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JOB OPENINGS AND LABOR TURNOVER: FEBRUARY 2004

New monthly data on job openings and labor turnover were announced today by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. For the first time, these data are seasonally adjusted, allowing analysis of over-the-month change. There were 2.9 million job openings, 4.1 million hires, and 4.0 million separations in February 2004, about the same as in January. These series include estimates of the number and rate of job openings, hires, and separations for the total nonfarm sector with breakouts by industry and geographic region.

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

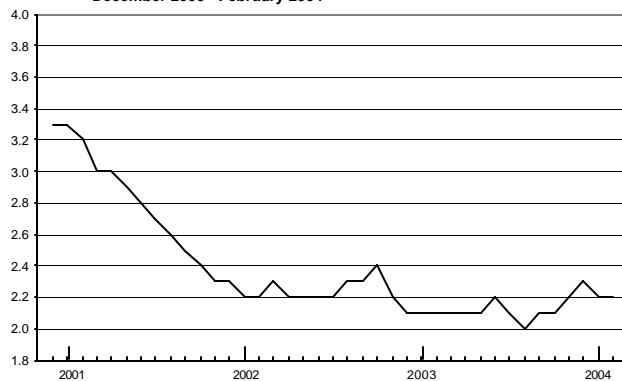
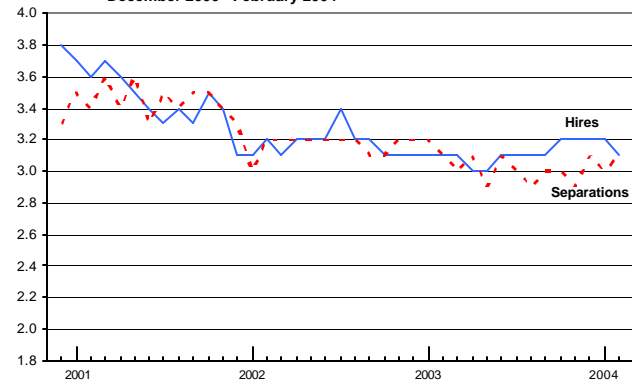


Chart 2. Hires and separations rates, seasonally adjusted,
Percent
December 2000 - February 2004



Job Openings

On the last business day of February 2004, there were 2.9 million job openings in the United States, and the job openings rate (the number of job openings on the last business day of the month divided by employment plus job openings) was 2.2 percent. Over the month, the job openings rate showed little or no change overall and for the major industries. (See table 1.) The job openings rate has been relatively unchanged since October 2001, ranging from 2.0 percent to 2.4 percent.

The Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) data in this release reflect the annual revisions to JOLTS estimates that incorporate the most recent employment universe counts. Historical JOLTS estimates from December 2000 forward were subject to revision. See the note on page 4 for more information on the JOLTS program.

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

Industry	Job openings			Hires			Total separations		
	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^p	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^p	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^p
	Levels (in thousands)								
Total ¹	2,786	2,868	2,907	3,991	4,106	4,064	4,081	3,968	4,019
Total private ¹	2,416	2,518	2,539	3,680	3,800	3,733	3,829	3,716	3,756
Construction	86	106	104	354	358	385	349	436	391
Manufacturing	182	233	224	321	349	346	404	323	349
Trade, transportation, and utilities	482	430	444	880	957	913	924	936	904
Professional and business services	471	501	481	623	708	537	606	572	581
Education and health services	570	549	540	435	416	439	363	389	384
Leisure and hospitality	305	368	387	666	715	752	750	709	721
Government	373	350	365	315	295	333	259	258	268
	Rates (percent)								
Total ¹	2.1	2.2	2.2	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.1
Total private ¹	2.2	2.3	2.3	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.5
Construction	1.3	1.5	1.5	5.3	5.3	5.7	5.2	6.4	5.8
Manufacturing	1.2	1.6	1.5	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.7	2.3	2.4
Trade, transportation, and utilities	1.9	1.7	1.7	3.5	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.6
Professional and business services	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.9	4.4	3.3	3.8	3.5	3.6
Education and health services	3.3	3.2	3.1	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.2	2.3	2.3
Leisure and hospitality	2.5	2.9	3.1	5.5	5.9	6.2	6.2	5.8	5.9
Government	1.7	1.6	1.7	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.2

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

Hires and Separations

The hires rate (the number of hires during the month divided by employment) was little changed in February at 3.1 percent. (See table 2.) Hires are any additions to the payroll during the month. The hires rate has ranged from 3.0 percent to 3.2 percent since August 2002. The hires rate decreased in professional and business services in February, while all other major industries showed little or no change over the month.

