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JOB OPENINGS AND LABOR TURNOVER: DECEMBER 2004

The job openings rate, at 2.5 percent, was up slightly in December, while the hires rate decreased to 3.4 percent and the total separations rate was little changed at 3.2 percent, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. This release includes estimates of the number and rate of job openings, hires, and separations for the total nonfarm sector by industry and geographic region.

Chart 1. Job openings rate, seasonally adjusted,
Percent December 2000 - December 2004

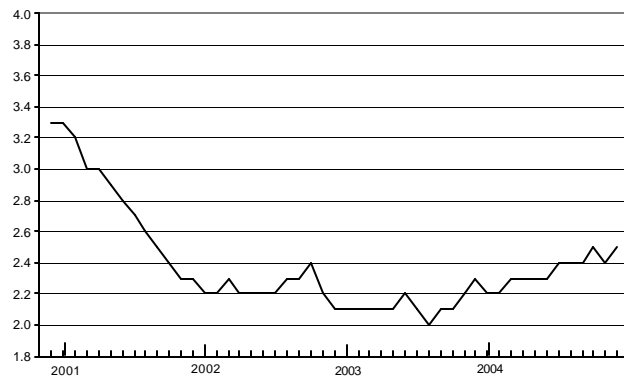
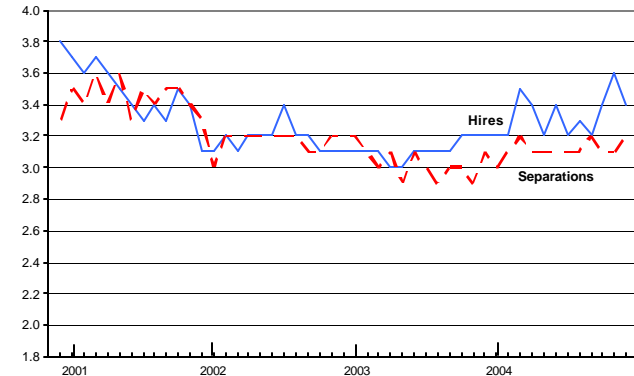


Chart 2. Hires and separations rates, seasonally adjusted,
Percent December 2000 - December 2004



Job Openings

On the last business day of December 2004, there were 3.4 million job openings in the United States, and the job openings rate was 2.5 percent. (See table 1.) The job openings rate has generally trended upward since August 2003. In December, the job openings rate increased for private industries overall, and for the professional and business services and leisure and hospitality industries. The job openings rate rose in the South region, but showed little or no change in the other regions of the country.

Hires and Separations

The hires rate (the number of hires during the month divided by employment) was 3.4 percent in December, a slight decrease from a month earlier. (See table 2.) Hires are any additions to the payroll during the month. The hires rate decreased in manufacturing, professional and business services, and government over the month. The hires rate also fell in the Midwest region.

The total separations, or turnover, rate (the total number of separations during the month divided by employment) was 3.2 percent in December. The overall total separations rate is 0.3 percentage point higher than its most recent low in November 2003. Separations are terminations of employment that occur at any time during the month. (See table 3.) The total separations rate increased in the trade, transportation, and utilities industry in December, but decreased in government.

Table A. Job openings, hires, and total separations by industry, seasonally adjusted

Industry	Job openings			Hires			Total separations		
	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^p	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^p	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^p
	Levels (in thousands)								
Total ¹	3,062	3,205	3,385	4,216	4,780	4,488	4,022	4,131	4,278
Total private ¹	2,719	2,864	3,027	3,923	4,467	4,198	3,723	3,832	3,994
Construction	110	108	126	404	388	385	391	360	343
Manufacturing	234	248	251	340	376	327	343	334	372
Trade, transportation, and utilities	520	532	536	913	1,081	1,022	968	934	1,073
Professional and business services	594	593	662	650	801	718	575	694	649
Education and health services	520	561	586	427	447	439	330	422	380
Leisure and hospitality	399	387	430	753	802	803	723	692	750
Government	351	356	370	300	325	287	269	307	277
	Rates (percent)								
Total ¹	2.3	2.4	2.5	3.2	3.6	3.4	3.1	3.1	3.2
Total private ¹	2.4	2.5	2.7	3.6	4.0	3.8	3.4	3.5	3.6
Construction	1.6	1.5	1.8	6.0	5.5	5.5	5.8	5.1	4.9
Manufacturing	1.6	1.7	1.7	2.4	2.6	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.6
Trade, transportation, and utilities	2.0	2.0	2.1	3.6	4.2	4.0	3.8	3.7	4.2
Professional and business services	3.5	3.4	3.8	4.0	4.8	4.3	3.6	4.2	3.9
Education and health services	3.0	3.2	3.3	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.0	2.5	2.2
Leisure and hospitality	3.2	3.0	3.4	6.2	6.5	6.5	5.9	5.6	6.1
Government	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.3

¹ Includes natural resources and mining, information, financial activities, and other services, not shown separately.
p = preliminary.

