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WORK EXPERIENCE OF THE POPULATION – 2010

A total of 152.3 million persons worked at some point during 2010, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The proportion of the civilian noninstitutional population age 16 and over who worked at some time during 2010 was 63.7 percent, down from 64.9 percent in 2009. The number of persons who experienced some unemployment during 2010 decreased by 894,000 to 25.2 million.

These data are based on information collected in the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) to the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The ASEC collects information on employment and unemployment experienced during the prior calendar year. Additional information about the CPS and the ASEC, including concepts and definitions, is provided in the Technical Note.

Highlights from the 2010 data:

- The proportion of workers who worked full time, year round in 2010 was 64.7 percent, up from 64.0 percent in 2009. (See table 1.)
- The "work-experience unemployment rate"—defined as the number of persons unemployed at some time during the year as a proportion of the number of persons who worked or looked for work during the year—was 15.9 percent in 2010, down from 16.4 percent in 2009. (See table 3.)
- The number of individuals who looked for a job but did not work at all during 2010 rose by 715,000 over the year to 6.6 million. (See table 3.)

Persons with Employment

The percent of men who worked during 2010 was 69.3 percent, down from 70.6 percent in 2009. The proportion of women who worked at some point during 2010 was 58.5 percent, down from 59.6 percent in the prior year. (See table 1.)

The proportions of whites (64.7 percent) and Hispanics (63.5 percent) who worked at some time during the year declined from 2009 to 2010, while the share of blacks (58.2 percent) and Asians (64.1 percent) were about unchanged. (See table 2.)

Of those employed at some time during 2010, 78.2 percent usually worked full time, little changed from 78.3 percent in 2009. Men were more likely to work full time during the year (84.3 percent) than were

women (71.5 percent). In 2010, the proportion of employed men and women working full time showed little or no change. (See table 1.)

Of the total who worked during 2010, 75.9 percent were employed year round (working 50 to 52 weeks, either full or part time), compared with 75.3 percent in 2009. The percentage of men employed year round rose by 1.1 percentage points to 76.7 percent in 2010, and the percentage of women working year round was nearly unchanged at 75.0 percent.

Persons with Unemployment

About 158.9 million persons worked or looked for work at some time in 2010. Of those, 25.2 million experienced some unemployment during the year, down slightly from 26.1 million in 2009. (See table 3.)

At 15.9 percent in 2010, the "work-experience unemployment rate" (those looking for work during the year as a percent of those who worked or looked for work during the year) was 0.5 percentage point lower than in 2009. The 2009 rate (16.4 percent) was the highest since 1985. The rate for whites (15.0 percent) declined from 2009 to 2010, while the rates for blacks (22.5 percent), Hispanics (20.5 percent), and Asians (12.9 percent) were little changed. (See tables 3 and 4.)

Overall, men continued to have higher "work-experience unemployment rates" in 2010 than women, 17.7 versus 13.8 percent. Among whites, the rate for men (16.8 percent) was higher than that for women (12.8 percent). This also was the case for men and women among blacks (25.9 and 19.5 percent, respectively) and Hispanics (22.4 and 18.0 percent, respectively). The rates for Asian men and women were the same (12.9 percent).

Among those who experienced unemployment in 2010, the median number of weeks spent looking for work was 19.9, little changed from 19.7 in 2009. The number of persons who looked for a job but did not work at all in 2010 rose by 715,000 to about 6.6 million. Of the 18.7 million individuals who worked during 2010 and also experienced unemployment, 20.7 percent had 2 or more spells of joblessness, nearly the same as in 2009 (20.5 percent).

Technical Note

The data presented in this release were collected in the Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly sample survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data from the CPS are used to obtain the monthly estimates of the nation's employment and unemployment levels. The supplement, conducted in the months of February through April, includes questions about work activity during the prior calendar year. For instance, data collected in 2011 refer to the 2010 calendar year. Because the reference period is a full year, the number of persons with some employment or unemployment greatly exceeds the average levels for any given month, which are based on a 1-week reference period, and the corresponding annual average of the monthly estimates. As shown below, for example, the number experiencing any unemployment during 2010 was over twice the number unemployed in an average month during the year.