The total separations, or turnover, rate (the number of separations during the month divided by employment) was 3.1 percent in February 2004 and has been essentially unchanged since early 2002. (See table 3.) Separations are terminations of employment that occur at any time during the month. The major industries showed little or no change in their total separations rates over the month.

Total separations includes 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 essentially unchanged in February at 1.7 percent and has shown little movement since 2001. (See table 4.) Professional and business services showed an increase in the quits rate over the month, while other major industries showed little or no change. The other two components of total separations, layoffs and discharges (1.0 percent) and other separations (0.2 percent), are not seasonally adjusted. (See tables 9 and 10.)

Hires and separations help show dynamic flows in the labor market. Over the last 12 months, hires have averaged 4.1 million per month and separations have averaged 3.9 million per month. (See the note on page 4 and the Technical Note for additional information on these measures.) The trade, transportation, and utilities; professional and business services; and leisure and hospitality industries typically report the largest share of hires and separations.

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 report on Job Openings and Labor Turnover for March 2004 is scheduled to be released on Tuesday, May 11, 2004.

Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey

The Bureau of Labor Statistics initiated the publication of the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) data with a news release in July 2002 that presented data from December 2000 through May 2002. Since that time, data have been updated monthly on the BLS Web site. With the release of January 2004 estimates, the Bureau introduced new seasonally adjusted JOLTS data series and initiated several changes in the publication of JOLTS estimates. Each month, the Bureau will issue a news release with seasonally adjusted estimates and an analysis of significant over-the-month changes. The monthly JOLTS news release will contain both the current month's preliminary estimates and the previous month's final estimates.

Background

JOLTS collects monthly job openings and labor turnover data from 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 data collected monthly from each cooperating establishment are employment for the pay period that includes the 12th of the month; job openings on the last business day of the month; and hires, quits, layoffs and discharges, and other separations for the entire month. The measure of job openings is a one-day snapshot at the end of the month, while the hires and separations measures represent flows of workers into and out of jobs over the course of the full calendar month.

In responding to the survey, employers are asked to report only those job openings for which: 1) a specific position exists, 2) work could start within 30 days, and 3) the employer is actively recruiting from outside of the establishment to fill the position. Hires are any additions to the payroll, and separations are any separations from the payroll, including quits, layoffs and discharges, and other separations (retirements or transfers to other locations). For hires and separations, firms are asked to exclude employees returning from or going on strike; employees of temporary help agencies, leasing companies, outside contractors, or consultants; and employees changing jobs within the establishment. Data on employees of temporary help agencies, leasing companies, outside contractors, and consultants are reported by employers in those industries.

Not seasonally adjusted data on job openings, hires, total separations, quits, layoffs and discharges, and other separations levels and rates are available for the total nonfarm sector; for the total private sector and 16 private industry divisions based on the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS); and government, with breakouts for the federal government and for state and local government combined. Levels and rates also are published for four geographic regions: the Northeast, South, Midwest, and West. Seasonally adjusted job openings, hires, total separations, and quits levels and rates are available for the nation, selected industry sectors, and the four geographic regions. (See the Technical Note for additional information on seasonal adjustment methodology.)

Uses of the Data

As the monthly JOLTS time series grow longer, their value will increase in assessing, over the course of the business cycle, the ease or difficulty that employers have in hiring workers and the extent of any mismatch between the unused supply of available workers and the unmet demand for labor by employers. Of particular interest will be the study of the complex relationship between job openings and unemployment. While these two measures are expected to move in opposite directions over the course of the business cycle, their relative levels and movements will depend on the efficiency of the labor market in matching workers and jobs.

Together with the job openings rate, trends in hires and separations estimates may broadly identify which aggregate industries face the tightest labor markets. Quits rates may provide clues about workers' views of the labor market or their success in finding better jobs. In addition, businesses will be able to compare their own turnover rate with the national, regional, and major industry division rates.

