

## **GLOSSARY OF LABOR STATISTICS**

- BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, US Department of Labor, 2009

The Bureau of Labor Statistics is the principal fact-finding agency for the Federal Government in the broad field of labor economics and statistics. The Glossary published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics is reproduced here for our browser's convenience.

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## A

### **Absence rate (Current Population Survey)**

The ratio of workers with absences to total full-time wage and salary employment. Absences are defined as instances when persons who usually work 35 or more hours per week worked less than 35 hours during the reference week for one of the following reasons: own illness, injury, or medical problems; childcare problems; other family or personal obligations; civic or military duty; and maternity or paternity leave.

### **Accidental death and dismemberment (National Compensation Survey—Benefits)**

A term used to describe a policy that pays additional benefits to the beneficiary if the cause of death is due to a non-work-related accident. Fractional amounts of the policy will be paid out if the covered employee loses a bodily appendage or sight because of an accident.

### **All other occupational illnesses**

Illnesses other than skin diseases or disorders, respiratory conditions, or poisoning. Examples include anthrax, brucellosis, infectious hepatitis, malignant and benign tumors, food poisoning, histoplasmosis, coccidioidomycosis.

### **Alternative employment arrangements (Current Population Survey)**

BLS has collected data for workers in four types of alternative employment arrangements: 1) independent contractors, 2) on-call workers, 3) temporary help agency workers, and 4) workers provided by contract firms. More information

### **Average hours per day (American Time Use Survey)**

This term refers to the average number of hours spent in a 24-hour day (between 4 a.m. on the diary day and 4 a.m. on the interview day) doing a specified activity.

### **Average hours per day, population (American Time Use Survey)**

The average number of hours per day is computed using all responses from a given population, including respondents who did not do a particular activity on their diary day.

### **Average hours per day, persons reporting the activity on the diary day (American Time Use Survey)**

The average number of hours per day is computed using only responses from those who engaged in a particular activity on their diary day.

## B

### **Base period**

A point in time used as a reference point for comparison with some later period.

### **Benefit incidence**

A measure of the availability of a benefit. The National Compensation Survey (NCS) presents data on the percent of workers with access to, and who participate in, employee benefits. Access is defined as the percent of workers in an occupation who are offered a benefit. For example, an employee may have access to an employer-sponsored fitness center, but may or may not use it. Employees in contributory plans are counted as participating in an insurance plan or a retirement plan if they have paid required contributions and met any applicable service requirements. Employees in noncontributory plans are counted as participating regardless of whether they have fulfilled their service requirements.

### **Benefits**

Nonwage compensation provided to employees. The National Compensation Survey groups benefits into five categories: paid leave (vacations, holidays, sick leave); supplementary pay (premium pay for overtime and work on holidays and weekends, shift differentials, nonproduction bonuses); retirement (defined benefit

and defined contribution plans); insurance (life insurance, health benefits, short-term disability, and long-term disability insurance) and legally required benefits (Social Security and Medicare, Federal and State unemployment insurance taxes, and workers' compensation).

**Blue collar and service occupations** (National Compensation Survey)

Includes precision production, craft, and repair occupations; machine operators and inspectors; transportation and moving occupations; handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers; and service occupations.

**Business sector** (Productivity and Costs)

The business sector is a subset of the domestic economy and excludes the economic activities of the following: general government, private households, and nonprofit organizations serving individuals. The business sector accounted for about 78 percent of the value of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2000.

## C

**Capital services**

A chain-type index of service flows derived from the stock of physical assets and software. Assets include equipment and software, structures, land, and inventories. Capital services are estimated as a capital-income weighted average of the growth rates of each asset. Capital services differ from capital stocks because short-lived assets such as equipment and software provide more services per unit of stock than long-lived assets such as land.

**Civilian noninstitutional population** (Current Population Survey)

Included are persons 16 years of age and older residing in the 50 States and the District of Columbia who are not inmates of institutions (for example, penal and mental facilities, homes for the aged), and who are not on active duty in the Armed Forces.

**Civilian workers** (National Compensation Survey)

The National Compensation Survey defines Civilian Workers as the sum of all private industry and State and local government workers. Federal Government, military and agricultural workers are excluded.

**Cohort** (National Longitudinal Surveys)

A cohort in the BLS National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) program is a group of people, defined by year of birth, that make up a particular study. For example, the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 (NLSY79) cohort consists of people born between January 1, 1957, and December 31, 1964.

**Collective bargaining**

Method whereby representatives of employees (unions) and employers negotiate the conditions of employment, normally resulting in a written contract setting forth the wages, hours, and other conditions to be observed for a stipulated period (e.g., 3 years). The term also applies to union-management dealings during the term of the agreement.

**Comparative advantage**

When one nation's opportunity cost of producing an item is less than another nation's opportunity cost of producing that item. A good or service with which a nation has the largest absolute advantage (or smallest absolute disadvantage) is the item for which they have a comparative advantage.

**Compensation** (National Compensation Survey)

A term used to encompass the entire range of wages and benefits, both current and deferred, that employees receive in return for their work. In the Employment Cost Index (ECI), compensation includes the employer's cost of wages and salaries, plus the employer's cost of providing employee benefits.

**Complete income reporters** (Consumer Expenditure Survey)

The distinction between complete and incomplete income reporters generally is based on whether the respondent provided values for major sources of income, such as wages and salaries, self-employment income, and Social Security income. Even complete income reporters may not have provided a full accounting of all income from all sources. In the current survey, across-the-board zero income reporting was designated as invalid, and the consumer unit was categorized as an incomplete reporter. In all tables, income data are for complete income reporters only.

**Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI)**

A structured system of microdata collection by telephone that speeds up the collection and editing of microdata; it also permits the interviewer to educate the respondents on the importance of timely and accurate data.

**Consumer unit (Consumer Expenditure Survey)**

A consumer unit is defined as either (1) all members of a particular household who are related by blood, marriage, adoption, or other legal arrangements; (2) a person living alone or sharing a household with others or living as a roomer in a private home or lodging house or in permanent living quarters in a hotel or motel, but who is financially independent; or (3) two or more persons living together who pool their income to make joint expenditure decisions. Financial independence is determined by the three major expense categories: housing, food, and other living expenses. To be considered financially independent, a respondent must provide at least two of the three major expense categories.

