	46.8	46.1	45.1	46.7	46.7	-0.1
Employed	9,659	9,574	9,439	9,459	9,288	-371
Employment– population ratio	44.2	43.5	42.7	44.3	44.2	0.0
Unemployed	588	568	533	512	525	-63
Unemployment rate	5.7	5.6	5.3	5.1	5.3	-0.4

See footnotes at end of table.

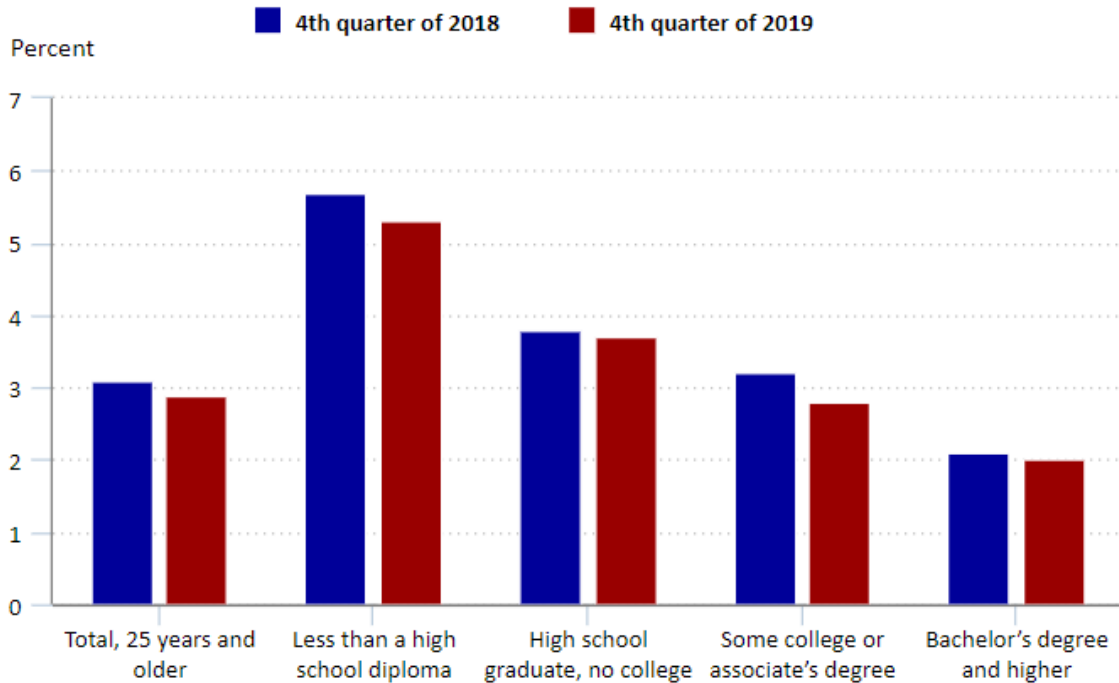
Table 4. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 25 years and older, by educational attainment, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Characteristic	Fourth quarter, 2018	2019				Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	
High school graduates, no college						
Civilian labor force	36,052	36,185	35,964	36,314	36,178	126
Participation rate	57.8	58.2	57.7	57.6	58.1	0.3
Employed	34,694	34,837	34,657	35,006	34,848	154
Employment– population ratio	55.6	56.0	55.6	55.5	55.9	0.3
Unemployed	1,358	1,348	1,307	1,308	1,331	-27
Unemployment rate	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.7	-0.1
Some college or associate's degree						
Civilian labor force	37,397	37,276	37,408	37,461	37,524	127
Participation rate	65.4	65.3	64.9	65.2	64.8	-0.6
Employed	36,216	36,042	36,301	36,321	36,466	250
Employment– population ratio	63.3	63.2	63.0	63.2	62.9	-0.4
Unemployed	1,181	1,234	1,107	1,140	1,057	-124
Unemployment rate	3.2	3.3	3.0	3.0	2.8	-0.4
Bachelor's degree and higher						
Civilian labor force	58,234	58,446	58,374	58,909	59,805	1,571
Participation rate	73.4	73.6	73.8	73.8	73.8	0.4
Employed	56,984	57,165	57,144	57,680	58,616	1,632
Employment– population ratio	71.9	72.0	72.3	72.3	72.3	0.4
Unemployed	1,250	1,281	1,230	1,229	1,190	-60
Unemployment rate	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.0	-0.1

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

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Figure 4. Unemployment rates for people 25 years and over by educational attainment, seasonally adjusted, fourth quarter 2018 and fourth quarter 2019



Click legend items to change data display. Hover over chart to view data.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Number of job leavers trended up, while long-term unemployment edged down

There were 5.8 million people classified as unemployed in the fourth quarter of 2019. Unemployed people are grouped by their reasons for unemployment. People are currently unemployed because they either (1) were on temporary layoff, permanently lost their job, or completed a temporary job (referred to as job losers); (2) voluntarily left their job (job leavers); (3) reentered the labor force (reentrants); or (4) entered the labor force for the first time (new entrants).

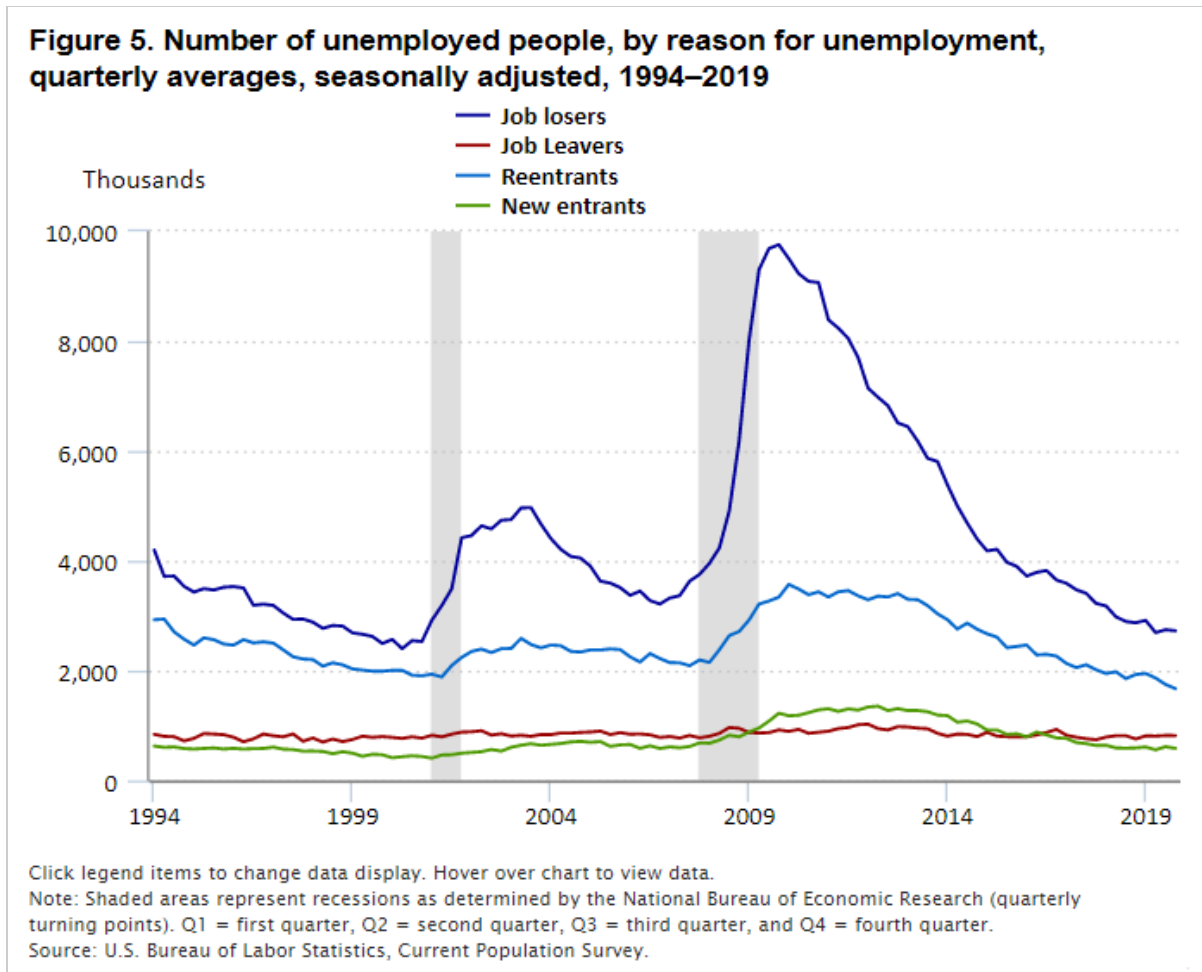
The number of unemployed people who lost their job or who completed temporary jobs was 2.7 million in the fourth quarter of 2019. This data series reached a peak of 9.8 million in the fourth quarter of 2009 and steadily declined throughout the economic expansion. The last time there were fewer unemployed people because of job losses or completion of temporary jobs was in the fourth quarter of 2000, when there were 2.5 million people in this category. The number of reentrants—unemployed people who previously worked but were out of the labor force before they began their job search—decreased by 258,000 over the year, to 1.7 million in the fourth quarter. The number of job leavers (people who voluntarily left their job) was 817,000 in the fourth quarter of 2019, and the number of new entrants was 585,000. (See table 5 and figure 5.)