Hires and separations cannot completely explain net changes in payroll employment. Research shows 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 reasons why it is problematic to compare changes in payroll employment with JOLTS hires and separations, especially over short-term periods, 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 including the 12th of the month.

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						
	Feb. 2003	Sept. 2003	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P	Feb. 2003	Sept. 2003	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P
Total⁴	2,786	2,755	2,823	2,952	3,062	2,868	2,907	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.2
INDUSTRY														
Total private ⁴	2,416	2,399	2,479	2,593	2,719	2,518	2,539	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.3
Construction.....	86	58	78	89	110	106	104	1.3	.9	1.1	1.3	1.6	1.5	1.5
Manufacturing.....	182	183	199	221	234	233	224	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.5
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	482	484	451	513	520	430	444	1.9	1.9	1.8	2.0	2.0	1.7	1.7
Professional and business services.....	471	467	488	499	594	501	481	2.9	2.8	2.9	3.0	3.5	3.0	2.9
Education and health services.....	570	499	545	551	520	549	540	3.3	2.9	3.2	3.2	3.0	3.2	3.1
Leisure and hospitality.....	305	348	367	364	399	368	387	2.5	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.2	2.9	3.1
Government.....	373	364	346	358	351	350	365	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7
REGION														
Northeast.....	503	488	499	526	541	476	489	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.1	1.9	1.9
South.....	1,046	1,039	1,092	1,154	1,204	1,132	1,098	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.5	2.6	2.4	2.3
Midwest.....	620	581	628	655	666	679	692	2.0	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2
West.....	625	657	636	621	649	586	642	2.2	2.3	2.2	2.1	2.2	2.0	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.

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						
	Feb. 2003	Sept. 2003	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P	Feb. 2003	Sept. 2003	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P
Total⁴	3,991	4,061	4,108	4,135	4,216	4,106	4,064	3.1	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1
INDUSTRY														
Total private ⁴	3,680	3,787	3,815	3,843	3,923	3,800	3,733	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.4
Construction.....	354	405	391	397	404	358	385	5.3	6.0	5.8	5.9	6.0	5.3	5.7
Manufacturing.....	321	336	335	345	340	349	346	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	880	859	880	875	913	957	913	3.5	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.8	3.6
Professional and business services.....	623	606	590	613	650	708	537	3.9	3.8	3.7	3.8	4.0	4.4	3.3
Education and health services.....	435	439	433	436	427	416	439	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.6
Leisure and hospitality.....	666	732	729	776	753	715	752	5.5	6.0	6.0	6.4	6.2	5.9	6.2
Government.....	315	290	269	302	300	295	333	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5
REGION														
Northeast.....	652	705	695	717	792	722	686	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.9	3.2	2.9	2.7
South.....	1,495	1,524	1,500	1,508	1,517	1,585	1,588	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.5
Midwest.....	892	885	905	925	897	921	937	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0
West.....	957	973	969	924	992	883	857	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.5	3.1	3.0