**Contingent workers (Current Population Survey)**

Workers who do not have an implicit or explicit contract for long-term employment. BLS uses three alternative measures of contingent workers that vary in scope. More information

**Contract escalation**

Producer Price Index (PPI) data are commonly used in escalating purchase and sales contracts. These contracts typically specify dollar amounts to be paid at some point in the future. It is often desirable to include an escalation clause that accounts for changes in input prices. For example, a long-term contract for bread may be escalated for changes in wheat prices by applying the percent change in the PPI for wheat to the contracted price for bread. Consumer Price Index (CPI) data can also be used in escalation. For example, the CPI may be used to escalate lease payments or child support payments. More information

**Cost-of-living index**

A cost-of-living index measures differences in the price of goods and services, and allows for substitutions to other items as prices change. A consumer price index measures a price change for a constant market basket of goods and services from one period to the next within the same city (or in the Nation). The CPIs are not true cost-of-living indexes and should not be used for place-to-place comparisons.

**D****Defined benefit pension plan**

A retirement plan that uses a specific predetermined formula to calculate the amount of an employee's future benefit. The most common type of formula is based on the employee's terminal earnings. Under this formula, benefits are based on a percentage of average earnings during a specified number of years at the end of a worker's career—for example, the highest 5 out of the last 10 years—multiplied by the maximum number of years of credited service under the plan. In recent years, a new type of defined benefit plan, a cash balance plan, has become more prevalent. Under this type of plan, benefits are computed as a percentage of each employee's account balance. Employers specify a contribution—usually based on a percentage of the employee's earnings—and a rate of interest on that contribution that will provide a predetermined amount at retirement, usually in the form of a lump sum. In the private sector, defined benefit plans are typically funded exclusively by employer contributions. In the public sector, defined benefit plans often require employee contributions.

**Defined contribution plan**

A retirement plan in which the amount of the employer's annual contribution is specified. Individual accounts are set up for participants and benefits are based on the amounts credited to these accounts (through employer contributions and, if applicable, employee contributions) plus any investment earnings on the money in the account. Only employer contributions to the account are guaranteed, not the future benefits. In defined contribution plans, future benefits fluctuate on the basis of investment earnings. The most common type of defined contribution plan is a savings and thrift plan. Under this type of plan, the employee

contributes a predetermined portion of his or her earnings (usually pretax) to an individual account, all or part of which is matched by the employer.

**Deflator**

A value that allows data to be measured over time in terms of some base period; or, in more obscure terms, an implicit or explicit price index used to distinguish between those changes in the money value of gross national product which result from a change in prices and those which result from a change in physical output. The import and export price indexes produced by the International Price Program are used as deflators in the U.S. national accounts. For example, the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) equals consumption expenditures plus net investment plus government expenditures plus exports minus imports. Various price indexes are used to "deflate" each component of the GDP in order to make the GDP figures comparable over time. Import price indexes are used to deflate the import component (i.e., import volume is divided by the Import Price index) and the export price indexes are used to deflate the export component (i.e., export volume is divided by the Export Price index).

**Demand for additional workers** (Employment Projections)

Job openings resulting from employment growth and the need to replace workers who leave an occupation.

**Designated person** (American Time Use Survey)

One individual age 15 or older who is randomly selected from each sampled household to participate in the American Time Use Survey. The designated person is interviewed by telephone once about only his or her activities on the day before the interview. No other household member may respond for the designated person.

**Diary day** (American Time Use Survey)

The diary day is the day about which the designated person reports his or her activities for the American Time Use Survey. For example, the diary day of a designated person interviewed on Tuesday is Monday.

**Disability insurance**

Includes paid sick leave, short-term disability benefits, and long-term disability benefits.

**Discharge** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

A separation of an employee from an establishment that is initiated by the employer; an involuntary separation

**Discouraged workers** (Current Population Survey)

Persons not in the labor force who want and are available for a job and who have looked for work sometime in the past 12 months (or since the end of their last job if they held one within the past 12 months), but who are not currently looking because they believe there are no jobs available or there are none for which they would qualify.

**Displaced workers** (Current Population Survey)

Persons 20 years and over who lost or left jobs because their plant or company closed or moved, there was insufficient work for them to do, or their position or shift was abolished.

**Division, Geographic or Census**

One of nine geographic areas of the United States defined by the Census Bureau and widely used by BLS for presenting regional data.

**Duration of unemployment** (Current Population Survey)

The length of time in weeks (through the current reference week) that persons classified as unemployed had been looking for work. For persons on layoff who are counted as unemployed, duration of unemployment represents the number of full weeks they had been on layoff. The data do not represent completed spells of unemployment. (See Unemployed persons.)

**E**

**Earnings**

Remuneration (pay, wages) of a worker or group of workers for services performed during a specific period of time. The term usually carries a defining word or phrase, such as straight-time average hourly earnings.

Because a statistical concept is usually involved in the term and its variations, the producers and users of earnings data should define them clearly. In the absence of such definitions, the following may serve as rough guidelines:

Hourly, daily, weekly, annual: period of time to which earnings figures, as stated or computed, relate. The context in which annual earnings (sometimes weekly earnings) are used may indicate whether the reference includes earnings from one employer only or from all employment plus other sources of income.

Average: usually refers to the arithmetic mean; that is, total earnings (as defined) of a group of workers (as identified) divided by the number of workers in the group.

Gross: usually refers to total earnings, before any deductions (such as tax withholding) including, where applicable, overtime payments, shift differentials, production bonuses, cost-of-living allowances, commissions, etc.

Straight-time: usually refers to gross earnings excluding overtime payments and (with variations at this point) shift differentials and other monetary payments. (Also see Wages and Salaries.)

#### **Educational attainment cluster** (Employment Projections)

Six clusters are defined based on the distribution of educational attainment across occupations. The clusters are as follows: high school occupations, high school/some college occupations, some college occupations, high school/some college/college occupations, some college/college occupations, and college occupations.

#### **Educational attainment**

The highest diploma or degree, or level of work towards a diploma or degree, an individual has completed.

#### **Employed persons** (Current Population Survey)

Persons 16 years and over in the civilian noninstitutional population who, during the reference week, (a) did any work at all (at least 1 hour) as paid employees; worked in their own business, profession, or on their own farm, or worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in an enterprise operated by a member of the family; and (b) all those who were not working but who had jobs or businesses from which they were temporarily absent because of vacation, illness, bad weather, childcare problems, maternity or paternity leave, labor-management dispute, job training, or other family or personal reasons, whether or not they were paid for the time off or were seeking other jobs. Each employed person is counted only once, even if he or she holds more than one job. Excluded are persons whose only activity consisted of work around their own house (painting, repairing, or own home housework) or volunteer work for religious, charitable, and other organizations.