	Employed	Unemployed
2010 estimates (in thousands)		
Annual average of monthly estimates	139,064	14,825
Annual supplement data	152,320	25,241

In addition, estimates from the supplement differ from those obtained in the basic CPS because the questions used to classify workers as either employed or unemployed are different. More important, perhaps, is that fewer questions by which to categorize respondents are asked in the supplement. In regard to unemployment in particular, the supplement has no questions on the type of job search activity or on the respondent's availability to work. Also, individuals can be counted as both employed and unemployed in the work experience data, whereas, for a specific reference week, each person is only counted in one category and employment activity takes precedence over job search activity.

Work experience data for 2010, which were collected in the 2011 Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the CPS, are not strictly comparable with data for 2009 and earlier years because of the introduction in January 2011 of revised population controls used in the CPS. The effect of the revised population controls on the work experience estimates is unknown. However, the effect of the new January 2011 controls on the monthly CPS estimates was to decrease the December 2010 employment level by 472,000 and the unemployment level by 32,000. Additional information is available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#pop.

Reliability of the estimates

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.

A full discussion of the reliability of data from the CPS and information on estimating standard errors is available at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#reliability.

Concepts and definitions

Persons who worked. In the 2011 supplement, persons are considered to have worked if they responded "yes" to either the question "Did you work at a job or business at any time during 2010?" or "Did you do any temporary, part-time, or seasonal work even for a few days during 2010?"

Unemployed persons. Persons who worked during the year but not in every week are counted as unemployed if they also reported looking for work or being on layoff from a job during the year. Those who reported no work activity during the year are considered unemployed if they responded "yes" to the question "Even though you did not work in 2010, did you spend any time trying to find a job or on layoff?"

Labor force participants. Persons who either worked or were unemployed during the year.

Usual full- and part-time employment. These data refer to the number of hours a worker typically works during most weeks of the year. Workers are classified as full time if they usually worked 35 hours or more in a week; part-time employment refers to workers whose typical workweek was between 1 and 34 hours.

Year-round and part-year employment. Workers are classified as year round if they worked 50 to 52 weeks. Part-year employment refers to workers who worked fewer than 50 weeks.

Other information

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Work experience of the population during the year by sex and extent of employment, 2009-10

Extent of employment	Total		Men		Women	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
Numbers (in thousands)						
Civilian noninstitutional population	237,158	238,999	114,820	115,986	122,339	123,012
Total who worked or looked for work	159,776	158,882	84,396	84,000	75,380	74,882
Percent of the population	67.4	66.5	73.5	72.4	61.6	60.9
Total who worked during the year ¹	153,929	152,320	81,073	80,341	72,855	71,980
Percent of the population	64.9	63.7	70.6	69.3	59.6	58.5
Full time ²	120,538	119,145	68,436	67,693	52,101	51,452
50 to 52 weeks	98,519	98,490	55,341	55,738	43,178	42,752
48 to 49 weeks	1,903	1,800	1,172	1,084	731	715
40 to 47 weeks	5,428	5,392	3,153	3,052	2,275	2,340
27 to 39 weeks	5,006	4,498	3,002	2,609	2,004	1,888
14 to 26 weeks	5,717	5,287	3,378	3,103	2,339	2,184
1 to 13 weeks	3,964	3,680	2,389	2,106	1,574	1,574
Part time ³	33,391	33,175	12,637	12,648	20,754	20,528
50 to 52 weeks	17,405	17,113	5,904	5,874	11,502	11,239
48 to 49 weeks	811	780	253	257	558	523
40 to 47 weeks	2,706	2,941	1,023	1,079	1,682	1,863
27 to 39 weeks	3,153	2,856	1,246	1,183	1,907	1,673
14 to 26 weeks	4,627	4,753	2,042	2,141	2,585	2,611
1 to 13 weeks	4,689	4,732	2,169	2,113	2,520	2,619
Percent distribution						
Total who worked during the year ¹	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full time ²	78.3	78.2	84.4	84.3	71.5	71.5
50 to 52 weeks	64.0	64.7	68.3	69.4	59.3	59.4
48 to 49 weeks	1.2	1.2	1.4	1.3	1.0	1.0
40 to 47 weeks	3.5	3.5	3.9	3.8	3.1	3.3
27 to 39 weeks	3.3	3.0	3.7	3.2	2.8	2.6
14 to 26 weeks	3.7	3.5	4.2	3.9	3.2	3.0
1 to 13 weeks	2.6	2.4	2.9	2.6	2.2	2.2
Part time ³	21.7	21.8	15.6	15.7	28.5	28.5
50 to 52 weeks	11.3	11.2	7.3	7.3	15.8	15.6
48 to 49 weeks	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.8	0.7
40 to 47 weeks	1.8	1.9	1.3	1.3	2.3	2.6
27 to 39 weeks	2.0	1.9	1.5	1.5	2.6	2.3
14 to 26 weeks	3.0	3.1	2.5	2.7	3.5	3.6
1 to 13 weeks	3.0	3.1	2.7	2.6	3.5	3.6

¹ Time worked includes paid vacation and sick leave.

