

Persons on the payroll of more than one establishment during the period are counted each time reported. Self-employed persons, unpaid family workers, and domestics are excluded.

Because these payroll data are based upon records of a relatively large sample of establishments, they provide industry information in considerable detail which cannot be obtained with equal accuracy from a survey of households. The household survey, on the other hand, furnishes detail on personal characteristics of the labor force.

Unemployment Data

The unemployed total from the household survey includes all jobless persons who were looking for work, regardless of whether or not they were eligible for unemployment insurance. Also counted as unemployed are persons waiting to be called back to jobs from which they had been laid off; those scheduled to start new wage or salary jobs within 30 days (except students); and those who would have been looking for work except that they were temporarily ill or believed no work was available in their line of work or in the community.

Insured unemployment represents the number of persons reporting a week of unemployment under an unemployment insurance program. It includes some persons who are working part time who would be counted as employed in the payroll and household surveys. Excluded are persons who have exhausted their benefit rights; new workers who have not earned rights to unemployment insurance; and persons losing jobs not covered by unemployment insurance systems (agriculture, State and local government, domestic service, self-employment, unpaid family work, nonprofit organizations, and firms below a minimum size). The rate of insured unemployment is the number of insured unemployed expressed as a percentage of average covered employment in a 12-month period ending 6 to 8 months prior to the week of reference. Initial claims are notices filed by those losing jobs covered by an unemployment insurance program that they are starting periods of unemployment. A claimant who continues to be unemployed a full week is then counted in the insured unemployment figure.

Hours of Work

Average weekly hours of work from the employer survey are available for detailed industries in manufacturing and for selected nonmanufacturing industries. The data relate to production or nonsupervisory workers and measure the total number of hours for which pay was received.

The hours of work from the household survey include all hours worked (paid or unpaid) in farm and nonfarm employment as reported by individuals. The total number of hours worked by persons holding more than one job is credited to the activity at which they worked the most hours.

Statistical Reliability

Household Survey

Since the data from the household survey are based on a sample, they may differ from the figures that would have been obtained if it were possible to take a complete census using the same schedules, enumerators, and procedures.

The standard error is primarily a measure of sampling variability, that is, the variations that might occur by chance because only a sample of the population is surveyed. The chances are about two out of three that an estimate from the sample would differ from a complete census by less than the standard error. The chances are about 19 out of 20 that the difference would be less than twice the standard error.

The following table shows the average standard error for the major employment status categories, computed from data for 12 recent months. Estimates of change derived from the survey are also subject to sampling variability. The standard error of change for consecutive months is also shown. The standard errors of level are acceptable approximations of the standard errors