#### **Employed persons** (American Time Use Survey)

Same as definition for Employed persons (Current Population Survey), EXCEPT that in the American Time Use Survey, the definition includes persons 15 years and over and the reference period is the last 7 days prior to the American Time Use Survey interview.

#### **Employer** (Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages)

A person or business employing one or more persons for wages or salary; the legal entity responsible for payment of quarterly unemployment insurance taxes or for reimbursing the State fund for unemployment insurance benefits costs in lieu of paying the quarterly taxes.

#### **Employer Costs for Employee Compensation** (National Compensation Survey)

The Employer Costs for Employee Compensation (ECEC) series shows employer costs per hour worked for wages and salaries and individual benefits. Cost data are presented in both dollar amounts and as percentages of compensation.

#### **Employment Cost Index** (National Compensation Survey)

The Employment Cost Index (ECI) is a measure of the change in the cost of labor, free from the influence of employment shifts among occupations and industries. The series measures changes in compensation costs (wages and salaries and employer costs for employee benefits).

#### **Employment-population ratio** (Current Population Survey)

The proportion of the civilian noninstitutional population aged 16 years and over that is employed.

#### **Establishment**

The physical location of a certain economic activity—for example, a factory, mine, store, or office. A single establishment generally produces a single good or provides a single service. An enterprise (a private firm,

government, or nonprofit organization) can consist of a single establishment or multiple establishments. All establishments in an enterprise may be classified in one industry (e.g., a chain), or they may be classified in different industries (e.g., a conglomerate).

**Event or exposure** (Safety and Health Statistics)

Signifies the manner in which an occupational injury or illness was produced or inflicted—for example, overexertion while lifting, or a fall from a ladder.

**Expenditure shares** (Consumer Expenditure Survey)

Expenditure shares are the portions of total expenditures (as percentages) allotted to each expenditure category. Tables organized by various demographic characteristics are available.

**Expenditures** (Consumer Expenditure Survey)

Expenditures consist of the transaction costs, including excise and sales taxes, of goods and services acquired during the interview or recordkeeping period. Expenditure estimates include expenditures for gifts, but exclude purchases or portions of purchases directly assignable to business purposes. Also excluded are periodic credit or installment payments on goods or services already acquired. The full cost of each purchase is recorded even though full payment may not have been made at the date of purchase. Expenditure categories include food, alcoholic beverages, housing, apparel and services, transportation, health care, entertainment, personal care products and services, reading, education, tobacco products and smoking supplies, cash contributions, personal insurance and pensions, and miscellaneous).

**Export**

A domestic good or service that is sold to a foreign resident from a U.S. resident. Exports include government and nongovernment goods and services; however they exclude goods and services sold to the U.S. military and diplomatic and consular institutions abroad. Exports do include goods and services that were previously imported.

**Extended mass layoff**

Layoff of at least 31 days in duration and involving 50 or more individuals from a single establishment filing initial claims for unemployment insurance during a consecutive 5-week period.

## F

**Fatality rate** (Safety and Health Statistics)

Represents the number of fatal injuries per 100,000 workers, calculated as follows:  $(N/W) \times 100,000$ , where N = number of fatal injuries, W = number of workers employed, and 100,000 = base to express the fatality rate per 100,000 workers.

**Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS)**

Standards for information processing issued by the National Institute of Standards and Technology of the U.S. Department of Commerce; includes a numeric designation for geographic areas such as States, counties, and metropolitan areas.

**Flexible benefits**

A type of plan under Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code that provides employees a choice between permissible taxable benefits, including cash, and nontaxable benefits such as life and health insurance, vacations, retirement plans, and child care. Although a common core of benefits may be required, the employee can determine how his or her remaining benefit dollars are to be allocated for each type of benefit from the total amount promised by the employer.

**Full-time employees** (National Compensation Survey)

Employees are classified as full time or part time as defined by their employer.

Full-time workers (Current Population Survey and American Time Use Survey)

Persons who work 35 hours or more per week.

## G

### **Goods-producing industries** (Standard Industrial Classification)

Includes manufacturing, mining, and construction.

### **Goods-producing industries** (North American Industry Classification System)

Includes manufacturing, construction, and natural resources and mining.

## H

### **Health insurance plan**

Insurance plans that include coverage for one or more of the following: medical care, dental care, and vision care.

### **Hire** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

Any addition to an establishment's payroll, including newly hired and rehired employees.

### **Hires rate** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

The number of hires during the month divided by the number of employees who worked during or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month.

### **Hispanic or Latino ethnicity**

Refers to persons who identified themselves in the enumeration process as being Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino. Persons of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity may be of any race.

### **Hourly compensation** (Productivity and Costs)

Compensation costs are defined as the sum of wage and salary accruals and supplements to wages and salaries. Wage and salary accruals consist of the monetary remuneration of employees, including the compensation of corporate officers; commissions, tips, and bonuses; voluntary employee contributions to certain deferred compensation plans, such as 401(k) plans; employee gains from exercising nonqualified stock options; and receipts in kind that represent income. Supplements to wages and salaries consist of employer contributions for social insurance and employer payments (including payments in kind) to private pension and profit-sharing plans, group health and life insurance plans, privately administered workers' compensation plans. For employees (wage and salary workers), hourly compensation is measured relative to hours at work and includes payments made by employers for time not at work, such as vacation, holiday, and sick pay. Because compensation costs for the business and nonfarm business sectors would otherwise be severely understated, an estimate of the hourly compensation of proprietors of unincorporated businesses is made by assuming that their hourly compensation is equal to that of employees in the same sector.

### **Hourly compensation costs** (International Labor Comparisons)

Hourly compensation costs, as measured in the BLS international comparison series, are defined as (1) all payments made directly to workers—pay for time worked (basic time and piece rates plus overtime premiums, shift differentials, other premiums and bonuses paid regularly each pay period, and cost-of-living adjustments), pay for time not worked (such as for vacations and holidays), seasonal or irregular bonuses and other special payments, selected social allowances, and the cost of payments in kind—before payroll deductions of any kind, and (2) employer expenditures for legally required insurance programs and contractual and private benefit plans (such as retirement plans, health insurance, unemployment insurance, and family allowances). In addition, for some countries, compensation is adjusted for other taxes on payrolls or employment (or reduced to reflect subsidies), even if they do not finance programs that directly benefit workers, because such taxes are regarded as labor costs. The BLS definition of hourly compensation costs used in its international comparisons series is based on the International Labour Office standard definition of total labor costs. However, it does not include all items of total labor costs; the items excluded are the costs of recruitment, employee training, and plant facilities and services, such as cafeterias and medical clinics. Hourly compensation costs include all the items of compensation covered in the BLS series Employer Costs for Employee Compensation, the Employment Cost Index, and the index of hourly compensation (published



with the index of labor productivity); hourly compensation costs also include the costs of payments in kind and other taxes and subsidies, which may not be included in the other BLS compensation series. The classification of the compensation items and the terminology used in the definitions differ among the series.