² Usually worked 35 hours or more per week.

³ Usually worked 1 to 34 hours per week.

NOTE: Data refer to persons 16 years and over. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 2. Work experience of the population during the year by race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex, 2009-10

(Numbers in thousands)

Extent of employment, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total		Men		Women	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
WHITE						
Civilian noninstitutional population	191,727	192,792	93,927	94,689	97,800	98,103
Total who worked or looked for work	130,189	129,249	70,042	69,593	60,147	59,656
Percent of the population	67.9	67.0	74.6	73.5	61.5	60.8
Total who worked during the year ¹	126,236	124,651	67,731	66,984	58,504	57,667
Percent of the population	65.8	64.7	72.1	70.7	59.8	58.8
Percent who worked during the year ¹	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full time ²	77.8	77.9	84.4	84.5	70.3	70.2
50 to 52 weeks	63.7	64.5	68.3	69.6	58.4	58.6
27 to 49 weeks	8.1	7.7	9.2	8.5	6.8	6.7
1 to 26 weeks	6.1	5.7	7.0	6.4	5.1	4.9
Part time ³	22.2	22.1	15.6	15.5	29.7	29.8
50 to 52 weeks	11.6	11.5	7.3	7.3	16.5	16.4
27 to 49 weeks	4.5	4.5	3.2	3.1	6.0	6.0
1 to 26 weeks	6.1	6.1	5.1	5.1	7.2	7.3
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN						
Civilian noninstitutional population	28,590	29,004	12,879	13,108	15,711	15,896
Total who worked or looked for work	18,250	18,263	8,421	8,466	9,829	9,797
Percent of the population	63.8	63.0	65.4	64.6	62.6	61.6
Total who worked during the year ¹	16,804	16,868	7,641	7,708	9,163	9,160
Percent of the population	58.8	58.2	59.3	58.8	58.3	57.6
Percent who worked during the year ¹	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full time ²	80.5	79.6	83.4	82.0	78.0	77.6
50 to 52 weeks	65.1	64.5	66.3	66.0	64.1	63.2
27 to 49 weeks	7.9	8.3	8.7	8.6	7.3	8.0
1 to 26 weeks	7.5	6.8	8.4	7.4	6.7	6.3
Part time ³	19.5	20.4	16.6	18.0	22.0	22.4
50 to 52 weeks	9.9	9.5	7.4	7.3	12.0	11.4
27 to 49 weeks	3.4	3.4	2.9	3.2	3.8	3.6
1 to 26 weeks	6.2	7.4	6.3	7.5	6.1	7.4
ASIAN						
Civilian noninstitutional population	11,033	11,320	5,192	5,325	5,841	5,995
Total who worked or looked for work	7,430	7,569	3,935	3,955	3,495	3,614
Percent of the population	67.3	66.9	75.8	74.3	59.8	60.3
Total who worked during the year ¹	7,194	7,253	3,822	3,811	3,372	3,442
Percent of the population	65.2	64.1	73.6	71.6	57.7	57.4
Percent who worked during the year ¹	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full time ²	82.7	81.7	87.7	87.2	77.1	75.7
50 to 52 weeks	70.8	70.7	75.8	76.4	65.0	64.4
27 to 49 weeks	6.0	5.7	5.9	5.9	6.2	5.5
1 to 26 weeks	5.9	5.4	6.0	5.0	5.9	5.8
Part time ³	17.3	18.3	12.3	12.8	22.9	24.3
50 to 52 weeks	9.8	10.1	7.0	6.6	13.0	14.1
27 to 49 weeks	3.2	3.6	1.9	2.6	4.8	4.7
1 to 26 weeks	4.2	4.5	3.4	3.6	5.2	5.5

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Work experience of the population during the year by race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex, 2009-10 — Continued

(Numbers in thousands)