Table 5. Unemployed people, by reason and duration of unemployment, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

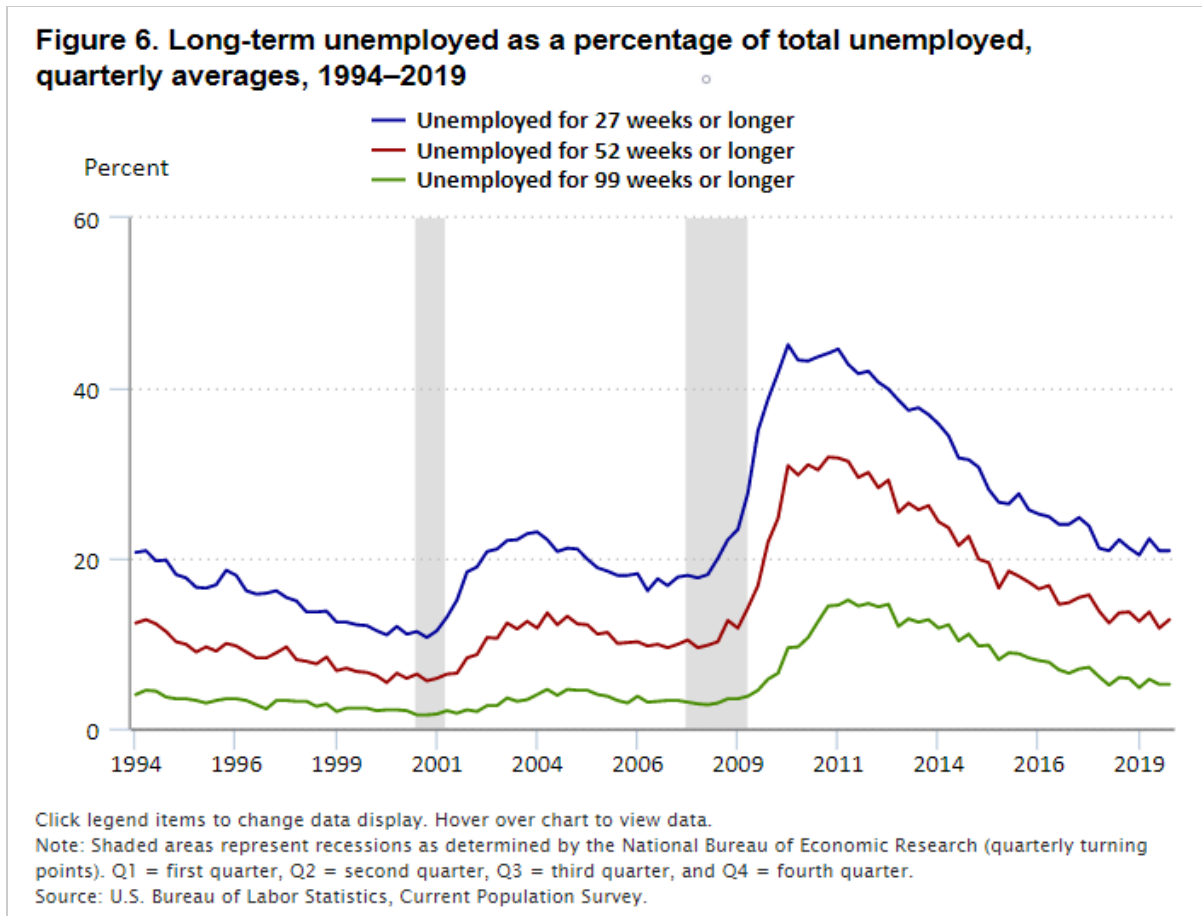
Characteristic	Fourth quarter, 2018	2019				Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
		First quarter	Second quarter	Third quarter	Fourth quarter	
Reason for unemployment						
Job losers and people who completed temporary jobs	2,872	2,916	2,693	2,745	2,727	-145
On temporary layoff	810	878	797	790	782	-28
Not on temporary layoff	2,063	2,039	1,896	1,955	1,945	-118
Permanent job losers	1,368	1,365	1,323	1,355	1,325	-43
People who completed temporary jobs	695	674	573	600	619	-76
Job leavers	756	812	809	819	817	61
Reentrants	1,930	1,949	1,866	1,749	1,672	-258
New entrants	594	610	558	615	585	-9
Percent distribution						
Job losers and people who completed temporary jobs	46.7	46.4	45.4	46.3	47.0	0.3
On temporary layoff	13.2	14.0	13.5	13.3	13.5	0.3
Not on temporary layoff	33.5	32.4	32.0	33.0	33.5	0.0
Job leavers	12.3	12.9	13.6	13.8	14.1	1.8
Reentrants	31.4	31.0	31.5	29.5	28.8	-2.6
New entrants	9.7	9.7	9.4	10.4	10.1	0.4
Duration of unemployment						
Less than 5 weeks	2,116	2,201	2,005	2,103	2,023	-93
5 to 14 weeks	1,886	1,873	1,746	1,773	1,743	-143
15 weeks or longer	2,181	2,202	2,132	2,095	2,075	-106
15 to 26 weeks	869	921	819	849	854	-15
27 weeks or longer	1,312	1,281	1,313	1,246	1,221	-91
Average (mean) duration in weeks	22.1	21.6	23.0	21.2	20.9	-1.2
Median duration, in weeks	9.2	9.3	9.3	9.1	9.1	-0.1
Percent distribution						
Less than 5 weeks	34.2	35.1	34.1	35.2	34.6	0.4
5 to 14 weeks	30.5	29.8	29.7	29.7	29.8	-0.7
15 weeks or longer	35.3	35.1	36.2	35.1	35.5	0.2
15 to 26 weeks	14.1	14.7	13.9	14.2	14.6	0.5
27 weeks or longer	21.2	20.4	22.3	20.9	20.9	-0.3

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

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

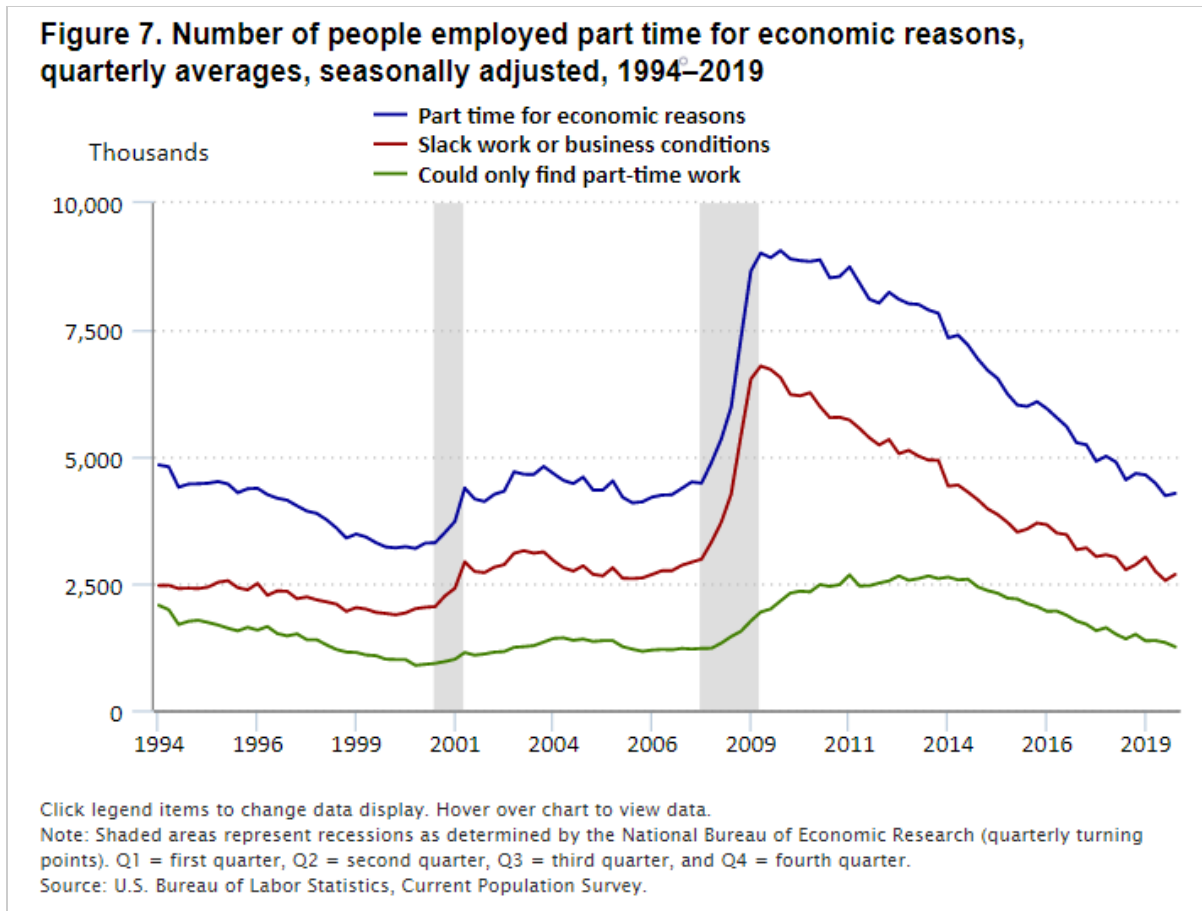


The number of people experiencing long-term unemployment (those who had been looking for work for 27 weeks or longer) edged down by 91,000 in 2019. In the fourth quarter of 2019, 1.2 million people were long-term unemployed, representing 20.9 percent of the total unemployed. The proportion of long-term unemployed remained higher than it was before the 2007–09 recession (17.8 percent in the third quarter of 2007), but it was much lower in 2019 than it had been during the recession. This proportion peaked at 45.1 percent in the second quarter of 2010. The proportion of people unemployed for even longer periods (52 weeks or more) also remained higher than before the recession. In the fourth quarter of 2019, 12.8 percent of the unemployed had been looking for work for 52 weeks or longer, and 5.2 percent had searched for a job for 99 weeks or longer. Before the recession, the percentage of the unemployed who had been looking for work for 52 weeks or longer was 9.9 percent, and those who had been looking for 99 weeks or longer was 3.3 percent. These measures reached peaks of 31.9 percent and 15.1 percent, respectively, in 2011. (Data for those unemployed for 52 weeks or longer and 99 weeks or longer are not seasonally adjusted.) (See figure 6.)