**Hours at work** (Productivity and Costs)

For productivity measurement, the proper measure of hours is "hours at work," which include paid time working, traveling between job sites, coffee breaks, and machine downtime. Hours at work, however, exclude hours for which employees are paid but not at work (examples: vacation time, holidays, and paid sick leave).

**Hours worked** (Current Population Survey)

There are two different hours concepts measured in the CPS: usual hours and actual hours at work. Usual hours refer to a person's normal work schedule versus their actual hours at work during the survey reference week. For example, a person who normally works 40 hours per week, but was off for a 1-day holiday during the reference week, would report his or her usual hours as 40 but actual hours at work for the reference week as 32.

I

**Import**

A good or service that is sold to a U.S. resident from a foreign resident. Imports include government and nongovernment goods and services; however they exclude goods and services to the U.S. military, diplomatic, and consular institutions abroad. Imports do include goods and services that were previously exported.

**Incidence rate** (Safety and Health Statistics)

Represents the number of injuries and/or illnesses per 100 full-time workers, calculated as follows:  $(N/EH) \times 200,000$ , where: N = number of injuries and/or illnesses, EH = total hours worked by all employees during the calendar year, and 200,000 = base for 100 full-time equivalent workers (working 40 hours per week, 50 weeks per year).

**Income before taxes** (Consumer Expenditure Survey)

Income before taxes is the total money earnings and selected money receipts of all consumer unit members aged 14 years or older during the 12 months prior to the interview date. It includes the following components: wages and salaries; self-employment income; Social Security, private and government retirement; interest, dividends, rental income, and other property income; unemployment, workers' compensation and veteran's benefits; public assistance, supplemental security income, and food stamps; regular contributions for support (including alimony and child support); other income (including cash scholarships, fellowships or stipends not based on working, and meals and rent as pay).

**Industry**

A group of establishments that produce similar products or provide similar services. For example, all establishments that manufacture automobiles are in the same industry. A given industry, or even a particular establishment in that industry, might have employees in dozens of occupations. The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) groups similar establishments into industries. NAICS is replacing the former Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system.

**Inflation**

Inflation has been defined as a process of continuously rising prices, or equivalently, of a continuously falling value of money.

**Initial claimant**

A person who files any notice of unemployment to initiate a request either for a determination of entitlement to and eligibility for compensation, or for a subsequent period of unemployment within a benefit year or period of eligibility.

**Item specification**

The description of a good or service that includes all price-determining characteristics and any other information necessary to distinguish the item from all others.

## J

### **Job leavers** (Current Population Survey)

Unemployed persons who quit or otherwise terminated their employment voluntarily and immediately began looking for work.

### **Job losers** (Current Population Survey)

Unemployed persons who involuntarily lost their last job or who had completed a temporary job. This includes persons who were on temporary layoff expecting to return to work, as well as persons not on temporary layoff. (See Unemployed persons.) Those not on temporary layoff include permanent job losers and persons whose temporary jobs had ended. (See Permanent job losers.)

### **Job opening** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

A specific position of employment to be filled at an establishment; conditions include the following: there is work available for that position, the job could start within 30 days, and the employer is actively recruiting for the position.

### **Job openings rate** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

The number of job openings on the last business day of the month divided by the sum of the number of employees who worked during or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month and the number of job openings on the last business day of the month.

### **Job tenure** (Current Population Survey)

The length of time an employee has worked for his or her current employer. The data do not represent completed spells of tenure.

## L

### **Labor dispute**

See Labor Management Dispute.

### **Labor force** (Current Population Survey)

The labor force includes all persons classified as employed or unemployed in accordance with the definitions contained in this glossary.

### **Labor force participation rate**

The labor force as a percent of the civilian noninstitutional population.

### **Labor management dispute**

A conflict between employees, typically represented by a union, and management or the employer. This general term covers all types of conflicts from a grievance to a strike or a lockout. Labor management disputes are more common during collective bargaining or union contract negotiations.

### **Labor productivity**

Labor productivity refers to the relationship between output and the labor time used in generating that output. It is the ratio of output per hour.

### **Laspeyres index**

$\text{Sum}(p_2q_1)/\text{Sum}(p_1q_1)$ : A weighted aggregative index showing the ratio of expenditures in the current period ( $p_2q_1$ , where  $p_2$  is the current period price and  $q_1$  is the base period quantity) to the expenditure in the base period ( $p_1q_1$ , where  $p_1$  is the base period price and  $q_1$  is the base period quantity) to purchase the identical market basket of items. It answers the question "How much more or less does it cost now to purchase the same items as in the base period?" The main shortcoming of the Laspeyres index is that it does not track actual expenditures because consumers adjust their buying in response to changes in relative price, which changes the composition of the market basket. This invalid assumption that consumer demand is totally price inelastic causes the index to overstate the actual effect on consumers when there is a change in prices.

### **Layoff** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

A separation of an employee from an establishment that is initiated by the employer; an involuntary separation; a period of forced unemployment

**Layoff and discharges rate** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

The number of layoffs and discharges during the month divided by the number of employees who worked during or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month.

**Legally required benefits** (National Compensation Survey)

Legally required benefits include the employer's costs for Social Security, Medicare, Federal and State unemployment insurance, and workers' compensation.

**Life insurance**

A contract that pays the beneficiary a set sum of money upon the death of the policyholder. These plans pay benefits usually in the form of a lump sum, but they may be distributed as an annuity.

**Locality of origin indexes**

U.S. import price indexes based on country or region, rather than product type.

**Location Quotient**

Ratio that compares the concentration of a resource or activity, such as employment, in a defined area to that of a larger area or base. For example, location quotients can be used to compare State employment by industry to that of the nation.

**Lockout**

A temporary withholding or denial of employment during a labor dispute in order to enforce terms of employment upon a group of employees. A lockout is initiated by the management of an establishment.