Total separations include quits (voluntary separations), layoffs and discharges (involuntary separations), and other separations (including retirements). The quits rate, which can serve as a barometer of workers' ability to change jobs, was unchanged at 1.8 percent in December, after holding steady at 1.7 percent from February through October 2004. (See table 4.) The quits rate did not change significantly from November to December for any industry or region. The other two components of total separations, layoffs and discharges (1.4 percent) and other separations (0.2 percent), are not seasonally adjusted. Both rates showed no change from a year earlier.

Hires and separations help show dynamic flows in the labor market. Over the last 12 months, hires have averaged 4.4 million per month and separations have averaged 4.1 million per month. (See the Technical Note for additional information on these measures.)

For More Information

For additional information, please see the Technical Note or the JOLTS Web site at www.bls.gov/jlt/. Additional information about JOLTS also may be obtained by e-mailing Joltsinfo@bls.gov or by calling (202) 691-5870.

The Job Openings and Labor Turnover release for January 2005 is scheduled to be issued on Tuesday, March 15, 2005.

Revisions to the JOLTS data

With the release of January data on March 15, BLS will revise the job openings, hires, and separations data to incorporate the annual updates to the Current Employment Statistics employment counts. Unadjusted data since April 2003 and seasonally adjusted data since December 2000 are subject to change.

Technical Note

The data for the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) are collected and compiled monthly from a sample of business establishments by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

Collection

Each month, data are collected in a survey of business establishments for total employment, job openings, hires, quits, layoffs and discharges, and other separations. Data collection methods include computer-assisted telephone interviewing, touchtone data entry, fax, and mail.

Coverage

The JOLTS program covers all private nonfarm establishments such as factories, offices, and stores, as well as federal, state, and local government entities in the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Concepts

Industry classification. The industry classifications in this release are in accordance with the 2002 version of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). In order to ensure the highest possible quality of data, State Employment Security Agencies verify with employers and update, if necessary, the industry code, location, and ownership classification of all establishments on a 3-year cycle. Changes in establishment characteristics resulting from the verification process are always introduced into the JOLTS sampling frame with the data reported for the first month of the year.

Employment. Employment includes persons on the payroll who worked or received pay for the pay period that includes the 12th day of the reference month. Full-time, part-time, permanent, short-term, seasonal, salaried, and hourly employees are included, as are employees on paid vacations or other paid leave. Proprietors or partners of unincorporated businesses, unpaid family workers, or persons on leave without pay or on strike for the entire pay period, are not counted as employed. Employees of temporary help agencies, employee leasing companies, outside contractors, and consultants are counted by their employer of record, not by the establishment where they are working.

Job openings. Establishments submit job openings information for the last business day of the reference month. A job opening requires that: 1) a specific position exists and there is work available for that position, 2) work could start within 30 days regardless of whether a suitable candidate is found, and 3) the employer is actively recruiting from outside the establishment to fill the position. Included are full-time, part-time, permanent, short-term, and seasonal openings. Active recruiting means that the establishment is taking steps to fill a position by advertising in newspapers or on the Internet, posting help-wanted signs, accepting applications, or using other similar methods.

Jobs to be filled only by internal transfers, promotions, demotions, or recall from layoffs are excluded. Also excluded

are jobs with start dates more than 30 days in the future, jobs for which employees have been hired but have not yet reported for work, and jobs to be filled by employees of temporary help agencies, employee leasing companies, outside contractors, or consultants. The job openings rate is computed by dividing the number of job openings by the sum of employment and job openings and multiplying that quotient by 100.

Hires. Hires are the total number of additions to the payroll occurring at any time during the reference month, including both new and rehired employees, full-time and part-time, permanent, short-term, and seasonal employees, employees recalled to the location after a layoff lasting more than 7 days, on-call or intermittent employees who returned to work after having been formally separated, and transfers from other locations. The hires count does not include transfers or promotions within the reporting site, employees returning from strike, employees of temporary help agencies or employee leasing companies, outside contractors, or consultants. The hires rate is computed by dividing the number of hires by employment and multiplying that quotient by 100.