The number of involuntary part-time workers decreased

People who work part time for economic reasons, often referred to as involuntary part-time workers, are those who worked for less than 35 hours per week but would have preferred full-time employment.^[7] They worked a reduced number of hours because of unfavorable business conditions (slack work), or else they worked part time because they could not find a full-time job. Involuntary part-time workers are often described as underemployed.^[8] (See figure 7.)



Over the year, the number of involuntary part-time workers decreased by 391,000, to 4.3 million in the fourth quarter of 2019, representing 2.7 percent of total employment. During the 2007–09 recession, the share of involuntary part-time workers increased, reaching a peak of 6.6 percent in the fourth quarter of 2009; but in 2019, the share fell to below its prerecession level. The percentage of involuntary part-time workers had not been lower since the second quarter of 2001. The number of people who could only find part-time work declined by 247,000, to 1.3 million in 2019, while the number of involuntary part-time workers because of slack work or business conditions declined by 193,000, to 2.7 million.

Employment increased and unemployment rates decreased for the major occupational groups

Unemployment rates declined for service occupations; natural resources, construction and maintenance occupations; and management, professional, and related occupations in 2019. The rates for sales and office occupations and production, transportation, and material moving occupations changed little over the year.^[9] The jobless rate for service occupations was 4.4 percent, 0.4 percentage point lower than in 2018. The rate for natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations was 4.7 percent, which also was a decline of 0.4 percentage point. The rate for management, professional, and related occupations was 2.0 percent. This was the lowest unemployment rate among the five major occupational categories. (See table 6.)

Table 6. Unemployment rates, by occupational group and gender, annual averages, 2018–19

Occupational group	Total			Men			Women		
	2018	2019	Change, 2018–19	2018	2019	Change, 2018–19	2018	2019	Change, 2018–19
Management, professional, and related occupations	2.1	2.0	-0.1	2.0	1.8	-0.2	2.2	2.1	-0.1
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	2.0	1.8	-0.2	1.9	1.7	-0.2	2.1	2.0	-0.1
Professional and related occupations	2.2	2.1	-0.1	2.1	2.0	-0.1	2.3	2.2	-0.1
Service occupations	4.8	4.4	-0.4	5.1	4.8	-0.3	4.6	4.2	-0.4
Health care support occupations	3.4	3.1	-0.3	3.0	2.8	-0.2	3.5	3.2	-0.3
Protective service occupations	2.7	2.9	0.2	2.6	2.3	-0.3	3.0	4.8	1.8
Food preparation and serving related occupations	6.1	5.5	-0.6	6.7	6.1	-0.6	5.6	5.0	-0.6
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	5.5	5.1	-0.4	5.8	5.6	-0.2	4.9	4.4	-0.5
Personal care and service occupations	4.3	3.9	-0.4	3.9	4.4	0.5	4.4	3.7	-0.7
Sales and office occupations	3.8	3.7	-0.1	3.6	3.5	-0.1	4.0	3.8	-0.2
Sales and related occupations	4.1	3.8	-0.3	3.3	2.9	-0.4	4.8	4.7	-0.1
Office and administrative support occupations	3.6	3.6	0.0	4.2	4.3	0.1	3.4	3.3	-0.1
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	5.1	4.7	-0.4	4.9	4.4	-0.5	8.2	9.0	0.8
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	9.2	9.6	0.4	8.0	7.7	-0.3	12.6	14.8	2.2
Construction and extraction occupations	6.0	5.2	-0.8	6.0	5.1	-0.9	6.4	6.1	-0.3
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	2.6	2.6	0.0	2.6	2.5	-0.1	4.1	3.7	-0.4
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	4.5	4.3	-0.2	4.3	4.2	-0.1	5.3	4.9	-0.4
Production occupations	4.0	3.9	-0.1	3.7	3.7	0.0	4.8	4.5	-0.3
Transportation and material moving occupations	5.0	4.7	-0.3	4.8	4.5	-0.3	5.9	5.4	-0.5

Note: The unemployed are classified by occupation according to their last job, which may or may not be similar to the job they are currently looking for.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Employment expanded by 2.9 percent in management, professional, and related occupations; this occupation group accounted for 40.8 percent of total employment in 2019. In fact, employment growth from 2018 to 2019 in management, professional, and related occupations accounted for nearly all of the increase in total employment. (See table 7.)

Table 7. Employment, by occupational group and gender, annual averages, 2018–19 (in thousands)

Occupational group	Total			Men			Women		
	2018	2019	Change, 2018–19	2018	2019	Change, 2018–19	2018	2019	Change, 2018–19
Total, 16 years and over	155,761	157,538	1,777	82,698	83,460	762	73,063	74,078	1,015
Management, professional, and related occupations	62,436	64,218	1,782	30,287	30,950	663	32,149	33,267	1,118
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	25,850	26,981	1,131	14,464	15,072	608	11,387	11,909	522
Professional and related occupations	36,586	37,237	651	15,823	15,879	56	20,763	21,358	595
Service occupations	26,854	26,978	124	11,416	11,445	29	15,439	15,534	95
Health care support occupations	3,629	3,758	129	469	491	22	3,161	3,267	106
Protective service occupations	3,203	3,128	-75	2,483	2,437	-46	720	692	-28
Food preparation and serving related occupations	8,220	8,378	158	3,655	3,808	153	4,565	4,569	4
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations	5,854	5,746	-108	3,434	3,332	-102	2,421	2,413	-8
Personal care and service occupations	5,947	5,968	21	1,375	1,376	1	4,572	4,592	20
Sales and office occupations	33,461	33,370	-91	13,008	13,148	140	20,453	20,222	-231
Sales and related occupations	15,806	15,582	-224	7,999	7,979	-20	7,807	7,602	-205
Office and administrative support occupations	17,655	17,789	134	5,010	5,169	159	12,646	12,620	-26
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	14,471	14,343	-128	13,726	13,569	-157	745	774	29
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	1,121	1,156	35	848	865	17	273	291	18
Construction and extraction occupations	8,338	8,325	-13	8,053	8,033	-20	285	292	7
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	5,012	4,862	-150	4,825	4,671	-154	187	191	4
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	18,539	18,628	89	14,261	14,348	87	4,278	4,281	3
Production occupations	8,621	8,565	-56	6,140	6,115	-25	2,480	2,450	-30
Transportation and material moving occupations	9,918	10,063	145	8,121	8,233	112	1,797	1,831	34

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

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Unemployment rate for veterans unchanged over the year

There were 18.7 million veterans in the civilian noninstitutional population in the fourth quarter of 2019. Nearly half of these veterans were in the labor force. Veterans who served during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era account for the largest share of the veteran population, at 7.1 million, followed by veterans who served during Gulf War-era II (4.4 million), and those who served during Gulf War-era I (3.1 million). Among veterans, women accounted for about 10 percent of the total veteran population in the fourth quarter of 2019.

In the fourth quarter of 2019, the unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) for veterans was 3.1 percent, about unchanged from the previous year. The unemployment rate for nonveterans decreased by 0.3 percentage point over the year, to 3.2 percent.^[10] The jobless rate for Gulf War-era II veterans (those who served from September 2001 to the present), at 3.8 percent, was little different from a year earlier. The unemployment rates for male (2.9 percent) and female (4.2 percent) veterans were little changed in the fourth quarter of 2019, compared with the 2018 rates. (See table 8.)