**Long-term disability insurance** (National Compensation Survey—benefits)

Provides a monthly benefit to employees who, due to a non-work-related injury or illness, are unable to perform the duties of their normal occupation or any other, for periods of time extending beyond their short-term disability or sickness and accident insurance.

**Longitudinal data** (National Longitudinal Surveys and Business Employment Dynamics)

Data in which the same units are observed over multiple time periods. Another term for longitudinal data is panel data. For example, the BLS National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) program collects data from several groups of individuals over many years on an annual or biennial basis.

**Lost-worktime cases** (Safety and Health Statistics)

Cases involving days away from work, or days of restricted work activity, or both.

**Lost-worktime cases involving days away from work** (Safety and Health Statistics)

Cases resulting in days away from work, or a combination of days away from work and days of restricted work activity.

**Lost-worktime cases involving restricted work activity** (Safety and Health Statistics)

Cases resulting in restricted work activity only.

**Lost-worktime rate** (Current Population Survey)

Hours absent as a percent of hours usually worked. Absences are defined as instances when persons who usually work 35 or more hours per week worked less than 35 hours during the reference week for one of the following reasons: own illness, injury, or medical problems; childcare problems; other family or personal obligations; civic or military duty; and maternity or paternity leave.

**Lump-sum payments** (National Compensation Survey)

Payments made to employees in lieu of a general wage rate increase. The payment may be a fixed amount as set forth in a labor agreement or an amount determined by a formula—for example, 2.5 percent of an employee's earnings during the prior year. Lump-sum payments are not incorporated into an employee's base pay rate or salary, but are considered as nonproduction bonuses in the Employment Cost Index and Employer Costs for Employee Compensation series.

**M**

**Marginally attached workers** (Current Population Survey)

Persons not in the labor force who want and are available for work, and who have looked for a job sometime in the prior 12 months (or since the end of their last job if they held one within the past 12 months), but were not counted as unemployed because they had not searched for work in the 4 weeks preceding the survey. Discouraged workers are a subset of the marginally attached. (See Discouraged workers.)

**Market basket** (Consumer Price Index)

The market basket is a package of goods and services that consumers purchase for day-to-day living. The weight of each item is based on the amount of expenditure reported by a sample of households.

**Mass layoff**

A situation in which 50 or more persons have filed initial claims for unemployment insurance benefits against an establishment during a consecutive 5-week period.

**Mean wage** (Occupational Employment Statistics)

An average wage; an occupational mean wage estimate is calculated by summing the wages of all the employees in a given occupation and then dividing the total wages by the number of employees.

**Median days away from work** (Safety and Health Statistics)

The measure used to summarize the varying lengths of absences from work among the cases with days away from work. The median is the point at which half of the cases involved more days away from work and half involved less days away from work.

**Median wage**

An occupational median wage estimate is the boundary between the highest paid 50 percent and the lowest paid 50 percent of workers in that occupation. Half of the workers in a given occupation earn more than the median wage, and half the workers earn less than the median wage.

**Medical care coverage**

A type of insurance coverage that provides for the payment of benefits as a result of sickness or injury. Medical care coverage can be provided in a hospital or a doctor's office. There are two main types of medical care plans. An indemnity plan—also called a fee-for-service plan—reimburses the patient or the provider as expenses are incurred. The most common type of indemnity plan is a preferred provider organization (PPO). A PPO provides coverage to the enrollee through a network of selected health care providers (such as hospitals and physicians). Enrollees may go outside the network, but would incur higher costs in the form of higher deductibles and higher coinsurance rates than if they stayed within the network. The second type of medical care plan is called a prepaid plan—also called a health maintenance organization. A prepaid plan assumes both the financial risks associated with providing comprehensive medical services and the responsibility for health care delivery in a particular geographic area, usually in return for a fixed prepaid fee from its members.

**Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs)**

The general concept of an MSA is one of a large population nucleus, together with adjacent communities which have a high degree of economic and social integration with that nucleus. These are defined by the Office of Management and Budget as a standard for Federal agencies in the preparation and publication of statistics relating to metropolitan areas. More information

**Most significant source of postsecondary education or training** (Employment Projections)

An occupation is classified into 1 of 11 categories that best describes the postsecondary education or training needed by most workers to become fully qualified in the occupation. The categories are as follows: first professional degree; doctoral degree; master's degree; bachelor's or higher degree, plus work experience; bachelor's degree; associate degree; postsecondary vocational award; work experience in a related occupation; long-term on-the-job training; moderate-term on-the-job training; and short-term on-the-job training.

**Multifactor productivity**

For the private business and private nonfarm business sectors, the growth rate of multifactor productivity is measured as the growth rate of output less the growth rate of combined inputs of labor and capital. Labor is measured by a weighted average of the number of hours worked classified by education, work experience, and gender. Capital services measure the flow of services from the stocks of equipment and software, structures, land, and inventories. For the manufacturing sector, multifactor productivity is the growth rate of

output less the combined inputs of labor, capital, and intermediate purchases. Labor is measured by the number of hours worked. Capital services measure the flow of services from the stocks of equipment and software, structures, land, and inventories. Intermediate purchases are composed of materials, fuels, electricity, and purchased services.

**Multiple jobholders** (Current Population Survey and American Time Use Survey)

Employed persons who, during the reference week, either had two or more jobs as a wage and salary worker, were self-employed and also held a wage and salary job, or worked as an unpaid family worker and also held a wage and salary job. Excluded are self-employed persons with multiple businesses and persons with multiple jobs as unpaid family workers.

## N

**Nature of injury or illness**

Names the principal physical characteristic of a disabling condition, such as sprain/strain, cut/laceration, or carpal tunnel syndrome.

**New entrants** (Current Population Survey)

Unemployed persons who never worked before and who are entering the labor force for the first time.

**Nonfarm business sector** (Productivity and Costs)

The nonfarm business sector is a subset of the domestic economy and excludes the economic activities of the following: general government, private households, nonprofit organizations serving individuals, and farms. The nonfarm business sector accounted for about 77 percent of the value of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2000.

**Nonfinancial corporations** (Productivity and Costs)

The nonfinancial corporate business sector is a subset of the domestic economy and excludes the economic activities of the following: general government, private households, nonprofit organizations serving individuals, and those corporations classified as offices of bank holding companies, offices of other holding companies, or offices in the finance and insurance sector. Nonfinancial corporations accounted for about 54 percent of the value of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2000.

**Nonlabor payments** (Productivity and Costs)

These payments include profits, consumption of fixed capital, taxes on production and imports less subsidies, net interest and miscellaneous payments, business current transfer payments, rental income of persons, and the current surplus of government enterprises.