Extent of employment, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total		Men		Women	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY						
Civilian noninstitutional population	33,413	34,155	17,200	17,602	16,213	16,552
Total who worked or looked for work	22,668	22,825	13,268	13,301	9,400	9,524
Percent of the population	67.8	66.8	77.1	75.6	58.0	57.5
Total who worked during the year ¹	21,723	21,686	12,724	12,663	9,000	9,023
Percent of the population	65.0	63.5	74.0	71.9	55.5	54.5
Percent who worked during the year ¹	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full time ²	78.5	78.9	83.5	84.0	71.5	71.8
50 to 52 weeks	61.2	62.2	63.8	65.7	57.6	57.2
27 to 49 weeks	9.6	9.8	11.2	11.0	7.3	8.1
1 to 26 weeks	7.6	7.0	8.4	7.3	6.5	6.5
Part time ³	21.5	21.1	16.5	16.0	28.5	28.2
50 to 52 weeks	11.7	11.2	8.3	8.0	16.5	15.8
27 to 49 weeks	4.3	4.1	3.7	3.4	5.1	5.0
1 to 26 weeks	5.6	5.8	4.6	4.6	7.0	7.4

¹ Time worked includes paid vacation and sick leave.

² Usually worked 35 hours or more per week.

³ Usually worked 1 to 34 hours per week.

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African

American, and Asian) do not sum to totals shown in table 1 because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 3. Extent of unemployment during the year by sex, 2009-10

Extent of unemployment	Total		Men		Women	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
Numbers (in thousands)						
Total who worked or looked for work	159,776	158,882	84,396	84,000	75,380	74,882
Percent with unemployment	16.4	15.9	18.8	17.7	13.6	13.8
Total with unemployment	26,135	25,241	15,864	14,880	10,271	10,360
Did not work but looked for work	5,847	6,562	3,323	3,659	2,525	2,903
1 to 14 weeks	1,231	1,351	572	634	658	717
15 weeks or more	4,617	5,211	2,750	3,025	1,866	2,186
Worked during the year	20,288	18,679	12,542	11,221	7,746	7,458
Year-round workers ¹ with 1 or 2 weeks of unemployment	693	591	458	379	235	211
Part-year workers ² with unemployment	19,595	18,088	12,083	10,842	7,512	7,246
1 to 4 weeks	2,526	2,259	1,466	1,178	1,060	1,081
5 to 10 weeks	2,560	2,393	1,592	1,419	968	974
11 to 14 weeks	2,414	2,299	1,557	1,438	857	861
15 to 26 weeks	5,693	5,113	3,559	3,231	2,134	1,882
27 weeks or more	6,402	6,024	3,908	3,577	2,494	2,447
Median weeks of unemployment for all workers	19.7	19.9	19.7	20.1	19.5	19.5
With 2 spells or more of unemployment	4,149	3,872	2,862	2,620	1,287	1,252
2 spells	1,915	1,786	1,297	1,129	619	657
3 spells or more	2,234	2,086	1,565	1,491	668	595
Percent distribution						
Did not work but looked for work	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1 to 14 weeks	21.0	20.6	17.2	17.3	26.1	24.7
15 weeks or more	79.0	79.4	82.8	82.7	73.9	75.3
Worked during the year	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Year-round workers ¹ with 1 or 2 weeks of unemployment	3.4	3.2	3.7	3.4	3.0	2.8
Part-year workers ² with unemployment	96.6	96.8	96.3	96.6	97.0	97.2
1 to 4 weeks	12.5	12.1	11.7	10.5	13.7	14.5
5 to 10 weeks	12.6	12.8	12.7	12.6	12.5	13.1
11 to 14 weeks	11.9	12.3	12.4	12.8	11.1	11.5
15 to 26 weeks	28.1	27.4	28.4	28.8	27.5	25.2
27 weeks or more	31.6	32.3	31.2	31.9	32.2	32.8
With 2 spells or more of unemployment	20.5	20.7	22.8	23.3	16.6	16.8
2 spells	9.4	9.6	10.3	10.1	8.0	8.8
3 spells or more	11.0	11.2	12.5	13.3	8.6	8.0

¹ Worked 50 or 51 weeks.

² Worked less than 50 weeks.

