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USDL 07-1584

For release: 10:00 A.M. EST

Media contact: 691-5902

Thursday, October 18, 2007

USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS: THIRD QUARTER 2007

Median weekly earnings of the nation's 108.3 million full-time wage and salary workers were \$695 in the third quarter of 2007, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. This was 3.0 percent higher than a year earlier, compared with a gain of 2.4 percent in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) over the same period.

Data on usual earnings are collected as part of the Current Population Survey, a nationwide sample survey of households in which respondents are asked, among other things, how much each wage and salary worker usually earns. (See the Technical Note.) Highlights from the third-quarter data are:

- Women who usually worked full time had median earnings of \$616 per week, or 80.3 percent of the \$767 median for men. The female-to-male earnings ratios were higher among Hispanics (90.5 percent) and blacks (86.4 percent) than among whites (80.4 percent) or Asians (77.9 percent). (See table 1.)
- Median earnings for black men working at full-time jobs were \$618 per week, 78.8 percent of the median for white men (\$784). The difference was less among women, as black women's median earnings (\$534) were 84.8 percent of those for their white counterparts (\$630). Overall, median earnings of Hispanics who worked full time (\$502) were lower than those of blacks (\$578), whites (\$713), and Asians (\$842). (See table 1.)
- Among men, those age 45 to 54 and age 55 to 64 had the highest median weekly earnings, \$916 and \$915, respectively. Among women, earnings were highest for those age 45 to 54 (\$686). (See table 2.)
- Among the major occupational groups, persons employed full time in managerial, professional, and related occupations had the highest median weekly earnings—\$1,205 for men and \$868 for women. Men and women in service jobs earned the least. (See table 3.)
- Full-time workers age 25 and over without a high school diploma had median weekly earnings of \$422, compared with \$610 for high school graduates (no college) and \$1,088 for those holding at least a bachelor's degree. Among college graduates with advanced degrees (professional or master's degree and above), the highest earning 10 percent of male workers made \$2,923 or more per week, compared with \$2,120 or more for their female counterparts. (See table 4.)

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides the basic information on the labor force, employment, and unemployment. The survey is conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau from a scientifically selected national sample of about 60,000 households, with coverage in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The earnings data are collected from one-quarter of the CPS monthly sample and are limited to wages and salaries. The data, therefore, exclude self-employment income.

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

Reliability

Statistics based on the CPS 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. There is about 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. BLS analyses are generally conducted at the 90-percent level of confidence.

The CPS data also are affected by *nonsampling error*. Nonsampling error can occur for many reasons, including the failure to sample a segment of the population, inability to obtain information for all respondents in the sample, inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information, and errors made in the collection or processing of the data.

For a full discussion of the reliability of data from the CPS and information on estimating standard errors, see the "Explanatory Notes and Estimates of Error" section of *Employment and Earnings*.

Definitions

The principal definitions used in connection with the earnings series are described briefly below.

Usual weekly earnings. Data represent earnings before taxes and other deductions and include any overtime pay, commissions, or tips usually received (at the main job in the case of multiple jobholders.) Prior to 1994, respondents were asked how much they usually earned per week. Since January 1994, respondents have been asked to identify the easiest way for them to report earnings (hourly, weekly, biweekly, twice monthly, monthly, annually, other) and how much they usually earn in the reported time period. Earnings reported on a basis other than weekly are converted to a weekly equivalent. 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.

Medians (and other quantiles) of weekly earnings. The median (or upper limit of the second quartile) is the amount which divides a given earnings distribution into two equal groups, one having earnings above the median and the other having earnings below the median. Ten percent of a given distribution have earnings below the upper limit of the first decile (90 percent have higher earnings); 25 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the first quartile (75 percent have higher earnings); 75 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the third quartile (25 percent have higher earnings); and 90 percent have earnings below the upper limit of the ninth decile (10 percent have higher earnings).

The estimating procedure places each reported or calculated weekly earnings value into \$50-wide intervals which are centered around multiples of \$50. The actual value is estimated through the linear interpolation of the interval in which the quantile boundary lies.

Over-the-year changes in the medians (and other quantile boundaries) for specific groups may not necessarily be consistent with the movements estimated for the overall quantile boundary. The most common reasons for this possible anomaly are: (1) There could be a change in the relative weights of the subgroups. For example, the medians of both 16-to-24 year olds and those 25 years and over may rise; but if the lower-earning 16-to-24 group accounts for a greatly increased share of the total, the overall median could actually fall. (2) There could be a large change in the shape of the distribution of reported earnings, particularly near a quantile boundary. This could be caused by survey observations that are clustered at rounded values, e.g., \$250, \$300, \$400. An estimate lying in a \$50-wide centered interval containing such a cluster or "spike" tends to change more slowly than one in other intervals.

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 but, for the purposes of the earnings series, excludes all self-employed persons, regardless of whether or not their businesses are incorporated.

Full-time workers. Workers who usually work 35 hours or more per week at their sole or principal job.