**North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)**

The successor to the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system; this system of classifying business establishments is being adopted by the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

**Not employed** (American Time Use Survey)

The term refers to persons who are classified as unemployed as well as those classified as not in the labor force (using Current Population Survey definitions).

**Not in the labor force** (Current Population Survey)

Includes persons aged 16 years and older in the civilian noninstitutional population who are neither employed nor unemployed in accordance with the definitions contained in this glossary. Information is collected on their desire for and availability for work, job search activity in the prior year, and reasons for not currently searching. (See Marginally attached workers.)

**Not seasonally adjusted**

This term is used to describe data series that have not been subjected to the seasonal adjustment process. In other words, the effects of regular or seasonal patterns have not been removed from these series.

## O

**Occupation**

A set of activities or tasks that employees are paid to perform. Employees that perform essentially the same tasks are in the same occupation, whether or not they work in the same industry. Some occupations are concentrated in a few particular industries; other occupations are found in many industries. (See Industry.)

**Occupational groups**

A group of related occupations; examples: sales occupations and service occupations.

**Occupational illness**

Any abnormal condition or disorder, other than one resulting from an occupational injury, caused by exposure to factors associated with employment. It includes acute and chronic illnesses or diseases which may be caused by inhalation, absorption, ingestion, or direct contact.

**Occupational injury**

Any injury such as a cut, fracture, sprain, amputation, etc., which results from a work-related event or from a single instantaneous exposure in the work environment.

Occupational Injury and Illness Classification System (Safety and Health Statistics)

Defines many of the data elements—such as nature, part, event, and source—that are used in the production of safety and health statistics by BLS.

**On-call employees**

Employees who are not permanent, but are called to work as needed, often on short notice, although they can be scheduled to work for several days or weeks in a row.

**Other separation** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

A separation of an employee from an establishment for miscellaneous reasons, including retirement, death, separation due to employee disability, or transfer to another location of the enterprise.

**Other separations rate** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

The number of other separations during the month divided by the number of employees who worked during or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month.

**P****Paid leave** (National Compensation Survey)

Paid leave includes vacations, holidays, sick leave, and other leave with pay.

**Panel data** (National Longitudinal Surveys and Business Employment Dynamics)

See Longitudinal data.

**Part of body affected** (Safety and Health Statistics)

Directly linked to the nature of injury or illness cited, such as back, finger, or eye.

**Part-time workers** (Current Population Survey and American Time Use Survey)

Persons who work less than 35 hours per week.

**Pay period that includes the 12th of the month**

Standard measurement period for all Federal agencies collecting employment data from business establishments; time unit that employers use to pay employees that overlaps the 12th of the month; length of the pay period does not matter, as long as the 12th of the month is included in the pay period: For establishments with a Monday-through-Friday pay period, if the 12th of the month falls on a Saturday, it should be taken as the last day of the requested pay period, and if the 12th of the month falls on a Sunday, it should be taken as the first day of the requested pay period.

**Payroll employment** (Current Employment Statistics)

Employment is the total number of persons on establishment payrolls employed full or part time who received pay for any part of the pay period which includes the 12th day of the month. Temporary and intermittent employees are included, as are any workers who are on paid sick leave, on paid holiday, or who work during only part of the specified pay period. A striking worker who only works a small portion of the survey period, and is paid, would be included as employed under the CES definitions. Persons on the payroll of more than one establishment are counted in each establishment. Data exclude proprietors, self-employed, unpaid family or volunteer workers, farm workers, and domestic workers. Persons on layoff the

entire pay period, on leave without pay, on strike for the entire period or who have not yet reported for work are not counted as employed. Government employment covers only civilian workers. With the release of NAICS-based estimates in June 2003, the scope and definition of Federal Government employment estimates changed due to a change in source data and estimation methods. The previous series was an end-of-month federal employee count produced by the Office of Personnel Management, and it excluded some workers, mostly employees who work in Department of Defense-owned establishments such as military base commissaries. Beginning in June 2003, the CES national series began to include these workers. Also, Federal Government employment is now estimated from a sample of Federal establishments, is benchmarked annually to counts from unemployment insurance tax records, and reflects employee counts as of the pay period including the 12th of the month, consistent with other CES industry series. The historical time series for Federal Government employment was revised to reflect these changes.

#### **Percentile wage estimate**

Shows what percentage of workers in an occupation earn less than a given wage and what percentage earn more. For example, a 25th percentile wage of \$15.00 indicates that 25% of workers (in a given occupation in a given area) earn less than \$15.00; therefore 75% of workers earn more than \$15.00.

#### **Permanent job losers (Current Population Survey)**

Unemployed persons whose employment ended involuntarily and who began looking for work.

#### **Primary activity (American Time Use Survey)**

A primary activity is the main activity a respondent was doing at a specified time. Most published time use estimates reflect time spent in primary activities only.

#### **Price Index**

A price index is a tool that simplifies the measurement of price movements in a numerical series. Movements are measured with respect to the base period, when the index is set to 100.

#### **Producer Price Index (PPI)**

A family of indexes that measure the average change over time in selling prices received by domestic producers of goods and services. PPIs measure price change from the perspective of the seller. This contrasts with other measures that measure price change from the purchaser's perspective, such as the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Sellers' and purchasers' prices may differ due to government subsidies, sales and excise taxes, and distribution costs.

#### **Productivity**

A measure of economic efficiency that shows how effectively economic inputs are converted into output. Productivity is measured by comparing the amount of goods and services produced with the inputs that were used in production.

#### **Professional Employer Organization (PEO)**

A business that supplies management and administrative services with regard to human resource responsibilities for employers; it serves as the co-employer of the client's employees for payroll, benefits, and related purposes. PEOs are referred to as "employee leasing companies" in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual.

## **Q**

#### **Quit (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)**

A separation of an employee from an establishment that is initiated by the employee; a voluntary separation; a resignation from a job or position.

#### **Quits rate (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)**

The number of quits during the month divided by the number of employees who worked during or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month.

## **R**

#### **Race (Current Population Survey)**

The CPS provides data by race, with the race given by the household respondent. Since 2003, respondents are allowed to choose more than one race; previously, multiracial persons were required to select a single primary race. Persons who select more than one race are classified separately in the category "two or more races." Persons who select one race only are classified in one of the following five categories: 1) white, 2) black or African American, 3) Asian, 4) Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and 5) American Indian or Alaska Native. Only data for whites, blacks, and Asians are currently published because the number of survey respondents for the other racial categories is not large enough to produce statistically reliable estimates.