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						
	Feb. 2003	Sept. 2003	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P	Feb. 2003	Sept. 2003	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P
Total⁴	4,081	3,845	3,859	3,797	4,022	3,968	4,019	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.1	3.0	3.1
INDUSTRY														
Total private ⁴	3,829	3,588	3,612	3,543	3,723	3,716	3,756	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5
Construction.....	349	408	365	372	391	436	391	5.2	6.0	5.4	5.5	5.8	6.4	5.8
Manufacturing.....	404	340	332	330	343	323	349	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.4
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	924	821	854	856	968	936	904	3.6	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.8	3.7	3.6
Professional and business services.....	606	524	523	542	575	572	581	3.8	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.6
Education and health services.....	363	399	377	372	330	389	384	2.2	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.0	2.3	2.3
Leisure and hospitality.....	750	657	725	678	723	709	721	6.2	5.4	6.0	5.6	5.9	5.8	5.9
Government.....	259	259	257	259	269	258	268	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
REGION														
Northeast.....	670	660	615	622	687	712	676	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.8	2.9	2.7
South.....	1,557	1,468	1,465	1,438	1,518	1,505	1,469	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.3	3.2
Midwest.....	897	832	859	881	901	903	935	2.9	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	3.0
West.....	954	878	877	858	898	896	930	3.4	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.2	3.2	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						
	Feb. 2003	Sept. 2003	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P	Feb. 2003	Sept. 2003	Oct. 2003	Nov. 2003	Dec. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P
Total⁴	2,121	2,072	2,129	2,104	2,131	2,118	2,166	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.7
INDUSTRY														
Total private ⁴	2,005	1,949	1,995	1,999	2,010	2,002	2,036	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.9
Construction.....	123	151	139	158	171	148	129	1.8	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.5	2.2	1.9
Manufacturing.....	161	142	162	166	178	165	165	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	494	473	482	491	534	530	499	2.0	1.9	1.9	1.9	2.1	2.1	2.0
Professional and business services.....	318	276	266	261	256	261	310	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.9
Education and health services.....	223	252	230	225	212	237	227	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4
Leisure and hospitality.....	456	392	515	463	462	428	450	3.8	3.2	4.2	3.8	3.8	3.5	3.7
Government.....	114	123	135	100	119	116	126	.5	.6	.6	.5	.6	.5	.6
REGION														
Northeast.....	325	295	288	301	315	288	311	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.2
South.....	827	811	840	869	894	852	852	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9
Midwest.....	468	462	464	466	465	513	463	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.7	1.5
West.....	502	504	552	464	436	475	534	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.9

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		
	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P
Total.....	2,714	2,700	2,811	2.1	2.1	2.1
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	2,384	2,374	2,482	2.2	2.2	2.3
Natural resources and mining.....	5	7	5	.9	1.3	.9
Construction.....	75	85	92	1.2	1.3	1.4
Manufacturing.....	187	224	228	1.3	1.6	1.6
Durable goods.....	119	138	150	1.3	1.5	1.7
Nondurable goods.....	68	86	78	1.2	1.6	1.4
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	461	385	406	1.8	1.5	1.6
Wholesale trade.....	84	85	75	1.5	1.5	1.3
Retail trade.....	281	235	259	1.9	1.6	1.7
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	95	65	72	2.0	1.4	1.5
Information.....	62	69	78	1.9	2.1	2.4
Financial activities.....	160	165	169	2.0	2.0	2.1
Finance and insurance.....	121	137	142	2.0	2.3	2.3
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	39	28	27	1.9	1.4	1.3
Professional and business services.....	491	474	487	3.0	2.9	3.0
Education and health services.....	552	534	527	3.2	3.1	3.0
Educational services.....	38	34	41	1.3	1.3	1.4
Health care and social assistance.....	514	500	486	3.6	3.5	3.4
Leisure and hospitality.....	277	324	360	2.3	2.7	3.0
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	27	50	47	1.6	3.1	2.9
Accommodations and food services.....	249	274	313	2.4	2.7	3.0
Other services.....	116	107	130	2.1	2.0	2.4
Government.....	330	326	329	1.5	1.5	1.5
Federal.....	29	41	50	1.0	1.5	1.8
State and local.....	300	285	279	1.5	1.5	1.4
REGION						
Northeast.....	469	420	450	1.9	1.7	1.8
South.....	1,067	1,110	1,095	2.3	2.4	2.4
Midwest.....	573	612	643	1.8	2.0	2.1
West.....	604	558	622	2.1	2.0	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		
	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P
Total	3,307	3,491	3,340	2.6	2.7	2.6
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	3,090	3,234	3,109	2.9	3.0	2.9
Natural resources and mining.....	19	17	18	3.3	3.1	3.2
Construction.....	293	281	316	4.7	4.4	5.0
Manufacturing.....	300	349	324	2.0	2.5	2.3
Durable goods.....	186	237	213	2.0	2.7	2.4
Nondurable goods.....	114	112	111	2.0	2.1	2.1
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	654	681	678	2.6	2.7	2.7
Wholesale trade.....	96	111	110	1.7	2.0	2.0
Retail trade.....	483	448	451	3.3	3.0	3.1
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	76	122	117	1.6	2.6	2.5
Information.....	68	47	65	2.1	1.5	2.1
Financial activities.....	147	128	115	1.9	1.6	1.4
Finance and insurance.....	97	78	75	1.6	1.3	1.3
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	50	49	40	2.5	2.4	2.0
Professional and business services.....	578	659	494	3.7	4.2	3.1
Education and health services.....	367	400	373	2.2	2.4	2.2
Educational services.....	37	47	49	1.3	1.8	1.7
Health care and social assistance.....	330	353	324	2.4	2.5	2.3
Leisure and hospitality.....	530	530	604	4.6	4.6	5.2
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	60	64	80	3.7	4.0	5.0
Accommodations and food services.....	471	466	524	4.7	4.6	5.2
Other services.....	135	143	122	2.5	2.7	2.3
Government.....	217	257	232	1.0	1.2	1.1
Federal.....	23	34	29	.8	1.3	1.1
State and local.....	194	223	203	1.0	1.2	1.1
REGION						
Northeast.....	506	572	514	2.0	2.3	2.1
South.....	1,307	1,409	1,409	2.9	3.1	3.1
Midwest.....	672	743	711	2.2	2.4	2.3
West.....	822	766	706	2.9	2.7	2.5