Separations. Separations are the total number of terminations of employment occurring at any time during the reference month, and are reported by type of separation—quits, layoffs and discharges, and other separations. Quits are voluntary separations by employees (except for retirements, which are reported as other separations). Layoffs and discharges are involuntary separations initiated by the employer and include layoffs with no intent to rehire, formal layoffs lasting or expected to last more than 7 days, discharges resulting from mergers, downsizing, or closings, firings or other discharges for cause, terminations of permanent or short-term employees, and terminations of seasonal employees. Other separations include retirements, transfers to other locations, deaths, and separations due to disability. Separations do not include transfers within the same location or employees on strike.

The separations rate is computed by dividing the number of separations by employment and multiplying that quotient by 100. The quits, layoffs and discharges, and other separations rates are computed similarly, dividing the number by employment and multiplying by 100.

Sample methodology

The JOLTS sample design is a random sample of 16,000 nonfarm business establishments, including factories, offices, and stores, as well as federal, state, and local governments in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The establishments are drawn from a universe of over eight million establishments compiled as part of the operations of the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, or QCEW, program. This program includes all employers subject to state Unemployment Insurance (UI) laws and federal agencies subject to Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE).

The sampling frame is stratified by ownership, region, industry sector, and size class. Large firms fall into the sample

with virtual certainty. JOLTS total employment estimates are controlled to the employment estimates of the Current Employment Statistics (CES) survey. A ratio of CES to JOLTS employment is used to adjust the levels for all other JOLTS data elements. Rates are then computed from the adjusted levels.

Using JOLTS data

The JOLTS data series on job openings, hires, and separations are relatively new. The full sample is divided into panels, with one panel enrolled each month. A full complement of panels for the original data series based on the 1987 Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) system was not completely enrolled in the survey until January 2002. The supplemental panels of establishments needed to create NAICS estimates were not completely enrolled until May 2003. The data collected up until those points are from less than a full sample. Therefore, estimates from earlier months should be used with caution, as fewer sampled units were reporting data at that time.

In March 2002, BLS procedures for collecting hires and separations data were revised to address possible underreporting. As a result, JOLTS hires and separations estimates for months prior to March 2002 may not be comparable with estimates for March 2002 and later.

The federal government reorganization that involved transferring approximately 180,000 employees to the new Department of Homeland Security is not reflected in the JOLTS hires and separations estimates for the federal government. The Office of Personnel Management's record shows these transfers were completed in March 2003. The inclusion of transfers in the JOLTS definitions of hires and separations is intended to cover ongoing movements of workers between establishments. The Department of Homeland Security reorganization was a massive one-time event, and the inclusion of these intergovernmental transfers would distort the federal government time series.

Seasonal adjustment

BLS seasonally adjusts several JOLTS series using the X-12-ARIMA seasonal adjustment program. Seasonal adjustment is the process of estimating and removing periodic fluctuations caused by events such as weather, holidays, and the beginning and ending of the school year. Seasonal adjustment makes it easier to observe fundamental changes in the level of the series, particularly those associated with general economic expansions and contractions. A concurrent seasonal adjustment methodology is used in which new seasonal adjustment factors are calculated each month, using all relevant data, up to and including the data for the current month.

Data users should note that seasonal adjustment of the JOLTS series is conducted with fewer data observations than is customary. The historical data, therefore, may be subject to larger than normal revisions. Since the seasonal patterns in economic data series typically emerge over time, the standard use of moving averages as seasonal filters to capture these

effects requires longer series than are currently available. As a result, the stable seasonal filter option is used in the seasonal adjustment of the JOLTS data. When calculating seasonal factors, this filter takes an average for each calendar month after detrending the series. The stable seasonal filter assumes that the seasonal factors are fixed; a necessary assumption until sufficient data are available. When the stable seasonal filter is no longer needed, other program features also may be introduced, such as outlier adjustment and extended diagnostic testing. Additionally, it is expected that more series, such as layoffs and discharges and additional industries, may be seasonally adjusted when more data are available.

Reliability of the estimates

JOLTS estimates are subject to both sampling and nonsampling error. When a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed, there is a chance that the sample estimates may differ from the "true" population values they represent. The exact difference, or sampling error, varies depending on the particular sample selected, and this variability is measured by the standard error of the estimate. BLS analysis is generally conducted at the 90-percent level of confidence. That means that there is a 90-percent chance, or level of confidence, that an estimate based on a sample will differ by no more than 1.6 standard errors from the "true" population value because of sampling error. Estimates of sampling errors are available upon request.