**Recordable injuries and illnesses** (Safety and Health statistics)

Recordable cases include work-related injuries and illnesses that result in one or more of the following: death, loss of consciousness, days away from work, restricted work activity or job transfer, medical treatment (beyond first aid), significant work-related injuries or illnesses that are diagnosed by a physician or other licensed health care professional (these include any work-related case involving cancer, chronic irreversible disease, a fracture or cracked bone, or a punctured eardrum); additional criteria include any needle-stick injury or cut from a sharp object that is contaminated with another person's blood or other potentially infectious material, any case requiring an employee to be medically removed under the requirements of an OSHA health standard, tuberculosis infection as evidenced by a positive skin test or diagnosis by a physician or other licensed health care professional after exposure to a known case of active tuberculosis.

**Reentrants** (Current Population Survey)

Unemployed persons who previously worked but were out of the labor force prior to beginning their job search.

**Reference person** (Consumer Expenditure Survey)

The first member mentioned by the respondent when asked to "Start with the name of the person or one of the persons who owns or rents the home." It is with respect to this person that the relationship of the other consumer unit members is determined.

**Region — Midwest**

Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

**Region — Northeast**

Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

**Region — South**

Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

**Region — West**

Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

**Regions**

Data are presented for four major regions: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West.

**Relative importance** (Consumer Price Index)

BLS publishes what is called a "relative importance" for each commodity and commodity grouping. The relative importance of an item represents its basic value weight, including any imputations, multiplied by the relative of price change from the weight date to the date of the relative importance calculation, expressed as a percentage of the total value weight for the "all commodities" category.

**Represented by unions** (Current Population Survey)

Data refer to union members, as well as workers who reported no union affiliation but whose jobs are covered by a union or an employee association contract.

**Respiratory condition due to toxic agents** (Safety and Health statistics)

Examples: Pneumonitis, pharyngitis, rhinitis or acute congestion due to chemicals, dusts, gases, or fumes; farmer's lung.



**Retirement plans** (National Compensation Survey)

Includes defined benefit pension plans and defined contribution retirement plans.

**S****Sample**

A subset of a universe; usually selected randomly and considered representative of the universe.

**Sample frame**

A listing of all units in the universe from which a sample can be drawn.

**Seasonally adjusted**

Seasonal adjustment removes the effects of events that follow a more or less regular pattern each year. These adjustments make it easier to observe the cyclical and other nonseasonal movements in a data series.

**Self-employed persons** (Current Population Survey and American Time Use Survey)

Those persons who work for profit or fees in their own business, profession, trade, or farm. Only the unincorporated self-employed are included in the self-employed category.

**Secondary or simultaneous activity** (American Time Use Survey)

A secondary or simultaneous activity is an activity done at the same time as a primary activity. With the exception of the care of children under age 13, information on secondary activities is not systematically collected in the American Time Use Survey.

**Separation** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

See Turnover.

**Separations rate** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

See Turnover rate.

**Series report**

A form-based application that uses BLS time series identifiers as input in extracting data from each survey-specific database according to a specified set of date ranges and output options.

**Service-producing industries** (Standard Industrial Classification)

Includes transportation; communications; electric, gas, and sanitary services; wholesale trade; retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and services.

**Service-providing industries** (North American Industry Classification System)

Includes trade, transportation, and utilities; information; financial activities; professional and business services; education and health services; leisure and hospitality; other services.

**Short-term disability insurance**

Provides short-term (typically 26 weeks) income protection to employees who are unable to work due to a non-work-related accident or illness.

**Shortage** (as in shortage of workers)

Shortages occur in a market economy when the demand for workers for a particular occupation is greater than the supply of workers who are qualified, available, and willing to do that job.

**Slowdown**

An effort, typically organized by a union, in which employees decrease productivity in order to bring pressure upon management. Generally a slowdown is used as an alternative to a strike and is seen as less disruptive.

**Source of injury or illness** (Safety and Health statistics)

The object, substance, exposure, or bodily motion that directly produced or inflicted the disabling condition cited. Examples include lifting a heavy box; exposure to a toxic substance, fire or flame; and bodily motion of an injured or ill worker.

**Stage-of-processing indexes** (Producer Price Index)

Stage-of-processing (SOP) price indexes regroup commodities at the subproduct class (6-digit) level according to the class of buyer and the amount of physical processing or assembling the products have undergone. The PPI publishes aggregate price indexes organized by commodity-based processing stage.

The three stages of processing include Finished Goods; Intermediate Materials, Supplies, and Components; and Crude Materials for Further Processing.

**Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system**

The SIC system has been used throughout the Federal Government to group establishments into industries. The SIC system is being gradually replaced by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). More information on the SIC system can be found in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual, 1987 (Executive Office of the President, Office of Management and Budget), available in many libraries.

**Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system**

This system is being adopted by Federal statistical agencies to classify workers into occupational categories for the purpose of collecting, calculating, or disseminating data. All workers are classified into 1 of more than 800 occupations according to their occupational definition. To facilitate classification, occupations are combined to form 23 major groups, 96 minor groups, and 449 broad occupations. Each broad occupation includes detailed occupations) requiring similar job duties, skills, education, or experience. More information

**Standard tables (Consumer Expenditure Survey)**

Standard tables contain annual expenditure data organized by various demographic characteristics. The following standard tables are available: age of reference person, composition of consumer unit, education of reference person, higher income before taxes, Hispanic or Latino origin of reference person, housing tenure and type of area, income before taxes, number of earners in consumer unit, occupation of reference person, population size of area of residence, quintiles of income before taxes, race of reference person, region of residence, size of consumer unit, and selected age of reference person.

**Strike**

A temporary stoppage of work by a group of workers (not necessarily union members) to express a grievance or enforce a demand. A strike is initiated by the workers of an establishment.

**Supplemental pay (National Compensation Survey)**

Supplemental pay includes overtime and premium pay for work in addition to the regular work schedule (such as weekends and holidays), shift differentials, and nonproduction bonuses (such as referral bonuses and lump-sum payments provided in lieu of wage increases).

**Supply of workers**

Often refers to the labor force. The concept focuses on worker characteristics, especially their education and training, but also characteristics such as experience (often considered to be correlated with age), physical strength (often considered to be inversely correlated with age), ability to work in teams, etc. Some demographic characteristics that are not to be considered in hiring and promotion decisions, but that are studied, include gender, race, ethnicity, parental and marital statuses. More information (PDF)

**Survey reference week (Current Population Survey)**

The CPS, a survey of households, asks respondents about their labor market activities during a specific week each month. That week, called the survey reference week, is defined as the 7-day period, Sunday through Saturday, which includes the 12th of the month.