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		
	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P
Total	3,365	4,030	3,335	2.6	3.1	2.6
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	3,187	3,819	3,149	3.0	3.6	2.9
Natural resources and mining.....	16	16	16	2.8	3.0	2.9
Construction.....	340	426	376	5.5	6.7	5.9
Manufacturing.....	365	325	311	2.5	2.3	2.2
Durable goods.....	233	193	176	2.6	2.2	2.0
Nondurable goods.....	131	132	135	2.4	2.4	2.5
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	788	1,126	767	3.2	4.5	3.1
Wholesale trade.....	108	121	116	1.9	2.2	2.1
Retail trade.....	569	866	533	3.9	5.8	3.6
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	110	140	118	2.3	3.0	2.5
Information.....	68	56	70	2.1	1.8	2.2
Financial activities.....	135	138	142	1.7	1.7	1.8
Finance and insurance.....	82	87	102	1.4	1.5	1.7
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	52	51	40	2.6	2.5	2.0
Professional and business services.....	478	576	465	3.1	3.6	2.9
Education and health services.....	304	398	328	1.8	2.4	1.9
Educational services.....	23	46	29	.8	1.7	1.0
Health care and social assistance.....	281	352	299	2.0	2.5	2.1
Leisure and hospitality.....	526	616	512	4.5	5.3	4.4
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	64	70	56	3.9	4.4	3.5
Accommodations and food services.....	463	547	456	4.6	5.4	4.5
Other services.....	168	143	161	3.1	2.7	3.0
Government.....	178	211	186	.8	1.0	.8
Federal.....	29	36	34	1.0	1.3	1.2
State and local.....	149	175	152	.8	.9	.8
REGION						
Northeast.....	516	689	530	2.1	2.8	2.1
South.....	1,345	1,482	1,265	3.0	3.3	2.8
Midwest.....	720	912	758	2.4	3.0	2.5
West.....	783	948	782	2.8	3.4	2.8

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		
	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P
Total	1,765	1,877	1,808	1.4	1.5	1.4
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	1,677	1,780	1,707	1.6	1.7	1.6
Natural resources and mining.....	6	5	5	1.0	.9	1.0
Construction.....	119	113	119	1.9	1.8	1.9
Manufacturing.....	138	142	140	.9	1.0	1.0
Durable goods.....	84	83	81	.9	.9	.9
Nondurable goods.....	55	58	59	1.0	1.1	1.1
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	420	513	417	1.7	2.0	1.7
Wholesale trade.....	54	60	49	1.0	1.1	.9
Retail trade.....	323	406	310	2.2	2.7	2.1
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	42	47	59	.9	1.0	1.2
Information.....	33	27	42	1.0	.9	1.3
Financial activities.....	84	66	90	1.1	.8	1.1
Finance and insurance.....	47	46	64	.8	.8	1.1
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	37	20	26	1.8	1.0	1.3
Professional and business services.....	237	239	244	1.5	1.5	1.5
Education and health services.....	189	234	192	1.1	1.4	1.1
Educational services.....	11	20	16	.4	.8	.5
Health care and social assistance.....	178	213	176	1.3	1.5	1.3
Leisure and hospitality.....	360	347	358	3.1	3.0	3.1
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	37	18	22	2.3	1.1	1.4
Accommodations and food services.....	324	329	336	3.2	3.3	3.3
Other services.....	93	94	99	1.7	1.8	1.9
Government.....	88	97	101	.4	.5	.5
Federal.....	16	11	19	.6	.4	.7
State and local.....	72	86	81	.4	.5	.4
REGION						
Northeast.....	254	231	245	1.0	.9	1.0
South.....	715	744	731	1.6	1.6	1.6
Midwest.....	373	465	369	1.2	1.5	1.2
West.....	422	436	464	1.5	1.6	1.7