The JOLTS estimates also are affected by nonsampling error. Nonsampling error can occur for many reasons, including the failure to include a segment of the population, the inability to obtain data from all units in the sample, the inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide data on a timely basis, mistakes made by respondents, errors made in the collection or processing of the data, and errors from the employment benchmark data used in estimation.

JOLTS hires and separations estimates cannot be used to exactly explain net changes in nonfarm payroll employment. Some reasons why it is problematic to compare changes in payroll employment with JOLTS hires and separations, especially on a monthly basis, are: 1) the reference period for payroll employment is the pay period including the 12th of the month, while the reference period for hires and separations is the calendar month; and 2) payroll employment can vary from month to month simply because part-time and on-call workers may not always work during the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. Additionally, research has found that some reporters systematically underreport separations relative to hires due to a number of factors, including the nature of their payroll systems and practices. The shortfall appears to be about 2 percent or less over a 12-month period.

Other information

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Job openings levels¹ and rates² by industry and region, seasonally adjusted

Industry and region	Levels ³ (in thousands)							Rates						
	Dec. 2003	July 2004	Aug. 2004	Sept. 2004	Oct. 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P	Dec. 2003	July 2004	Aug. 2004	Sept. 2004	Oct. 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P
Total⁴	3,062	3,237	3,195	3,294	3,420	3,205	3,385	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.5
INDUSTRY														
Total private ⁴	2,719	2,894	2,859	2,934	3,042	2,864	3,027	2.4	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.7
Construction.....	110	88	121	113	114	108	126	1.6	1.3	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.8
Manufacturing.....	234	240	234	251	263	248	251	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.7
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	520	567	551	591	630	532	536	2.0	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.0	2.1
Professional and business services.....	594	583	594	564	614	593	662	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.3	3.6	3.4	3.8
Education and health services.....	520	537	536	543	550	561	586	3.0	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.3
Leisure and hospitality.....	399	435	410	425	405	387	430	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.0	3.4
Government.....	351	343	337	350	403	356	370	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.8	1.6	1.7
REGION														
Northeast.....	541	545	540	562	606	535	569	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.1	2.2
South.....	1,204	1,280	1,259	1,245	1,385	1,217	1,297	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.9	2.5	2.7
Midwest.....	666	635	613	699	711	715	762	2.1	2.0	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.4
West.....	649	738	771	790	756	753	745	2.2	2.5	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5

¹ Job openings are the number of job openings on the last business day of the month.

² The job openings rate is the number of job openings on the last business day of the month as a percent of total employment plus job openings.

³ Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of the independent seasonal adjustment of the various series.

⁴ Includes natural resources and mining, information, financial activities, and other services, not shown separately.

^P = preliminary.

NOTE: The States (including the District of Columbia) that comprise

the regions are: Northeast: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont; South: Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia; Midwest: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin; West: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Table 2. Hires levels¹ and rates² by industry and region, seasonally adjusted

Industry and region	Levels ³ (in thousands)							Rates						
	Dec. 2003	July 2004	Aug. 2004	Sept. 2004	Oct. 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P	Dec. 2003	July 2004	Aug. 2004	Sept. 2004	Oct. 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P
Total⁴	4,216	4,229	4,375	4,253	4,469	4,780	4,488	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.4
INDUSTRY														
Total private ⁴	3,923	3,930	4,058	3,906	4,149	4,467	4,198	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6	3.8	4.0	3.8
Construction.....	404	368	401	383	361	388	385	6.0	5.3	5.8	5.5	5.1	5.5	5.5
Manufacturing.....	340	352	356	379	333	376	327	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.3	2.6	2.3
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	913	957	984	864	976	1,081	1,022	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.4	3.8	4.2	4.0
Professional and business services.....	650	621	690	689	783	801	718	4.0	3.8	4.2	4.2	4.7	4.8	4.3
Education and health services.....	427	418	470	401	411	447	439	2.5	2.5	2.8	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.6
Leisure and hospitality.....	753	760	760	782	769	802	803	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.3	6.2	6.5	6.5
Government.....	300	310	322	337	321	325	287	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.3
REGION														
Northeast.....	792	720	763	745	755	793	796	3.2	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.1
South.....	1,517	1,640	1,643	1,635	1,694	1,799	1,704	3.3	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.9	3.6
Midwest.....	897	935	945	942	1,054	1,114	998	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.4	3.6	3.2
West.....	992	865	1,018	942	928	1,022	951	3.5	3.0	3.5	3.3	3.2	3.5	3.3

¹ Hires are the number of hires during the entire month.