Table 8. Employment status of people 18 years and older, by veteran status, period of service, and gender, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Employment status, veteran status, and period of service	Total			Men			Women		
	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
Veterans, 18 years and older									
Civilian labor force	9,388	9,187	-201	8242	8,094	-148	1,146	1,092	-54
Participation rate	49.3	49.2	-0.1	48.0	48.2	0.2	61.2	57.8	-3.4
Employed	9,103	8,905	-198	7,988	7,859	-129	1,114	1,046	-68
Employment– population ratio	47.8	47.7	-0.1	46.5	46.8	0.3	59.5	55.3	-4.2
Unemployed	285	282	-3	254	236	-18	32	46	14
Unemployment rate	3.0	3.1	0.1	3.1	2.9	-0.2	2.7	4.2	1.5
Gulf War-era II veterans									
Civilian labor force	3,437	3,464	27	2,923	2,942	19	514	522	8
Participation rate	81.7	79.2	-2.5	83.8	81.7	-2.1	71.7	67.5	-4.2
Employed	3,320	3,333	13	2,823	2,847	24	497	486	-11
Employment– population ratio	78.9	76.2	-2.7	80.9	79.1	-1.8	69.3	62.9	-6.4
Unemployed	116	130	14	100	95	-5	17	35	18
Unemployment rate	3.4	3.8	0.4	3.4	3.2	-0.2	3.3	6.8	3.5
Gulf War-era I veterans									
Civilian labor force	2,401	2,305	-96	2,043	1,984	-59	358	321	-37
Participation rate	77.6	74.7	-2.9	78.5	75.8	-2.7	73.0	68.7	-4.3
Employed	2,335	2,241	-94	1,983	1,925	-58	352	316	-36
Employment– population ratio	75.4	72.7	-2.7	76.1	73.6	-2.5	71.8	67.6	-4.2
Unemployed	66	64	-2	60	59	-1	6	5	-1
Unemployment rate	2.8	2.8	0.0	3.0	3.0	0.0	1.7	1.6	-0.1
World War II, Korean War, and Vietnam-era veterans									
Civilian labor force	1,565	1,459	-106	1505	1,412	-93	60	47	-13

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 8. Employment status of people 18 years and older, by veteran status, period of service, and gender, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Employment status, veteran status, and period of service	Total			Men			Women		
	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
Participation rate	21.0	20.7	-0.3	20.9	20.7	-0.2	23.4	19.2	-4.2
Employed	1,525	1,417	-108	1466	1,370	-96	59	47	-12
Employment– population ratio	20.4	20.1	-0.3	20.3	20.1	-0.2	23.1	19.1	-4.0
Unemployed	40	42	2	39	42	3	1	0	-1
Unemployment rate	2.6	2.9	0.3	2.6	2.9	0.3	1.5	0.4	-1.1
Veterans of other service periods									
Civilian labor force	1,985	1,959	-26	1,771	1,757	-14	214	202	-12
Participation rate	46.3	47.1	0.8	45.6	46.8	1.2	52.2	49.9	-2.3
Employed	1,923	1,914	-9	1,717	1,717	0	206	197	-9
Employment– population ratio	44.8	46.0	1.2	44.2	45.7	1.5	50.3	48.6	-1.7
Unemployed	62	46	-16	55	41	-14	8	5	-3
Unemployment rate	3.1	2.3	-0.8	3.1	2.3	-0.8	3.6	2.5	-1.1
Nonveterans, 18 years and older									
Civilian labor force	151,198	153,028	1,830	76,801	77,656	855	74,398	75,371	973
Participation rate	65.5	65.9	0.4	74.3	74.3	0.0	58.4	58.9	0.5
Employed	145,900	148,080	2,180	74,048	75,085	1,037	71,851	72,995	1,144
Employment– population ratio	63.2	63.7	0.5	71.6	71.9	0.3	56.4	57.1	0.7
Unemployed	5,299	4,948	-351	2,752	2,571	-181	2,546	2,377	-169
Unemployment rate	3.5	3.2	-0.3	3.6	3.3	-0.3	3.4	3.2	-0.2

Note: Veterans are men and women who previously served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and were not on active duty at the time of the survey. Nonveterans never served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces. Veterans could have served anywhere in the world during these periods of service: Gulf War-era II (September 2001–present), Gulf War-era I (August 1990–August 2001), Vietnam era (August 1964–April 1975), Korean War (July 1950–January 1955), World War II (December 1941–December 1946), and other service periods (all other time periods). Veterans are only counted in one period of service, their most recent wartime period. Veterans who served in both a wartime period and any other service period are classified in the wartime period.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

In the fourth quarter of 2019, 49.2 percent of veterans participated in the labor force, while 65.9 percent of nonveterans participated in the labor force. The labor force participation rate of veterans was little changed from a year earlier, while the rate for nonveterans increased by 0.4 percentage point over the year. Labor force participation rates—for veterans and nonveterans—tend to be lower for older people than they are for people of prime working age. For instance, the labor force participation rate for those who served during World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam era—who are all over age 60 and accounted for 38 percent of the veteran population—was 20.7 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019, little changed from 2018. In contrast, Gulf War-era II veterans—who tend to be younger—had a much higher participation rate, 79.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019, down 2.5 percentage points from a year earlier.

Unemployment rate for persons with a disability continued to be twice that of those with no disability

Most labor market indicators for persons with a disability changed little in 2019. Among the 30.4 million persons age 16 and over with a disability in the fourth quarter of 2019, 6.3 million, or 20.6 percent, participated in the labor force. This was much lower than the rate those with no disability, 68.8 percent. (Data are not seasonally adjusted.) The lower participation rate for persons with a disability reflects, in part, the older age profile of those with a disability; older people, regardless of disability status, are less likely to be in the labor force. About half of all persons with a disability were age 65 and over, 3 times the share of those with no disability. The labor force participation rate for persons with a disability changed little, while the rate for persons with no disability increased over the year.^[11] (See table 9.)

Table 9. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population, by gender, age, and disability status, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Employment status, gender, and age	Persons with a disability			Persons with no disability		
	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
Total, 16 years and older						
Civilian labor force	6,384	6,256	-128	156,248	158,067	1,819
Participation rate	21.1	20.6	-0.5	68.4	68.8	0.4
Employed	5,895	5,824	-71	150,921	153,015	2,094
Employment– population ratio	19.4	19.2	-0.2	66.1	66.6	0.5
Unemployed	490	432	-58	5,327	5,052	-275
Unemployment rate	7.7	6.9	-0.8	3.4	3.2	-0.2
Men, 16 to 64 years						
Civilian labor force	2,700	2,730	30	77,683	77,958	275
Participation rate	35.7	36.0	0.3	82.4	82.8	0.4
Employed	2,483	2,525	42	74,921	75,382	461
Employment– population ratio	32.9	33.3	0.4	79.5	80.1	0.6
Unemployed	217	205	-12	2,762	2,576	-186
Unemployment rate	8.0	7.5	-0.5	3.6	3.3	-0.3
Women, 16 to 64 years						
Civilian labor force	2,486	2,306	-180	69,494	70,322	828
Participation rate	31.6	30.8	-0.8	71.6	72.4	0.8
Employed	2,267	2,125	-142	67,171	68,090	919
Employment– population ratio	28.9	28.4	-0.5	69.2	70.1	0.9
Unemployed	219	181	-38	2,323	2,232	-91
Unemployment rate	8.8	7.9	-0.9	3.3	3.2	-0.1
Total, 65 years and over						
Civilian labor force	1,199	1,219	20	9,071	9,787	716
Participation rate	8.0	8.0	0.0	24.5	25.6	1.1
Employed	1,145	1,173	28	8,829	9,543	714

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 9. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population, by gender, age, and disability status, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Employment status, gender, and age	Persons with a disability			Persons with no disability		
	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
Employment– population ratio	7.7	7.7	0.0	23.8	24.9	1.1
Unemployed	54	46	-8	243	244	1
Unemployment rate	4.5	3.8	-0.7	2.7	2.5	-0.2

Note: A person with a disability has at least one of the following conditions: is deaf or has serious difficulty hearing; is blind or has serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses; has serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition; has serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs; has difficulty dressing or bathing; or has difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor's office or shopping because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

The unemployment rate for persons with a disability, at 6.9 percent in the last quarter of 2019, was more than double the rate of persons without a disability (3.2 percent). The jobless rate for persons with a disability has been trending down for several years.

Unemployment rate of foreign born was lower than that of native born

The foreign born accounted for 17.2 percent of the U.S. civilian labor force age 16 and over in the fourth quarter of 2019.^[12] The unemployment rate for foreign-born people declined to 2.8 percent over the year, and the rate for native-born people declined to 3.5 percent. (Data are not seasonally adjusted.) (See table 10.)