Part-time workers. Workers who usually work fewer than 35 hours per week at their sole or principal job.

Constant dollars. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) is used to convert current dollars to constant (1982) dollars.

Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. Refers to persons who identified themselves in the enumeration process as being Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race.

Table 1. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

Characteristic	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings			
	III 2006	III 2007	In current dollars		In constant (1982) dollars	
			III 2006	III 2007	III 2006	III 2007
SEX AND AGE						
Total, 16 years and over	108,169	108,272	\$675	\$695	\$320	\$322
Men, 16 years and over	60,996	61,150	749	767	355	356
16 to 24 years	7,313	7,042	409	430	194	199
25 years and over	53,683	54,108	808	831	383	385
Women, 16 years and over	47,173	47,122	599	616	284	285
16 to 24 years	5,273	5,160	393	398	187	184
25 years and over	41,901	41,963	629	654	299	303
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX						
White	87,956	87,258	692	713	328	331
Men	50,852	50,520	764	784	362	363
Women	37,103	36,738	608	630	289	292
Black or African American	12,857	13,229	555	578	263	268
Men	6,070	6,320	610	618	289	286
Women	6,787	6,909	511	534	243	247
Asian	4,873	5,250	798	842	378	390
Men	2,703	2,939	857	947	407	439
Women	2,170	2,311	728	738	345	342
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	15,886	16,525	485	502	230	233
Men	10,096	10,533	504	518	239	240
Women	5,790	5,993	440	469	209	217

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Beginning in January 2007, data reflect revised population controls used in the household survey.

Table 2. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by age, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex, third quarter 2007 averages, not seasonally adjusted

Age, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total		Men		Women	
	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings	Number of workers (in thousands)	Median weekly earnings
TOTAL						
16 years and over	108,272	\$695	61,150	\$767	47,122	\$616
16 to 24 years	12,201	415	7,042	430	5,160	398
16 to 19 years	2,150	331	1,371	336	780	324
20 to 24 years	10,051	439	5,671	466	4,380	414
25 years and over	96,071	745	54,108	831	41,963	654
25 to 54 years	79,389	741	44,983	822	34,406	654
25 to 34 years	26,162	649	15,208	687	10,954	605
35 to 44 years	26,753	782	15,434	887	11,318	677
45 to 54 years	26,475	804	14,340	916	12,134	686
55 years and over	16,682	766	9,125	879	7,556	653
55 to 64 years	14,305	790	7,711	915	6,594	669
65 years and over	2,377	599	1,414	656	962	540
White						
16 years and over	87,258	713	50,520	784	36,738	630
16 to 24 years	10,035	421	5,920	437	4,116	404
25 years and over	77,222	764	44,600	851	32,622	671
25 to 54 years	63,249	758	36,788	839	26,460	671
55 years and over	13,974	792	7,812	911	6,162	672
Black or African American						
16 years and over	13,229	578	6,320	618	6,909	534
16 to 24 years	1,407	382	716	399	690	363
25 years and over	11,823	607	5,604	656	6,219	572
25 to 54 years	10,087	608	4,816	655	5,272	572
55 years and over	1,735	603	789	658	947	574
Asian						
16 years and over	5,250	842	2,939	947	2,311	738
16 to 24 years	335	514	182	572	154	505
25 years and over	4,915	875	2,758	974	2,158	755
25 to 54 years	4,183	904	2,351	1,014	1,832	778
55 years and over	732	702	407	758	325	535
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
16 years and over	16,525	502	10,533	518	5,993	469
16 to 24 years	2,462	388	1,571	400	890	362
25 years and over	14,064	530	8,961	559	5,103	497
25 to 54 years	12,574	528	8,038	555	4,536	497
55 years and over	1,490	545	923	590	567	498

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Beginning in January 2007, data reflect revised population controls used in the household survey.

Table 3. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by occupation and sex, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

Occupation and sex	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings	
	III 2006	III 2007	III 2006	III 2007
TOTAL				
Management, professional, and related occupations	37,876	38,843	\$974	\$1,011
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	15,319	15,848	1,046	1,114
Professional and related occupations	22,557	22,995	935	958
Service occupations	15,413	15,296	423	445
Sales and office occupations	26,206	25,844	592	602
Sales and related occupations	10,657	10,473	627	640
Office and administrative support occupations	15,549	15,371	580	587
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	13,104	12,678	663	659
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	881	825	371	372
Construction and extraction occupations	7,331	7,304	637	631
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	4,892	4,549	743	745
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	15,571	15,611	569	584
Production occupations	8,491	8,399	578	585
Transportation and material moving occupations	7,079	7,212	558	584
Men				
Management, professional, and related occupations	18,612	19,325	1,147	1,205
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	8,270	8,448	1,209	1,328
Professional and related occupations	10,342	10,877	1,104	1,151
Service occupations	7,566	7,612	494	503
Sales and office occupations	10,117	9,769	718	710
Sales and related occupations	5,924	5,767	770	784
Office and administrative support occupations	4,193	4,002	635	624
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	12,516	12,187	672	663
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	713	663	384	379
Construction and extraction occupations	7,157	7,126	642	633
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	4,647	4,398	745	744
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	12,185	12,257	615	622
Production occupations	5,994	6,013	659	643
Transportation and material moving occupations	6,191	6,245	587	608
Women				
Management, professional, and related occupations	19,264	19,518	856	868
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	7,049	7,400	905	923
Professional and related occupations	12,215	12,118	827	835
Service occupations	7,847	7,684	391	408
Sales and office occupations	16,089	16,075	541	562
Sales and related occupations	4,733	4,706	484	507
Office and administrative support occupations	11,355	11,370	563	577
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	588	490	518	526
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	169	162	319	353
Construction and extraction occupations	174	178	527	560
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	245	150	725	773
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	3,386	3,354	432	437
Production occupations	2,498	2,387	441	443
Transportation and material moving occupations	888	967	414	426