² The hires rate is the number of hires during the entire month as a percent of total employment.

³ Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of the independent seasonal adjustment of the various series.

⁴ Includes natural resources and mining, information, financial activities, and other services, not shown separately.

^P = preliminary.

NOTE: See NOTE, table 1.

Table 3. Total separations levels¹ and rates² by industry and region, seasonally adjusted

Industry and region	Levels ³ (in thousands)							Rates						
	Dec. 2003	July 2004	Aug. 2004	Sept. 2004	Oct. 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P	Dec. 2003	July 2004	Aug. 2004	Sept. 2004	Oct. 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P
Total⁴	4,022	4,074	4,134	4,158	4,129	4,131	4,278	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.2
INDUSTRY														
Total private ⁴	3,723	3,793	3,894	3,856	3,877	3,832	3,994	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6
Construction.....	391	364	391	350	423	360	343	5.8	5.3	5.6	5.0	6.0	5.1	4.9
Manufacturing.....	343	367	379	381	338	334	372	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.6
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	968	972	951	909	922	934	1,073	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.6	3.7	4.2
Professional and business services.....	575	613	575	590	580	694	649	3.6	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.5	4.2	3.9
Education and health services.....	330	363	380	384	373	422	380	2.0	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.5	2.2
Leisure and hospitality.....	723	694	760	756	747	692	750	5.9	5.6	6.2	6.1	6.0	5.6	6.1
Government.....	269	273	246	306	260	307	277	1.2	1.3	1.1	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.3
REGION														
Northeast.....	687	674	717	730	670	738	782	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.6	2.9	3.1
South.....	1,518	1,545	1,527	1,506	1,568	1,572	1,599	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.4
Midwest.....	901	935	831	931	948	986	949	2.9	3.0	2.7	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0
West.....	898	945	1,087	978	914	817	938	3.2	3.3	3.8	3.4	3.2	2.8	3.3

¹ Total separations are the number of total separations during the entire month.

² The total separations rate is the number of total separations during the entire month as a percent of total employment.

³ Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of the independent seasonal adjustment of the various series.

⁴ Includes natural resources and mining, information, financial activities, and other services, not shown separately.

^P = preliminary.

NOTE: See NOTE, table 1.

Table 4. Quits levels¹ and rates² by industry and region, seasonally adjusted

Industry and region	Levels ³ (in thousands)							Rates						
	Dec. 2003	July 2004	Aug. 2004	Sept. 2004	Oct. 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P	Dec. 2003	July 2004	Aug. 2004	Sept. 2004	Oct. 2004	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P
Total⁴	2,131	2,265	2,252	2,248	2,283	2,325	2,408	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8
INDUSTRY														
Total private ⁴	2,010	2,141	2,140	2,118	2,147	2,206	2,283	1.9	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.1
Construction.....	171	101	147	138	161	155	162	2.5	1.5	2.1	2.0	2.3	2.2	2.3
Manufacturing.....	178	174	165	183	172	182	191	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.3
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	534	559	552	536	515	551	553	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.1	2.0	2.2	2.2
Professional and business services.....	256	322	308	325	296	357	356	1.6	2.0	1.9	2.0	1.8	2.1	2.1
Education and health services.....	212	271	239	240	242	258	234	1.3	1.6	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.4
Leisure and hospitality.....	462	442	476	439	476	453	498	3.8	3.6	3.9	3.6	3.9	3.7	4.0
Government.....	119	126	116	130	122	119	127	.6	.6	.5	.6	.6	.5	.6
REGION														
Northeast.....	315	338	339	325	316	355	350	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.4
South.....	894	901	897	903	910	971	995	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.1
Midwest.....	465	505	447	472	510	508	512	1.5	1.6	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.6
West.....	436	519	566	546	539	468	519	1.5	1.8	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.6	1.8

¹ Quits are the number of quits during the entire month.

² The quits rate is the number of quits during the entire month as a percent of total employment.

³ Detail will not necessarily add to totals because of the independent seasonal adjustment of the various series.

⁴ Includes natural resources and mining, information, financial activities, and other services, not shown separately.

^P = preliminary.

NOTE: See NOTE, table 1.