NOTE: Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 4. Extent of unemployment during the year by race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex, 2009-10

(Numbers in thousands)

Extent of unemployment, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total		Men		Women	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
WHITE						
Total who worked or looked for work	130,189	129,249	70,042	69,593	60,147	59,656
Percent with unemployment	15.5	15.0	18.1	16.8	12.6	12.8
Total with unemployment	20,231	19,329	12,669	11,687	7,562	7,643
Did not work but looked for work	3,954	4,598	2,311	2,609	1,643	1,989
Worked during the year	16,277	14,732	10,358	9,078	5,920	5,654
Median weeks of unemployment for all workers	19.1	19.2	19.2	19.6	19.0	18.5
Percent who worked during the year ¹	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Year-round workers ² with 1 or 2 weeks of unemployment	3.4	3.4	3.6	3.6	3.0	3.1
Part-year workers ³ with unemployment	96.6	96.6	96.4	96.4	97.0	96.9
1 to 4 weeks	12.8	12.0	11.8	10.2	14.5	14.9
5 to 14 weeks	25.3	26.3	26.0	26.6	24.0	25.7
15 weeks or more	58.6	58.3	58.6	59.6	58.5	56.3
With 2 spells or more of unemployment	21.5	21.5	23.9	23.7	17.3	17.9
BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN						
Total who worked or looked for work	18,250	18,263	8,421	8,466	9,829	9,797
Percent with unemployment	22.4	22.5	26.1	25.9	19.1	19.5
Total with unemployment	4,082	4,105	2,201	2,192	1,881	1,913
Did not work but looked for work	1,446	1,395	780	758	666	637
Worked during the year	2,636	2,710	1,421	1,434	1,215	1,276
Median weeks of unemployment for all workers	22.8	22.9	23.6	22.3	22.1	23.6
Percent who worked during the year ¹	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Year-round workers ² with 1 or 2 weeks of unemployment	3.3	1.8	3.8	2.0	2.7	1.6
Part-year workers ³ with unemployment	96.7	98.2	96.2	98.0	97.3	98.4
1 to 4 weeks	9.9	11.7	11.1	11.4	8.5	12.2
5 to 14 weeks	19.9	19.9	18.8	20.0	21.2	19.8
15 weeks or more	66.9	66.5	66.3	66.6	67.6	66.4
With 2 spells or more of unemployment	14.7	17.2	16.8	20.7	12.1	13.2
ASIAN						
Total who worked or looked for work	7,430	7,569	3,935	3,955	3,495	3,614
Percent with unemployment	12.6	12.9	12.4	12.9	12.8	12.9
Total with unemployment	937	973	489	509	448	465
Did not work but looked for work	236	316	114	144	123	172
Worked during the year	701	657	376	364	325	293
Median weeks of unemployment for all workers	19.9	21.3	21.3	21.7	18.9	20.8
Percent who worked during the year ¹	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Year-round workers ² with 1 or 2 weeks of unemployment	7.0	3.0	8.0	3.6	5.8	2.3
Part-year workers ³ with unemployment	93.0	97.0	92.0	96.4	94.2	97.7
1 to 4 weeks	13.6	14.6	10.9	15.3	16.7	13.9
5 to 14 weeks	22.8	20.6	24.6	19.5	20.7	21.9
15 weeks or more	56.6	61.8	56.5	61.6	56.8	61.9
With 2 spells or more of unemployment	15.3	14.0	15.3	16.9	15.2	10.5

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 4. Extent of unemployment during the year by race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex, 2009-10 — Continued

(Numbers in thousands)

Extent of unemployment, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total		Men		Women	
	2009	2010	2009	2010	2009	2010
HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY						
Total who worked or looked for work	22,668	22,825	13,268	13,301	9,400	9,524
Percent with unemployment	20.9	20.5	23.7	22.4	16.9	18.0
Total with unemployment	4,729	4,686	3,140	2,974	1,589	1,712
Did not work but looked for work	944	1,138	544	638	400	500
Worked during the year	3,784	3,548	2,595	2,336	1,189	1,212
Median weeks of unemployment for all workers	20.0	20.0	19.4	19.9	21.6	20.2
Percent who worked during the year ¹	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Year-round workers ² with 1 or 2 weeks of unemployment	1.5	2.3	1.4	2.3	1.7	2.1
Part-year workers ³ with unemployment	98.5	97.7	98.6	97.7	98.3	97.9
1 to 4 weeks	12.4	10.7	12.3	8.9	12.6	14.0
5 to 14 weeks	25.5	26.5	26.8	27.8	22.6	24.1
15 weeks or more	60.6	60.5	59.5	60.9	63.1	59.8
With 2 spells or more of unemployment	24.1	24.0	27.7	26.7	16.2	18.8

¹ Time worked includes paid vacation and sick leave.

² Worked 50 or 51 weeks.

³ Worked less than 50 weeks.

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African

American, and Asian) do not sum to totals shown in table 3 because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.