NOTE: Beginning in January 2007, data reflect revised population controls used in the household survey.

Table 4. Quartiles and selected deciles of usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, third quarter 2007 averages, not seasonally adjusted

Characteristic	Number of workers (in thousands)	Upper limit of:				
		First decile	First quartile	Second quartile (median)	Third quartile	Ninth decile
SEX, RACE, AND HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY						
Total, 16 years and over	108,272	\$329	\$462	\$695	\$1,082	\$1,603
Men	61,150	355	500	767	1,194	1,832
Women	47,122	309	418	616	919	1,367
White	87,258	335	474	713	1,115	1,647
Men	50,520	362	509	784	1,220	1,876
Women	36,738	312	425	630	939	1,397
Black or African American	13,229	304	403	578	858	1,241
Men	6,320	314	421	618	938	1,393
Women	6,909	296	389	534	781	1,129
Asian	5,250	369	516	842	1,331	1,888
Men	2,939	399	603	947	1,526	2,017
Women	2,311	340	467	738	1,123	1,541
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	16,525	290	362	502	740	1,174
Men	10,533	300	380	518	781	1,248
Women	5,993	275	336	469	680	1,082
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
Total, 25 years and over	96,071	358	498	745	1,143	1,674
Less than a high school diploma	8,387	280	325	422	597	841
High school graduates, no college ¹	27,621	326	430	610	861	1,203
Some college or associate degree	26,662	378	503	707	999	1,396
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	33,400	520	746	1,088	1,587	2,300
Bachelor's degree only	21,680	489	690	993	1,474	2,088
Advanced degree	11,720	631	877	1,254	1,878	2,623
Men, 25 years and over	54,108	389	552	831	1,274	1,889
Less than a high school diploma	5,833	291	351	472	648	928
High school graduates, no college ¹	16,290	373	496	697	977	1,380
Some college or associate degree	13,912	418	583	816	1,141	1,517
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	18,074	587	836	1,250	1,869	2,556
Bachelor's degree only	11,808	531	766	1,141	1,657	2,340
Advanced degree	6,266	696	987	1,475	2,081	2,923
Women, 25 years and over	41,963	328	450	654	965	1,423
Less than a high school diploma	2,555	248	298	368	482	609
High school graduates, no college ¹	11,331	295	385	512	694	918
Some college or associate degree	12,750	344	454	612	843	1,169
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	15,326	482	679	938	1,334	1,885
Bachelor's degree only	9,872	448	630	868	1,223	1,715
Advanced degree	5,454	589	804	1,080	1,487	2,120

¹ Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent.

² Includes persons with bachelor's, master's, professional, and doctoral degrees.

NOTE: Ten percent of all full-time wage and salary workers earn less than the upper limit of the first decile; 25 percent earn less than the upper limit of the first quartile; 50 percent earn less than the upper limit of the second quartile, or median; 75 percent earn less than the upper limit of the

third quartile; and 90 percent earn less than the upper limit of the ninth decile. Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Beginning in January 2007, data reflect revised population controls used in the household survey.

Table 5. Median usual weekly earnings of part-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted

Characteristic	Number of workers (in thousands)		Median weekly earnings	
	III 2006	III 2007	III 2006	III 2007
SEX AND AGE				
Total, 16 years and over	20,659	21,707	\$211	\$218
Men, 16 years and over	6,579	6,855	198	213
16 to 24 years	3,352	3,279	161	174
25 years and over	3,228	3,577	259	268
Women, 16 years and over	14,079	14,851	218	221
16 to 24 years	4,365	4,529	160	164
25 years and over	9,715	10,323	256	262
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX				
White	17,318	18,190	213	221
Men	5,337	5,543	199	214
Women	11,981	12,646	221	224
Black or African American	2,032	2,039	202	200
Men	767	768	200	201
Women	1,266	1,271	203	198
Asian	796	902	216	233
Men	287	347	192	251
Women	509	555	228	222
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	2,220	2,377	200	208
Men	733	786	202	202
Women	1,487	1,591	200	210

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Beginning in January 2007, data reflect revised population controls used in the household survey.