Table 5. Job openings levels¹ and rates² by industry and region, not seasonally adjusted

Industry and region	Levels (in thousands)			Rates		
	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P
Total.....	2,662	2,944	2,937	2.0	2.2	2.2
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	2,342	2,599	2,597	2.1	2.3	2.3
Natural resources and mining.....	8	8	8	1.4	1.3	1.3
Construction.....	71	83	87	1.1	1.1	1.2
Manufacturing.....	190	213	202	1.3	1.5	1.4
Durable goods.....	114	136	134	1.3	1.5	1.5
Nondurable goods.....	76	76	68	1.4	1.4	1.2
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	417	493	422	1.6	1.9	1.6
Wholesale trade.....	81	97	93	1.4	1.7	1.6
Retail trade.....	244	294	245	1.6	1.9	1.5
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	92	102	83	1.9	2.0	1.7
Information.....	61	70	88	1.9	2.2	2.7
Financial activities.....	168	202	199	2.1	2.4	2.4
Finance and insurance.....	139	171	165	2.3	2.8	2.7
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	28	30	34	1.4	1.4	1.6
Professional and business services.....	524	526	602	3.1	3.0	3.5
Education and health services.....	484	533	547	2.8	3.0	3.1
Educational services.....	31	48	49	1.1	1.6	1.6
Health care and social assistance.....	453	485	498	3.1	3.3	3.3
Leisure and hospitality.....	305	334	335	2.5	2.7	2.7
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	26	39	40	1.5	2.3	2.4
Accommodations and food services.....	280	295	294	2.6	2.7	2.7
Other services.....	113	139	107	2.1	2.5	1.9
Government.....	321	344	340	1.4	1.5	1.5
Federal.....	38	35	33	1.4	1.3	1.2
State and local.....	283	309	308	1.5	1.6	1.6
REGION						
Northeast.....	461	516	500	1.8	2.0	1.9
South.....	1,059	1,118	1,129	2.2	2.3	2.3
Midwest.....	570	634	665	1.8	2.0	2.1
West.....	572	675	644	2.0	2.3	2.2

¹ Job openings are the number of job openings on the last business day of the month.

² The job openings rate is the number of job openings on the last business day of the month as a percent of total employment plus job openings.

^P = preliminary.

NOTE: See NOTE, table 1.

Table 6. Hires levels¹ and rates² by industry and region, not seasonally adjusted

Industry and region	Levels (in thousands)			Rates		
	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P
Total	3,145	4,361	3,335	2.4	3.3	2.5
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	2,935	4,094	3,140	2.7	3.7	2.8
Natural resources and mining.....	10	16	15	1.8	2.7	2.6
Construction.....	249	299	236	3.7	4.2	3.4
Manufacturing.....	233	307	218	1.6	2.1	1.5
Durable goods.....	152	177	124	1.7	2.0	1.4
Nondurable goods.....	82	130	94	1.5	2.4	1.7
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	760	1,301	846	2.9	5.0	3.2
Wholesale trade.....	76	104	66	1.4	1.8	1.2
Retail trade.....	573	1,004	619	3.7	6.5	4.0
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	111	193	161	2.3	4.0	3.3
Information.....	39	75	41	1.2	2.4	1.3
Financial activities.....	118	190	132	1.5	2.3	1.6
Finance and insurance.....	92	136	81	1.6	2.3	1.3
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	26	54	51	1.3	2.6	2.4
Professional and business services.....	521	714	582	3.2	4.3	3.5
Education and health services.....	306	381	316	1.8	2.2	1.8
Educational services.....	32	43	33	1.1	1.5	1.1
Health care and social assistance.....	275	338	283	2.0	2.4	2.0
Leisure and hospitality.....	554	661	597	4.6	5.4	4.9
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	76	68	72	4.6	4.2	4.4
Accommodations and food services.....	478	593	526	4.7	5.6	5.0
Other services.....	144	150	156	2.7	2.8	2.9
Government.....	210	267	195	1.0	1.2	.9
Federal.....	35	27	31	1.3	1.0	1.1
State and local.....	175	240	163	.9	1.2	.8
REGION						
Northeast.....	556	746	605	2.2	2.9	2.4
South.....	1,155	1,681	1,281	2.5	3.6	2.7
Midwest.....	633	973	692	2.0	3.1	2.2
West.....	802	961	757	2.8	3.3	2.6

¹ Hires are the number of hires during the entire month.