Table 10. Employment status of the foreign- and native-born populations by gender, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Employment status and nativity	Total			Men			Women		
	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
Foreign born, 16 years and older									
Civilian labor force	28,495	28,207	-288	16,247	16,044	-203	12,249	12,163	-86
Participation rate	66.1	66.3	0.2	77.9	78.0	0.1	55.0	55.3	0.3
Employed	27,577	27,420	-157	15,782	15,652	-130	11,795	11,769	-26
Employment– population ratio	64.0	64.4	0.4	75.7	76.1	0.4	53.0	53.5	0.5
Unemployed	918	787	-131	464	392	-72	454	395	-59
Unemployment rate	3.2	2.8	-0.4	2.9	2.4	-0.5	3.7	3.2	-0.5
Native born, 16 years and older									

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 10. Employment status of the foreign- and native-born populations by gender, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted, 2018–19 (levels in thousands)

Employment status and nativity	Total			Men			Women		
	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
Civilian labor force	134,137	136,116	1,979	69,724	70,685	961	64,413	65,430	1,017
Participation rate	62.2	62.6	0.4	66.9	67.2	0.3	57.9	58.3	0.4
Employed	129,239	131,418	2,179	67,059	68,134	1,075	62,179	63,284	1,105
Employment–population ratio	59.9	60.4	0.5	64.3	64.8	0.5	55.9	56.4	0.5
Unemployed	4,898	4,698	-200	2,664	2,551	-113	2,234	2,147	-87
Unemployment rate	3.7	3.5	-0.2	3.8	3.6	-0.2	3.5	3.3	-0.2

Note: The foreign born are those residing in the United States who were not U.S. citizens at birth. That is, they were born outside the United States or one of its outlying areas, such as Puerto Rico or Guam, to parents who were not U.S. citizens. This group includes legally admitted immigrants, refugees, students, temporary workers, and undocumented immigrants. The survey data, however, do not separately identify the number of people in these categories. The native born are people who were born in the United States or one of its outlying areas, such as Puerto Rico or Guam, or who were born abroad of at least one parent who was a U.S. citizen.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Foreign-born people continued to have a higher labor force participation rates than native-born people in 2019. The labor force participation rate for the foreign born, at 66.3 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019, was little changed over the year. The participation rate for the native born increased by 0.4 percentage point, to 62.6 percent.

Fewer people not participating in the labor force

People who are not employed or unemployed are classified as not in the labor force.^[13] The majority of people who are not in the labor force do not want a job, although a small percentage (5.0 percent in the fourth quarter of 2019) of this group do want a job but had not sought employment in the 4 weeks preceding the survey reference period. In the fourth quarter of 2019, the number of people who were not in the labor force edged down to 95.6 million. (See table 11.)

Table 11. Number of people not in the labor force, fourth quarter averages, seasonally adjusted, 2015–19 (in thousands)

Category	Fourth quarter, 2015	Fourth quarter, 2016	Fourth quarter, 2017	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
Total not in the labor force	94,186	94,869	95,466	95,911	95,581	-330

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 11. Number of people not in the labor force, fourth quarter averages, seasonally adjusted, 2015–19 (in thousands)

Category	Fourth quarter, 2015	Fourth quarter, 2016	Fourth quarter, 2017	Fourth quarter, 2018	Fourth quarter, 2019	Change, fourth quarter, 2018–19
Persons who currently want a job	5,852	5,804	5,240	5,358	4,807	-551
Marginally attached to the labor force ⁽¹⁾	1,822	1,771	1,544	1,575	1,243	-332
Discouraged workers ⁽²⁾	631	493	481	437	310	-127

Notes:

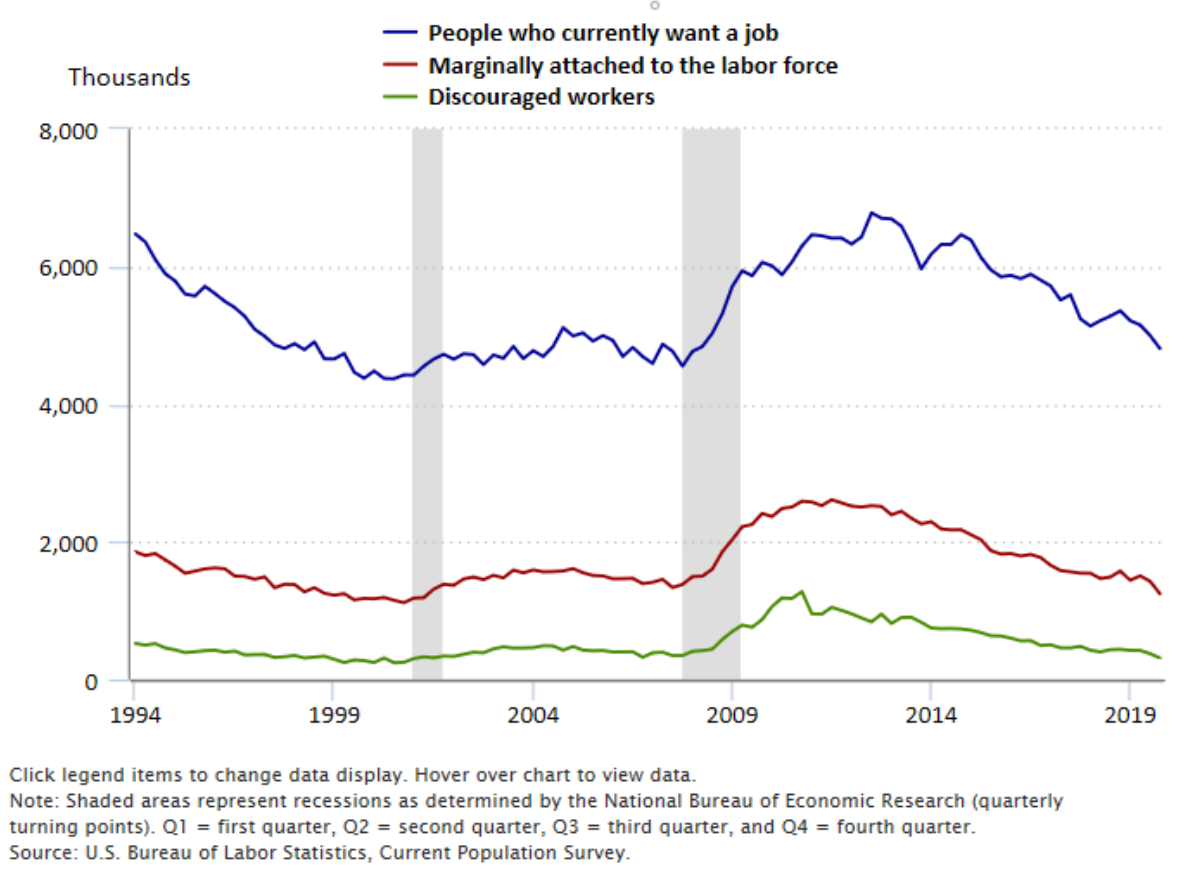
⁽¹⁾ Data refer to people who want a job, have searched for work during the prior 12 months, and were available to take a job during the reference week, but had not looked for work in the past 4 weeks.

⁽²⁾ Includes those who did not actively look for work in the prior 4 weeks for reasons such as thinks no work available, could not find work, lacks schooling or training, employer thinks too young or old, and other types of discrimination.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

People who were not in the labor force were considered marginally attached to the labor force if they wanted a job, were available for work, and had looked for work sometime in the prior 12 months (but not in the last 4 weeks before the survey). In the fourth quarter of 2019, 1.2 million people were marginally attached to the labor force, 332,000 less than a year earlier. (See figure 8.)

Figure 8. People not in the labor force, quarterly averages, 1994–2019



A subset of the marginally attached are discouraged workers—people not currently looking for work because they are discouraged over their job prospects.^[14] In the fourth quarter of 2019, there were 310,000 discouraged workers, which was 127,000 less than the number of such workers in 2018.

These subsets of people not in the labor force—people who currently want a job, the marginally attached, and discouraged workers—have followed a similar trend in recent years. These measures increased during the Great Recession and its aftermath and then began to trend downwards. The number of people not in the labor force who wanted a job peaked in 2012, the number of marginally attached peaked in 2011, and the number of discouraged workers peaked in 2010. All three measures have returned to levels similar to what they had been before the 2007–09 recession.

Alternative measures of labor underutilization

Six alternative measures of labor underutilization have long been available on a monthly basis from the Current Population Survey (CPS) for the United States as a whole. The official concept of unemployment (as measured in the CPS by U-3 in the U-1 to U-6 range of alternatives) includes all jobless people who are available to take a job and have actively sought work in the past 4 weeks. The other measures are provided

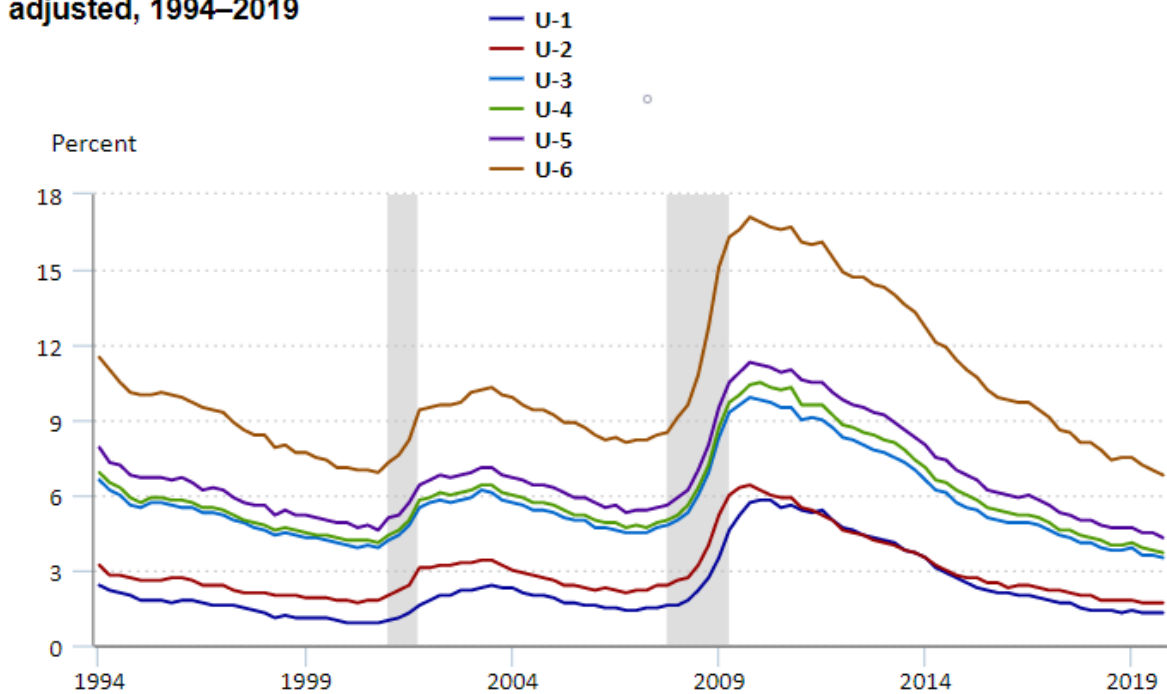
to data users and analysts who want more narrowly defined measures (U-1 and U-2) or more broadly defined measures (U-4 through U-6).