**Survivor benefits**

A series of payments to the dependents of deceased employees. Survivor benefits come in two types: First, the "transition" type pays the named beneficiary a monthly amount for a short period (usually 24 months). Transition benefits may then be followed by "bridge benefits," which are a series of payments that last until a specific date, usually the surviving spouse's 62nd birthday.

**T**

**Temporary help agency**

Establishment primarily engaged in supplying workers to client businesses for limited periods of time to supplement the work force of the client; the individuals provided are employees of the temporary help service establishment, but these establishments do not provide direct supervision of their employees.

**Terms of trade**

Allocation of inputs into two or more economies that take advantage of differences in comparative advantages and, through specialization, improve the production of the economies. Note that a change in the terms of trade should cause all domestic production to change (that is, reallocates all inputs), rather than just imports.

**Time off benefit**

Provides paid or unpaid leave for specific uses, such as lunch periods, holidays and vacations, and maternity and paternity leave.

**Time/Index series**

A way of expressing, in percentage terms, the change in some variable from a given point in time to another point in time. For example, suppose output increased by 10 percent from an initial year (1987) to a subsequent year (1988). The index for the base year of 1987 in this example would be 100.0, while the index for 1988 would be 110.0. Conversely, if output had declined in 1988 by 10 percent, the 1988 index value would be 90.0.

**Touchtone Data Entry (TDE)**

An automated method of collecting data in which respondents call a toll-free number and enter their data using a touchtone telephone.

**Transaction price**

The market sale price of a good or input shows what has to be given in exchange to obtain a good or service. It is usually denoted in money terms, although payment need not be in a monetary form. The relative price is expressed in terms of the quantity of some other good which has to be given in exchange for the original good. Thus, if all prices increase at the same rate, absolute prices will rise but relative prices will remain unchanged.

**Turnover (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)**

Separation of an employee from an establishment (voluntary, involuntary, or other).

**Turnover rate (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)**

The number of total separations during the month divided by the number of employees who worked during or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month (monthly turnover); the number of total separations for the year divided by average monthly employment for the year (annual turnover).

**U****Unemployed persons (Current Population Survey)**

Persons aged 16 years and older who had no employment during the reference week, were available for work, except for temporary illness, and had made specific efforts to find employment sometime during the 4-week period ending with the reference week. Persons who were waiting to be recalled to a job from which they had been laid off need not have been looking for work to be classified as unemployed.

**Unemployment rate**

The unemployment rate represents the number unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

**Union membership data**

Refers to wage and salary workers who report that they are members of a labor union or an employee association similar to a union.

**Unit labor costs (Productivity and Costs)**

Unit labor costs show the growth in compensation relative to that of real output. These costs are calculated by dividing total labor compensation by real output. Changes in unit labor costs can be approximated by subtracting the change in productivity from the change in hourly compensation.

**Unit value indexes**

Unit value indexes are calculated by dividing the total value of goods in a commodity area by the total quantity of goods in that commodity area.

**Universe**

The total number of units (for example, individuals, households, or businesses) in the population of interest.

**Unpaid family workers** (Current Population Survey and American Time Use Survey)

Persons who work without pay for 15 or more hours per week on a farm or in a business operated by a member of the household to whom they are related by birth or marriage.

**Usual hours** (Current Population Survey)

Respondents are asked the number of hours per week they usually work. This provides a measure of the usual full-time or part-time status of employed persons. All employed persons, both those who were at work and those who were absent from work, are asked about the number of hours they usually work.

**Usual weekly earnings** (Current Population Survey)

Wage and salary earnings before taxes and other deductions; includes any overtime pay, commissions, or tips usually received (at the main job, in the case of multiple jobholders). Earnings reported on a basis other than weekly (for example, annual, monthly, hourly) are converted to weekly. 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. Data refer to wage and salary workers only, excluding all self-employed persons (regardless of whether their businesses were incorporated) and all unpaid family workers.

**V****Vacancy** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

See Job opening.

**Vacancy rate** (Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey)

See Job openings rate.

**W****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.

**Wages and salaries**

Hourly straight-time wage rate or, for workers not paid on an hourly basis, straight-time earnings divided by the corresponding hours. Straight-time wage and salary rates are total earnings before payroll deductions, excluding premium pay for overtime and for work on weekends and holidays, shift differentials, and nonproduction bonuses such as lump-sum payments provided in lieu of wage increases. (See Earnings.)

**Weekly hours**

The expected or actual period of employment for the week, usually expressed in number of hours. Some uses of the term may relate to the outside dimensions of a week (for example, 7 consecutive days).

**Wholesale Price Index (WPI)**

The Wholesale Price Index (WPI) was the original name of the Producer Price Index (PPI) program from its inception in 1902 until 1978, when it was renamed (PPI). At the same time, emphasis was shifted from one index encompassing the whole economy, to three main indexes covering the stages of production in the economy. By changing emphasis, BLS greatly reduced the double-counting phenomenon inherent in aggregate commodity-based indexes.

**Work levels (National Compensation Survey)**

The National Compensation Survey produces earnings data by levels of work within an occupation. The duties and responsibilities of a job are evaluated using four factors (such as knowledge, and complexity of the work) to determine a work level. Levels vary by occupation, ranging from 1 to 15. For example, level 1 may represent an entry level, while level 15 may represent master-level skills.

**Work relationship (Safety and Health Statistics)**

An employee must have had a verifiable work relationship with his or her employer to be included in the Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries. A work relationship exists if an event or exposure results in fatal injury or illness to a person under the following conditions: (1) ON the employer's premises and the person

was there to work; or (2) OFF the employer's premises and the person was there to work, or the event or exposure was related to the person's work status as an employee. The employer's premises include buildings, grounds, parking lots, and other facilities and property used in the conduct of business. Work is defined as legal duties, activities, or tasks that produce a product as a result and that are done in exchange for money, goods, services, profit, or benefit.

**Work stoppage**

A strike or a lockout.

**Worklife estimates**

Estimates of the number of years individuals would spend in the labor force based on mortality conditions, labor force entry and exit rates, and demographic characteristics. BLS has not produced worklife estimates since February 1986. Last publication: Worklife Estimates: Effects of Race and Education PDF 1.32 MB

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