² The hires rate is the number of hires during the entire month as a percent of total employment.

^P = preliminary.

NOTE: See NOTE, table 1.

Table 7. Total separations levels¹ and rates² by industry and region, not seasonally adjusted

Industry and region	Levels (in thousands)			Rates		
	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P
Total	3,835	3,834	4,101	2.9	2.9	3.1
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	3,608	3,602	3,871	3.3	3.2	3.5
Natural resources and mining.....	23	20	20	4.0	3.3	3.3
Construction.....	461	398	390	6.9	5.6	5.6
Manufacturing.....	317	312	353	2.2	2.2	2.5
Durable goods.....	192	183	221	2.2	2.0	2.5
Nondurable goods.....	125	129	132	2.3	2.4	2.4
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	1,001	852	1,132	3.9	3.3	4.3
Wholesale trade.....	144	124	111	2.6	2.2	2.0
Retail trade.....	682	589	808	4.4	3.8	5.2
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	176	139	213	3.7	2.9	4.3
Information.....	69	46	49	2.2	1.4	1.6
Financial activities.....	130	172	180	1.6	2.1	2.2
Finance and insurance.....	78	114	109	1.3	1.9	1.8
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	52	58	70	2.5	2.8	3.4
Professional and business services.....	570	628	637	3.5	3.7	3.8
Education and health services.....	280	338	319	1.7	2.0	1.8
Educational services.....	34	31	33	1.2	1.0	1.1
Health care and social assistance.....	246	307	286	1.8	2.1	2.0
Leisure and hospitality.....	597	665	618	5.0	5.5	5.1
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	89	123	91	5.3	7.5	5.6
Accommodations and food services.....	509	542	528	5.0	5.2	5.0
Other services.....	160	171	173	3.0	3.2	3.2
Government.....	226	231	231	1.0	1.0	1.0
Federal.....	53	23	43	1.9	.9	1.6
State and local.....	173	208	188	.9	1.1	1.0
REGION						
Northeast.....	688	705	799	2.7	2.8	3.1
South.....	1,398	1,375	1,481	3.0	2.9	3.2
Midwest.....	885	947	930	2.9	3.0	3.0
West.....	863	806	892	3.0	2.8	3.1

¹ Total separations are the number of total separations during the entire month.

² The total separations rate is the number of total separations during the entire month as a percent of total employment.

^P = preliminary.

NOTE: See NOTE, table 1.

Table 8. Quits levels¹ and rates² by industry and region, not seasonally adjusted

Industry and region	Levels (in thousands)			Rates		
	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P
Total.....	1,764	1,992	2,000	1.3	1.5	1.5
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	1,673	1,899	1,901	1.5	1.7	1.7
Natural resources and mining.....	6	8	7	1.0	1.3	1.1
Construction.....	132	129	128	2.0	1.8	1.9
Manufacturing.....	124	137	137	.9	1.0	1.0
Durable goods.....	71	70	84	.8	.8	.9
Nondurable goods.....	53	68	53	1.0	1.2	1.0
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	476	484	496	1.8	1.9	1.9
Wholesale trade.....	71	52	65	1.3	.9	1.1
Retail trade.....	338	365	366	2.2	2.4	2.3
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	66	68	66	1.4	1.4	1.3
Information.....	27	28	29	.9	.9	.9
Financial activities.....	67	87	85	.8	1.1	1.0
Finance and insurance.....	47	62	61	.8	1.0	1.0
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	20	25	23	1.0	1.2	1.1
Professional and business services.....	213	322	300	1.3	1.9	1.8
Education and health services.....	189	213	207	1.1	1.2	1.2
Educational services.....	14	15	19	.5	.5	.6
Health care and social assistance.....	175	198	188	1.3	1.4	1.3
Leisure and hospitality.....	356	392	391	3.0	3.2	3.2
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	33	38	35	2.0	2.3	2.1
Accommodations and food services.....	323	354	356	3.1	3.4	3.4
Other services.....	83	99	122	1.5	1.8	2.3
Government.....	91	92	98	.4	.4	.4
Federal.....	10	11	11	.4	.4	.4
State and local.....	81	82	88	.4	.4	.5
REGION						
Northeast.....	262	306	293	1.0	1.2	1.1
South.....	737	834	833	1.6	1.8	1.8
Midwest.....	391	443	433	1.3	1.4	1.4
West.....	374	408	440	1.3	1.4	1.5

¹ Quits are the number of quits during the entire month.