- U-1: persons unemployed 15 weeks or longer, as a percentage of the civilian labor force;
- U-2: job losers and persons who completed temporary jobs, as a percentage of the civilian labor force;
- U-3: total unemployed, as a percentage of the civilian labor force (official unemployment rate);
- U-4: total unemployed plus discouraged workers, as a percentage of the civilian labor force plus discouraged workers;
- U-5: total unemployed, plus discouraged workers, plus all other persons marginally attached to the labor force, as a percentage of the civilian labor force plus all persons marginally attached to the labor force; and
- U-6: total unemployed, plus all persons marginally attached to the labor force, plus total employed part time for economic reasons, as a percentage of the civilian labor force plus all persons marginally attached to the labor force.

Discouraged workers (U-4, U-5, and U-6 measures) are people who are not in the labor force, want and are available for work, and had looked for a job sometime in the 12 months before the survey reference period. They are not counted as unemployed because they had not searched for work in the prior 4 weeks and they believed no jobs were available for them. The marginally attached (U-5 and U-6 measures) are a group that includes discouraged workers. The criteria for the marginally attached are the same as for discouraged workers, with the exception that any reason could have been cited for the lack of job search in the prior 4 weeks. People employed part time for economic reasons (U-6 measure) are those working less than 35 hours per week who want to work full time, are available to do so, and gave an economic reason (their hours had been cut back or they were unable to find a full-time job) for working part time. These individuals are sometimes referred to as involuntary part-time workers.

In 2019, U-6 declined by 0.7 percentage point, to 6.8 percent in the fourth quarter, and U-5 decreased by 0.4 percentage point, to 4.3 percent. Measures U-2, U-4, U-5, and U-6 were at their lowest levels reported since these measures were introduced in 1994. There has not been a lower rate for U-1 since the second quarter of 2001. (See figure 9.)

Figure 9. Measures of labor underutilization, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted, 1994–2019



Click legend items to change data display. Hover over chart to view data.

Note: Shaded areas represent recessions as determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (quarterly turning points). Measures of labor underutilization are as follows: U-1 = people unemployed 15 weeks or longer, as a percentage of the civilian labor force; U-2 = job losers and people who completed temporary jobs, as a percentage of the civilian labor force; U-3 = total unemployed, as a percentage of the civilian labor force (official unemployment rate); U-4 = total unemployed plus discouraged workers, as a percentage of the civilian labor force plus discouraged workers; U-5 = total unemployed, plus discouraged workers, plus all other marginally attached workers, as a percentage of the civilian labor force plus all marginally attached workers; U-6 = total unemployed, plus all marginally attached workers, plus total employed part time for economic reasons, as a percentage of the civilian labor force plus all marginally attached workers.

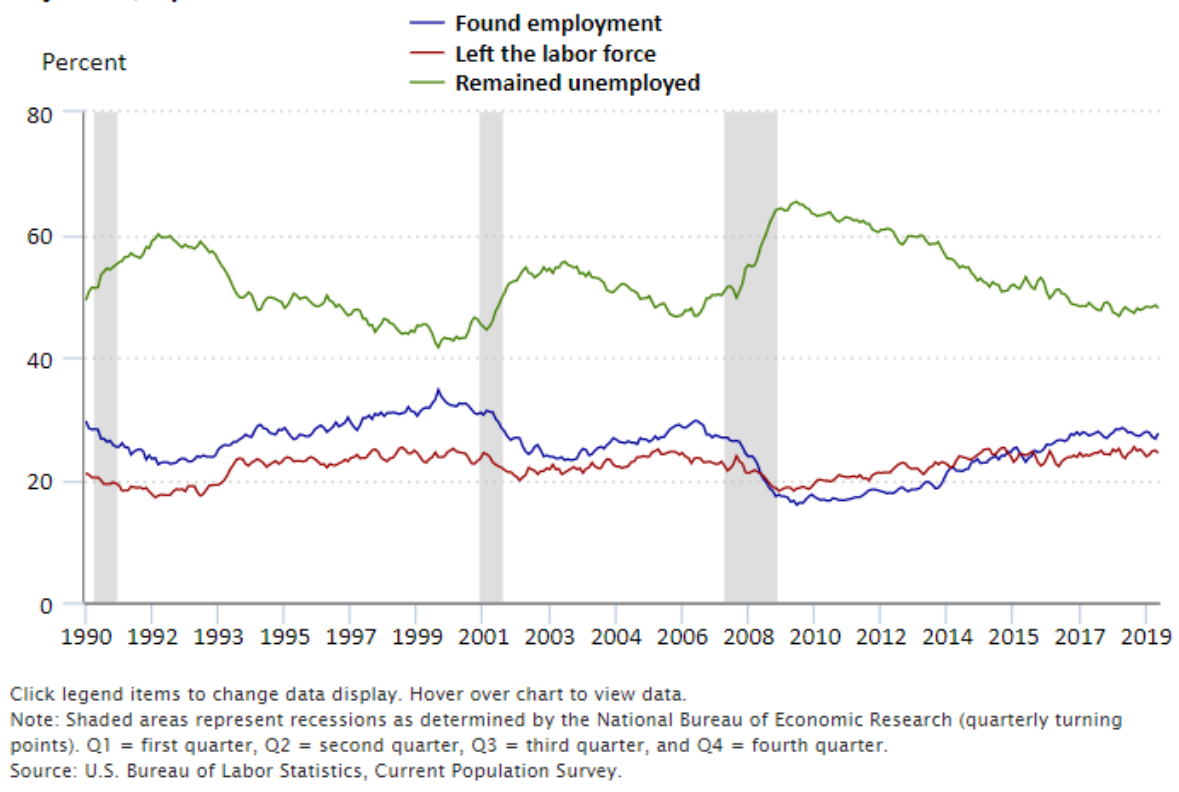
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Fewer people found employment in the month after being unemployed

In the CPS, for any given month, a person can be classified in one of three labor force categories: employed, unemployed, or not in the labor force. A person's labor force status can change or remain the same from month to month. For example, an unemployed person could become employed, or an employed person could leave the labor force. In 2019, 15.5 million people, or 6.0 percent of the population age 16 and older, changed their labor status in an average month. This represents the lowest annual rate of labor market churn for data on labor force status flows since 1990.

The CPS data on labor force flows provide a more detailed look at changes in the unemployment rate.^[15] In December 2019, 27.6 percent of the unemployed found jobs in the next month. (Data are seasonally adjusted 3-month moving averages.) This was slightly lower than a year earlier, when 28.5 percent found employment in the month after being unemployed. Among those unemployed who did not find employment in the following month, 48.0 percent remained unemployed and 24.4 percent left the labor force. (See figure 10.)

Figure 10. Percentage of the unemployed who found employment, remained unemployed, or left the labor force, 3-month moving average, seasonally adjusted, April 1990–December 2019



Earnings grew 3.5 percent from 2018 to 2019

As most economic indicators pointed to a strong labor market in 2019, many economists continued to look for signs of acceleration in wage growth. As measured by the CPS, median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers increased by 3.5 percent to \$917 in 2019.^[16] (Data are annual averages and are in current dollars.) From 2018 to 2019, women’s weekly earnings grew at a higher rate (4.1 percent) than men’s weekly earnings (3.5 percent). Women’s median weekly earnings were \$821 in 2019, or 81.5 percent of men’s, at \$1,007. (See table 12 and figure 11.)

Table 12. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers, by selected characteristics, annual averages, 2018–19

Characteristic	2018	2019	Percent change, 2018–19
Total, 16 years and older	\$886	\$917	3.5
CPI-U (1982–1984 = 100)	251.1	255.7	1.8
Men	\$973	\$1,007	3.5
Women	789	821	4.1
White	916	945	3.2
Men	1,002	1,036	3.4
Women	817	840	2.8

See footnotes at end of table.