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		
	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P
Total	1,336	1,796	1,282	1.0	1.4	1.0
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	1,282	1,737	1,236	1.2	1.6	1.2
Natural resources and mining.....	6	8	8	1.1	1.4	1.4
Construction.....	210	282	246	3.4	4.4	3.9
Manufacturing.....	187	155	148	1.3	1.1	1.0
Durable goods.....	123	91	80	1.4	1.0	.9
Nondurable goods.....	63	64	67	1.1	1.2	1.3
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	290	534	299	1.2	2.1	1.2
Wholesale trade.....	42	52	57	.8	.9	1.0
Retail trade.....	199	414	196	1.4	2.8	1.3
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	49	68	46	1.0	1.4	1.0
Information.....	32	22	23	1.0	.7	.7
Financial activities.....	35	50	32	.4	.6	.4
Finance and insurance.....	24	20	24	.4	.3	.4
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	11	30	8	.5	1.5	.4
Professional and business services.....	212	300	187	1.4	1.9	1.2
Education and health services.....	93	117	103	.6	.7	.6
Educational services.....	9	21	12	.3	.8	.4
Health care and social assistance.....	84	96	91	.6	.7	.6
Leisure and hospitality.....	151	231	139	1.3	2.0	1.2
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	26	50	33	1.6	3.1	2.0
Accommodations and food services.....	125	181	106	1.3	1.8	1.1
Other services.....	65	36	52	1.2	.7	1.0
Government.....	54	59	46	.2	.3	.2
Federal.....	6	6	7	.2	.2	.3
State and local.....	48	53	39	.3	.3	.2
REGION						
Northeast.....	215	390	237	.9	1.6	1.0
South.....	521	617	434	1.1	1.4	1.0
Midwest.....	287	361	342	.9	1.2	1.1
West.....	313	427	269	1.1	1.5	1.0

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		
	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P	Feb. 2003	Jan. 2004	Feb. 2004 ^P
Total	264	357	245	0.2	0.3	0.2
INDUSTRY						
Total private.....	228	302	207	.2	.3	.2
Natural resources and mining.....	4	4	3	.7	.7	.6
Construction.....	11	30	11	.2	.5	.2
Manufacturing.....	40	28	23	.3	.2	.2
Durable goods.....	27	18	14	.3	.2	.2
Nondurable goods.....	13	9	9	.2	.2	.2
Trade, transportation, and utilities.....	78	80	51	.3	.3	.2
Wholesale trade.....	12	9	11	.2	.2	.2
Retail trade.....	47	46	27	.3	.3	.2
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities.....	19	25	13	.4	.5	.3
Information.....	3	6	4	.1	.2	.1
Financial activities.....	17	22	20	.2	.3	.3
Finance and insurance.....	12	21	14	.2	.4	.2
Real estate and rental and leasing.....	5	1	6	.2	.1	.3
Professional and business services.....	29	36	35	.2	.2	.2
Education and health services.....	22	47	34	.1	.3	.2
Educational services.....	2	4	1	.1	.1	(³)
Health care and social assistance.....	19	43	33	.1	.3	.2
Leisure and hospitality.....	15	38	15	.1	.3	.1
Arts, entertainment, and recreation.....	1	1	1	(³)	.1	.1
Accommodations and food services.....	14	37	14	.1	.4	.1
Other services.....	10	12	10	.2	.2	.2
Government.....	36	55	39	.2	.3	.2
Federal.....	7	18	7	.2	.7	.3
State and local.....	29	36	32	.2	.2	.2
REGION						
Northeast.....	47	67	48	.2	.3	.2
South.....	110	120	100	.2	.3	.2
Midwest.....	59	86	48	.2	.3	.2
West.....	48	84	50	.2	.3	.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.