² The quits rate is the number of quits during the entire month as a percent of total employment.

^P = preliminary.

NOTE: See NOTE, table 1.

Table 9. Layoffs and discharges levels¹ and rates² by industry and region, not seasonally adjusted

Industry and region	Levels (in thousands)			Rates		
	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P
Total.....	1,809	1,611	1,799	1.4	1.2	1.4
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	1,711	1,505	1,714	1.6	1.4	1.5
Natural resources and mining.....	16	9	8	2.9	1.5	1.4
Construction.....	309	262	250	4.6	3.7	3.6
Manufacturing.....	158	157	170	1.1	1.1	1.2
Durable goods.....	98	102	99	1.1	1.1	1.1
Nondurable goods.....	60	55	71	1.1	1.0	1.3
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	470	313	564	1.8	1.2	2.2
Wholesale trade.....	58	69	37	1.0	1.2	.7
Retail trade.....	317	187	398	2.0	1.2	2.5
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	94	57	129	2.0	1.2	2.6
Information.....	36	13	14	1.1	.4	.5
Financial activities.....	47	73	80	.6	.9	1.0
Finance and insurance.....	20	41	39	.3	.7	.6
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	27	32	42	1.3	1.5	2.0
Professional and business services.....	329	279	301	2.0	1.7	1.8
Education and health services.....	63	104	87	.4	.6	.5
Educational services.....	15	14	12	.5	.5	.4
Health care and social assistance.....	48	89	75	.3	.6	.5
Leisure and hospitality.....	216	231	200	1.8	1.9	1.7
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	54	80	53	3.3	4.9	3.3
Accommodations and food services.....	163	151	147	1.6	1.4	1.4
Other services.....	67	65	38	1.2	1.2	.7
Government.....	98	106	84	.4	.5	.4
Federal.....	37	3	19	1.3	.1	.7
State and local.....	62	103	66	.3	.5	.3
REGION						
Northeast.....	354	350	447	1.4	1.4	1.7
South.....	583	463	540	1.3	1.0	1.1
Midwest.....	433	454	425	1.4	1.4	1.4
West.....	440	343	387	1.5	1.2	1.3

¹ Layoffs and discharges are the number of layoffs and discharges during the entire month.

² The layoffs and discharges rate is the number of layoffs and discharges during the entire month as a percent of total employment.

^P = preliminary.

NOTE: See NOTE, table 1.

Table 10. Other separations levels¹ and rates² by industry and region, not seasonally adjusted

Industry and region	Levels (in thousands)			Rates		
	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P	Dec. 2003	Nov. 2004	Dec. 2004 ^P
Total	261	231	303	0.2	0.2	0.2
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	224	197	256	.2	.2	.2
Natural resources and mining.....	(³)	3	5	.1	.5	.8
Construction.....	20	8	11	.3	.1	.2
Manufacturing.....	35	18	46	.2	.1	.3
Durable goods.....	23	11	39	.3	.1	.4
Nondurable goods.....	12	7	7	.2	.1	.1
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	56	55	72	.2	.2	.3
Wholesale trade.....	14	3	10	.3	.1	.2
Retail trade.....	27	38	44	.2	.2	.3
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	15	14	18	.3	.3	.4
Information.....	6	5	6	.2	.2	.2
Financial activities.....	16	12	15	.2	.1	.2
Finance and insurance.....	11	11	10	.2	.2	.2
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	5	1	5	.2	(³)	.3
Professional and business services.....	27	27	36	.2	.2	.2
Education and health services.....	28	21	25	.2	.1	.1
Educational services.....	6	1	2	.2	(³)	.1
Health care and social assistance.....	23	19	23	.2	.1	.2
Leisure and hospitality.....	25	42	27	.2	.3	.2
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	2	5	3	.1	.3	.2
Accommodations and food services.....	23	37	24	.2	.4	.2
Other services.....	11	7	12	.2	.1	.2
Government.....	37	33	48	.2	.2	.2
Federal.....	6	10	13	.2	.4	.5
State and local.....	31	24	34	.2	.1	.2
REGION						
Northeast.....	72	49	59	.3	.2	.2
South.....	78	77	108	.2	.2	.2
Midwest.....	62	49	72	.2	.2	.2
West.....	49	55	65	.2	.2	.2

¹ Other separations are the number of other separations during the entire month.

² The other separations rate is the number of other separations during the entire month as a percent of total employment.

³ Data round to zero.

^P = preliminary.

NOTE: See NOTE, table 1.