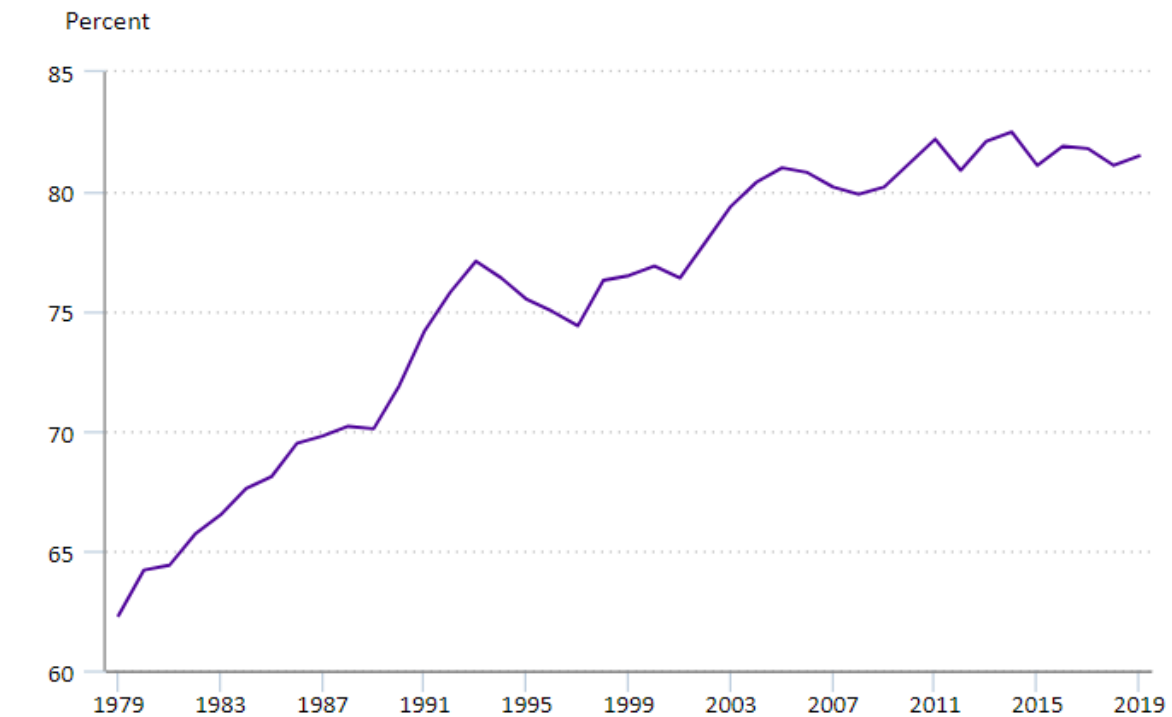
Table 12. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers, by selected characteristics, annual averages, 2018–19

Characteristic	2018	2019	Percent change, 2018–19
Black or African American	694	735	5.9
Men	735	769	4.6
Women	654	704	7.6
Asian	1,095	1,174	7.2
Men	1,241	1,336	7.7
Women	937	1,025	9.4
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	680	706	3.8
Men	720	747	3.8
Women	617	642	4.1
Total, 25 years and older	932	969	4.0
Less than a high school diploma	553	592	7.1
High school graduate, no college	730	746	2.2
Some college or associate's degree	826	856	3.6
Bachelor's degree or higher	1,324	1,367	3.2

Note: CPI-U = Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey and Consumer Price Index.

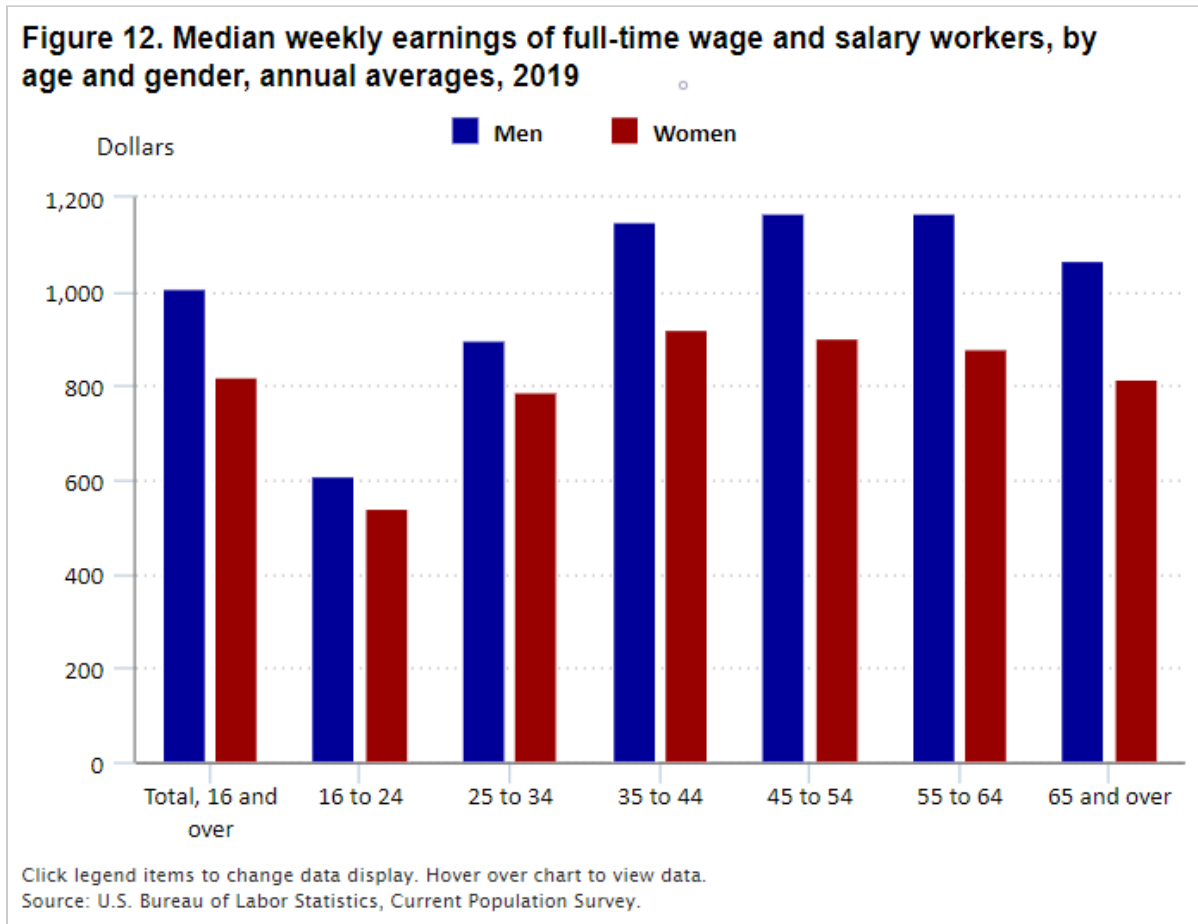
Figure 11. Women's median usual weekly earnings as a percentage of men's, full-time wage and salary workers, annual averages, 1979–2019



Hover over chart to view data.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Earnings varied by age and gender. For both men and women, earnings were lowest for those age 16 to 24, followed by 25- to 34-year-olds. Earnings of those age 35 to 64 were fairly similar, ranging from \$1,149 to \$1,166 for men and \$880 to \$920 for women. The women's-to-men's earnings ratio was higher among younger workers than among older workers. For example, the ratio was 89.0 percent for 16- to 24-year-olds and 75.5 percent among 45- to 54-year-olds. (See figure 12.)



In 2019, median weekly earnings among the major race and ethnicity groups continued to be higher for Asians (\$1,174) and Whites (\$945) than for Blacks (\$735) and Hispanics (\$706). From 2018 to 2019, Asians had the largest increase in earnings, at 7.2 percent, followed by Blacks, with an increase of 5.9 percent, and Hispanics, with an earnings increase of 3.8 percent. Earnings for Whites increased by 3.2 percent over the year.

The women's-to-men's earnings ratio varied by race and ethnicity. White women earned 81.1 percent as much as their male counterparts, compared with 91.5 percent for Black women, 76.7 percent for Asian women, and 85.9 percent for Hispanic women.

Earnings are positively correlated with educational attainment. Among full-time wage and salary workers age 25 and older, median usual weekly earnings rose for every educational attainment level from 2018 to 2019. Workers with a bachelor's degree and higher had median weekly earnings of \$1,367, an increase of 3.2 percent over the year. Those with some college or an associate degree had weekly earnings of \$856 (a 3.6-percent increase), and earnings for high school graduates (no college) were \$746 (a 2.2-percent increase). Workers with less than a high

school diploma had the lowest weekly earnings, at \$592; these workers had the largest percentage gain (7.1 percent) in earnings from 2018 to 2019.

Among the major occupational groups, people employed full time in management, professional, and related occupations had the highest median weekly earnings—\$1,539 for men and \$1,135 for women. Men (\$659) and women (\$537) employed in service occupations earned the least in 2019. (See table 13.)

