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Labor Day 2009: Sept. 7

The first observance of Labor Day is believed to have been a parade of 10,000 workers on Sept. 5, 1882, in New York City, organized by Peter J. McGuire, a Carpenters and Joiners Union secretary. By 1893, more than half the states were observing a “Labor Day” on one day or another, and Congress passed a bill to establish a federal holiday in 1894. President Grover Cleveland signed the bill soon afterward, designating the first Monday in September as Labor Day.

Who Are We Celebrating?

155.1 million

Number of people 16 and older in the nation’s labor force in May 2009.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics <<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/empisit.pdf>>

Employee Benefits

83%

Percentage of full-time workers 18 to 64 covered by health insurance during all or part of 2007.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2007
<http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/012528.html>

77%

Percentage of workers in private industry who receive a paid vacation as one of their employment benefits.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009, Table 634
<<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>>

Our Jobs

Americans work in a variety of occupations. Here is a sampling:

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Number of employees</u>
Teachers	7.2 million
Chief executives	1.7 million
Janitors and building cleaners	2.1 million
Computer software engineers	1.0 million
Aerospace engineers	137,000
Electricians	874,000
Registered nurses	2.8 million
Social workers	729,000
Clergy	441,000
Hairdressers, hairstylists and cosmetologists	773,000
Chefs and head cooks	351,000
Customer service representatives	1.9 million
Taxi drivers and chauffeurs	373,000
Firefighters	293,000
Roofers	234,000
Pharmacists	243,000
Machinists	409,000
Musicians, singers and related workers	186,000
Artists and related workers	213,000
Gaming services workers (gambling)	111,000
Tax preparers	105,000
Service station attendants	87,000
Inspectors, testers, sorters, samplers and weighers	751,000
Welding, soldering and brazing workers	598,000
Farmers and ranchers	751,000

Source: Upcoming Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2010, Table 603
<<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>>

7.7 million

Number of workers who hold down more than one job. So-called moonlighters comprise 5 percent of the working population. Of these, 4 million work full time at their primary job and part time at their other job.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009, Table 589
<<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>>

288,000

When do they sleep? Number of moonlighters who work full time at two jobs.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009, Table 589

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>

10.4 million

Number of self-employed workers.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009, Table 585

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>

22.5 million

Number of female workers 16 and older in educational services, and health care and social assistance industries. Among male workers 16 and older, 11.3 million were employed in manufacturing industries.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey

<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>

28%

Percentage of workers 16 and older who work more than 40 hours a week. Eight percent work 60 or more hours a week.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009, Table 582

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>

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Median number of years workers have been with their current employer. About 9 percent of those employed have been with their current employer for 20 or more years.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009, Table 591

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>

10.3 million

Number of independent contractors.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009, Table 588

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>

15.7 million

Number of labor union members nationwide. About 12 percent of wage and salary workers belong to unions, with Alaska, Hawaii and New York having among the highest rates of any state. North Carolina has one of the lowest rates, 3 percent.

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009, Table 644

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>

-10.8%

Percentage decline in employment in Elkhart County, Ind., between September 2007 and September 2008, the largest percentage decline among the nation's 334 largest counties. Maricopa, Ariz., posted the largest numerical job loss over the period: 67,100.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics <<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cewqtr.pdf>>

3.2%

Percentage increase in employment in Yakima County, Wash., between September 2007 and September 2008, the largest percentage increase among the nation's 334 largest counties. Harris, Texas, posted the largest numerical job gain over the period: 26,500.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics <<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cewqtr.pdf>>

5.7 million

The number of people who work at home.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey <<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

Another Day, Another Dollar

\$45,113 and \$35,102

The 2007 annual median earnings for male and female full-time, year-round workers, respectively.

Source: Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2007 <http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/income_wealth/012528.html>

\$1,552

Average weekly wage in New York County (Manhattan), N.Y., for the third quarter of 2008, the highest among the nation's 334 largest counties. Rutherford, Tenn., led the nation in growth of average weekly wages the third quarters of 2007 to 2008, with an increase of 17 percent (\$124).

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics <<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cewqtr.pdf>>

Hot Jobs

53%

Projected percentage growth from 2006 to 2016 in the number of network systems and data communication analysts. Forecasters expect this occupation to grow at a faster rate than any other. Meanwhile, the occupation expected to add more positions over this period than any other is registered nurses (587,000).

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2009, Table 598 <<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>>

Early, Lonely and Long — the Commute to Work

17 million

Number of commuters who leave for work between midnight and 5:59 a.m. These early birds represent 13 percent of all commuters.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey <<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

76%

Percentage of workers who drive alone to work. Another 10 percent carpool, and 5 percent take public transportation (excluding taxicabs).

Source: 2007 American Community Survey

<<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

31.5 minutes

The average time it takes to commute to work for residents of New York state. New York residents had the most time-consuming commute in the nation, followed by that of Maryland residents with 31.1 minutes. The national average was 25.3 minutes.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey

<<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

3.4 million

Number of workers who face extreme commutes to work of 90 or more minutes each day.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey

<<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

52%

Percentage of workers 16 and older living in Virginia who worked and lived in different counties, the highest rate in the nation.

Source: 2007 American Community Survey

<<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>>

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)

Super Bowl

Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)

Women's History Month (March)

Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/

St. Patrick's Day (March 17)

Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)

Older Americans Month (May)

Cinco de Mayo (May 5)

Mother's Day

Father's Day

The Fourth of July (July 4)

Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)

Back to School (August)

Labor Day

Grandparents Day

Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)

Unmarried and Single Americans Week

Halloween (Oct. 31)

American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month
(November)

Veterans Day (Nov. 11)

Thanksgiving Day

The Holiday Season (December)

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030; fax: 301-763-3762; or e-mail: <pio@census.gov>.