

of year-to-year change. For more details on statistical reliability, see Employment and Earnings of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Average standard error of major employment status categories
(In thousands)

Employment status	Average standard error of--	
	Monthly level	Month-to-month change (consecutive months only)
Labor force and total employment	250	180
Agriculture	200	120
Nonagricultural employment	300	180
Unemployment	100	100

Employer Survey

This survey is designed primarily to measure month-to-month changes in employment, as indicated by a sample of employers who report in successive pairs of months. The estimated employment levels are adjusted periodically to benchmarks obtained from a variety of sources, the most important of which are records of employment in establishments covered by State unemployment insurance laws. These data are compiled by State agencies under the direction of the Bureau of Employment Security. The extent of adjustments needed to make the monthly series conform with the benchmarks provides a check on the accuracy of the estimates.

Significant causes of difference between the benchmarks and estimates include changes in industrial classification of individual establishments, as well as sampling and response errors. The following table presents a comparison of nonagricultural payroll employment estimates for industry divisions for March 1959. This comparison relates to the series published prior to conversion to the 1957 Standard Industrial Classification, and reflects only those differences which would result from a normal benchmark adjustment. However, apart from sampling and related problems, the March 1959 benchmark levels actually used for the series on the 1957 SIC were affected by 1) additions to employment amounting to 670,000 (an increase of 1.3 percent in the total estimate) for certain categories not adequately represented before, and 2) shifts between industry divisions in accordance with the new SIC, as described in the article in the November 1961 issue of Employment and Earnings.

Comparison of nonagricultural payroll employment estimates with March 1959 benchmarks,
by industry division

Industry division	Employment estimate	
	In thousands	As percentage of benchmark
TOTAL	51,093	99.4
Mining	689	96.1
Contract construction	2,435	95.1
Manufacturing	15,995	99.1
Transportation and public utilities	3,883	100.3
Wholesale and retail trade	11,134	100.8
Finance, insurance, and real estate	2,393	98.8
Service and miscellaneous	6,409	98.6
Government	8,155	100.0