Table 13. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by occupation and gender, annual averages, 2018–19

Occupation and gender	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings		
	2018	2019	2018	2019	Percent change, 2018–19
Total, 16 years and over	115,567	117,584	\$886	\$917	3.5
Management, professional, and related occupations	48,808	50,119	1,246	1,309	5.1
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	19,863	20,696	1,355	1,415	4.4
Professional and related occupations	28,945	29,423	1,176	1,237	5.2
Service occupations	16,288	16,558	569	592	4.0
Sales and office occupations	23,714	23,883	742	758	2.2
Sales and related occupations	10,077	9,929	798	830	4.0
Office and administrative support occupations	13,637	13,954	717	732	2.1
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	11,546	11,671	824	869	5.5
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	850	900	581	574	-1.2
Construction and extraction occupations	6,414	6,467	808	866	7.2
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	4,282	4,304	934	939	0.5
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	15,210	15,353	707	727	2.8
Production occupations	7,668	7,741	723	745	3.0
Transportation and material moving occupations	7,542	7,612	689	711	3.2
Men, 16 years and over	64,142	65,007	973	1,007	3.5
Management, professional, and related occupations	23,685	24,260	1,468	1,539	4.8
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	10,668	11,111	1,537	1,598	4.0
Professional and related occupations	13,017	13,149	1,425	1,493	4.8
Service occupations	7,948	7,898	641	659	2.8
Sales and office occupations	9,548	9,695	846	874	3.3
Sales and related occupations	5,621	5,525	949	982	3.5
Office and administrative support occupations	3,926	4,170	738	771	4.5
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	11,030	11,134	834	881	5.6
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	667	690	602	593	-1.5
Construction and extraction occupations	6,223	6,280	809	873	7.9
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	4,140	4,164	936	943	0.7
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	11,932	12,020	762	780	2.4
Production occupations	5,627	5,668	793	814	2.6

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 13. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by occupation and gender, annual averages, 2018–19

Occupation and gender	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings		
	2018	2019	2018	2019	Percent change, 2018–19
Transportation and material moving occupations	6,305	6,352	724	747	3.2
Women, 16 years and over	51,425	52,577	789	821	4.1
Management, professional, and related occupations	25,123	25,859	1,078	1,135	5.3
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	9,195	9,585	1,168	1,221	4.5
Professional and related occupations	15,929	16,274	1,024	1,085	6.0
Service occupations	8,340	8,660	511	537	5.1
Sales and office occupations	14,166	14,188	696	713	2.4
Sales and related occupations	4,455	4,404	651	677	4.0
Office and administrative support occupations	9,711	9,784	711	721	1.4
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	516	537	638	614	-3.8
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	183	210	483	513	6.2
Construction and extraction occupations	191	187	785	711	-9.4
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	142	140	823	850	3.3
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	3,279	3,334	561	593	5.7
Production occupations	2,041	2,073	575	596	3.7
Transportation and material moving occupations	1,237	1,260	538	586	8.9

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

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

As measured by the CPS, real or inflation-adjusted median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers (also referred to as constant dollar usual weekly earnings) increased by 1.8 percentage points from 2018 to 2019.^[17]

Summary

The economic expansion continued in 2019, making it the longest on record. The national unemployment rate declined to 3.5 percent, the lowest level since 1969. Both the labor force participation rate and the employment–population ratio increased from the previous year. Total employment expanded by 2.0 million in 2019, reaching 158.6 million by the end of the year. The unemployment rates for Blacks and Hispanics both fell to their lowest levels on record in 2019. The number of people working part time for economic reasons also declined over the year. Median usual weekly earnings increased to \$917 in 2019; this was 3.5 percent higher than in 2018, which outpaced inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

SUGGESTED CITATION

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NOTES

¹ The Business Cycle Dating Committee of the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) is the official arbiter of the beginning and ending dates of recessions and expansions in the United States. According to NBER, the most recent recession began in December 2007 and ended in June 2009. Or, in terms of quarters, the recession began in the fourth quarter of 2007 and ended in the second quarter of 2009. For the quarterly analysis in this article, the NBER-designated quarterly dates are used. According to NBER, the "trough" of a recession marks the beginning of an expansion, and the "peak" of an expansion marks the beginning of a recession. Therefore, as of December or the fourth quarter of 2019, the economic expansion had lasted for 126 months or 42 quarters, surpassing the economic expansion of March (first quarter) 1991 to March (first quarter) 2001, which lasted for 120 months (or 40 quarters) and had been the longest expansion on record. As a result, the most recent economic expansion is now the longest on record. For further analysis of the U.S. labor market during the Great Recession and the decade that followed, see Evan Cunningham, "Great Recession, great recovery? Trends from the Current Population Survey," *Monthly Labor Review*, April 2018, <https://doi.org/10.21916/mlr.2018.10>.

² Although data from the CPS are published monthly, the data analyzed in this article are seasonally adjusted quarterly averages, and all over-the-year changes are comparisons of fourth-quarter 2018 data with fourth-quarter 2019 data, unless otherwise noted.

³ In the CPS, unemployed people are defined as those age 16 and over who were not employed during the survey reference week, had actively searched for work during the 4 weeks prior to the survey, and were available for work.

⁴ Effective with the release of data for January 2019, the household survey used updated population estimates. Each year, the U.S. Census Bureau updates its population estimates to reflect new information and assumptions about the growth of the population during the decade leading up to the decennial census. Following usual practice, BLS did not revise the official household survey estimates for December 2018 and earlier months. For additional information on the population adjustments and their effect on national labor force estimates, see "Adjustments to household survey population estimates in January 2019" (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, February 2019), <https://www.bls.gov/cps/population-control-adjustments-2019.pdf>.

⁵ People whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. In the CPS, about 90 percent of people of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity are classified as White.

⁶ Educational attainment data are based on the highest degree received for people age 25 and over.

⁷ The measure "part time for economic reasons" is based on an individual's actual hours at work during the survey reference week. An economic reason may include slack work, unfavorable business conditions, inability to find full-time work, or seasonal declines in demand. To be classified as involuntary part-time workers, people who usually work part time and worked part time during the survey reference week must indicate that they want and are available for full-time work. For more research on involuntary part-time workers, see, for example, Jonathan L. Willis, "Stuck in part-time employment," *The Macro Bulletin: Macroeconomic research from the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City* (Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, January 18, 2017), and Rob Valletta, "Involuntary part-time work: Yes, it's here to stay," *SF Fed Blog* (Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, April 11, 2018), <https://www.frbsf.org/our-district/about/sf-fed-blog/involuntary-part-time-work-here-to-stay/>.

⁸ Some research has suggested that higher levels of involuntary part-time workers contribute to slower wage growth, as employers may be less likely to raise wages if they have part-time workers who would like more work at the prevailing wage. See David N. F. Bell and David G. Blanchflower, "Underemployment in the United States and Europe," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* (OnlineFirst), November 22, 2019, <http://doi.org/10.1177/0019793919886527>.

⁹ These data on unemployment rates by occupation are 2019 annual averages. The unemployed are classified by the occupation they held at their last job, which may or may not be similar to the job they are currently seeking.

[10](#) In the CPS, veterans are defined as men and women 18 years and over who previously served on active duty in the U.S. Armed Forces and who were civilians at the time the survey was conducted. Veterans are categorized as having served in the following periods of service: (1) Gulf War era II (September 2001 to the present), (2) Gulf War era I (August 1990 to August 2001), (3) World War II (December 1941 to December 1946), (4) Korean War (July 1950 to January 1955), (5) Vietnam era (August 1964 to April 1975), and (6) other service period (all other periods). Veterans who served in more than one wartime period are classified into only the most recent one. Veterans who served in both a wartime period and any other service period are classified in the wartime period.

[11](#) Labor force statistics for people with and without a disability are available back to June 2008, the first month disability questions were added to the basic CPS.

[12](#) The foreign born are people who reside in the United States but were born outside the country or outside one of its outlying areas, such as Puerto Rico or Guam, to parents who were not U.S. citizens. The foreign born include legally admitted immigrants; refugees; temporary residents, such as students and temporary workers; and undocumented immigrants.

[13](#) For additional information, see Steven F. Hipple, "People who are not in the labor force: why aren't they working?" *Beyond the Numbers*, December 2015, <https://www.bls.gov/opub/btn/volume-4/people-who-are-not-in-the-labor-force-why-arent-they-working.htm>.

[14](#) Discouraged workers may indicate that no jobs are available for them; they lack education, training, or experience needed to find a job; or they believe they face some type of discrimination, such as being too young or too old.

[15](#) For additional information and analyses, see Harley Frazis, "Employed workers leaving the labor force: an analysis of recent trends," *Monthly Labor Review*, May 2017, <https://doi.org/10.21916/mlr.2017.16>; Randy E. Ilg and Eleni Theodossiou, "Job search of the unemployed by duration of unemployment," *Monthly Labor Review*, March 2012, pp. 41–49, <https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2012/03/art3full.pdf>; and "Research series on labor force status flows from the Current Population Survey," which is available at https://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_flows.htm.

[16](#) Data are annual averages and are in current dollars. The CPS data on earnings represent earnings before taxes and other deductions and include any overtime pay, commissions, or tips typically received. For multiple jobholders, only earnings received at their main job are included. Earnings reported on a nonweekly basis are converted to a weekly equivalent. The term "usual" reflects each survey respondent's understanding of the term. 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. Wage and salary workers are defined as those who receive wages, salaries, commissions, tips, payment in kind, or piece rates. This definition includes both public- and private-sector employees but excludes all self-employed people, regardless of whether their business is incorporated or unincorporated. Earnings comparisons made in this article are on a broad level and do not control for many factors that can be important in explaining earnings differences, such as job skills and responsibilities, work experience, and specialization. Finally, full-time workers are those who usually work 35 hours or more per week at their main job.

[17](#) The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) is used to convert current dollars to constant (1982–84) dollars.

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