



U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

Your Compensation Companion: A Practical Guide to BLS Data



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More information for respondents is located at
www.bls.gov/respondents

Your Participation Counts!

Without your participation, BLS survey data would not accurately reflect the economic conditions of our country.

You matter!

The gold-standard quality of the data produced by the BLS is a direct reflection of the number and diversity of businesses included—no business is too small. In fact, the majority of all businesses have less than five employees.

You speak for others.

Your business, chosen randomly to participate, actually represents many others. By participating, you make sure that businesses like yours are represented. BLS carefully designs its surveys to minimize costs by keeping sample sizes small—so every firm is critical to survey accuracy.

You make a difference.

The information you provide is your voice in the statistics that are used to evaluate and guide the actions of decision makers; by participating, you are helping your community and the nation.

Our surveys provide the public— individuals, businesses, and policymakers—with information they need to make better decisions.



BLS Data Move Money and Affect Lives

Participating is easy.

Nearly all of our surveys are voluntary, so we strive to make participation as easy as possible. We are grateful that the majority of companies say “Yes” when BLS staff or our partners, such as state labor market staff, ask for their participation.

It’s confidential and secure.

The information that you provide is confidential, and it will only be used to produce statistics that describe the characteristics of groups. Accordingly, the information of each specific organization and individual is safeguarded.

Without the generous cooperation of the people who participate in our surveys—*people like you*—we could not provide so much vital information about our economy and society to so many different customers.



Find the confidentiality pledge and laws at
www.bls.gov/bls/confidentiality.htm

Compensation Specialist

Analyze your compensation plans with information on pay levels and trends from BLS's *Occupational Employment Statistics (OES)*, *Modeled Wage Estimates (MWE)*, and *Employment Cost Index (ECI)*.

Area Wages

www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm

Pay rates from OES are published for over 800 occupations in specific geographic areas. Wage estimates are available for the nation as a whole, for individual states, and for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas.

Industry Wages

www.bls.gov/oes/tables.htm

OES's occupational wage rates are available by detailed industry for the nation.

Wage Ranges

data.bls.gov/oes

OES's occupational wage percentiles are available for local areas or industries. Wage rate distributions are published at the 10th, 25th, 50th, 75th, and 90th percentiles.

Wages by Level

www.bls.gov/mwe

MWE provides occupational mean hourly wages by job characteristics and work levels.

Changes in Labor Costs

www.bls.gov/eci

ECI data measure changes in the costs of all compensation, including wages and salaries and benefits.

What is the pay range for a job in my local area?
Do wages for the same occupation vary by industry?
What are the wages in areas where we are opening new locations?

These data are often used by compensation professionals to:

- Create competitive pay scales to attract top quality workers
- Research industry-specific wages
- Gather information about pay differences by area
- Compare company wages to local or industry averages
- Adjust wages to stay competitive in the market and retain workers
- Estimate future budget needs for compensation planning
- Analyze wage growth trends over time

Check out OES's occupational profiles at:
www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_stru.htm



Percentile wages and wage differences
Commercial Pilots

10th percentile
 (10% made less,
 90% made more)

50th percentile: Median
 (50% made less,
 50% made more)

90th percentile
 (90% made less,
 10% made more)



Benefits Analyst

Analyze your compensation plans with benefit costs and provisions data from BLS's *Employer Costs for Employee Compensation (ECEC)*, *Employment Cost Index (ECI)*, and *Employee Benefits Survey (EBS)*.



Benefit Costs

www.bls.gov/ect

The ECEC provides average hourly costs for total compensation and its components, including most employer-sponsored benefits. Estimates are reported as costs per hour worked, as well as percentages of total compensation.

Benefit Cost Changes

www.bls.gov/eci

The ECI measures changes in total compensation, including wages and salaries and benefit costs. ECI data are available by occupational groups, industries, and worker characteristics.

To learn more,
check out our ECI videos at:
www.bls.gov/eci/videos.htm

Benefit Coverage and Provisions

www.bls.gov/ebs

EBS data for the United States offer detailed information about access to and participation in various benefits, as well as plan features, and health care plan limits. These data are also available by worker and industry characteristics.

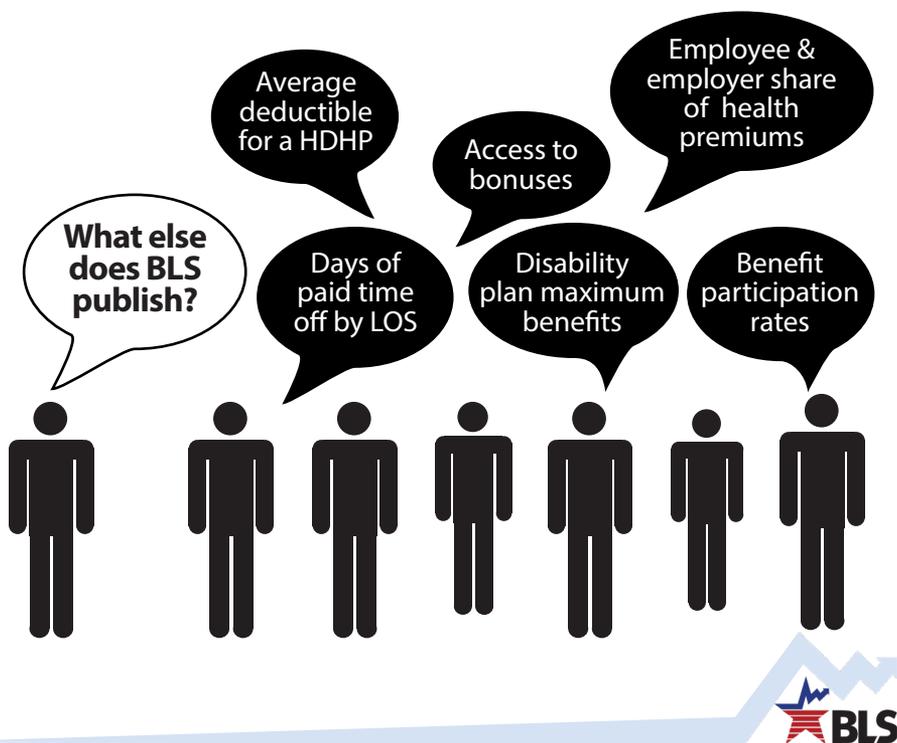
Are costs for benefits rising?

What share of medical care premiums do employees typically pay?

How do our benefit costs compare to the average?

These data are used by benefits analysts to:

- Evaluate benefit packages to stay competitive in the market
- Guide decisions on benefit provisions
- Analyze recent or historical changes in benefit costs
- Assess which benefits are the most expensive for employers
- Compare the costs per hour worked for different benefits
- Determine a benefit's average cost as a share of compensation
- Examine changes in labor costs by industry



Contract Administrator

Determine annual wage and salary increases and inform labor contract negotiations using inflation data from the *Employment Cost Index (ECI)*, *Consumer Price Index (CPI)*, and *Producer Price Index (PPI)*.

Changes in Labor Costs

www.bls.gov/eci

The ECI measures changes in the costs of all compensation, including benefits and wages and salaries, and is often used to adjust wage rates.

The ECI is closely watched as a gauge of inflationary pressures because rising compensation costs may lead to higher prices.

Changes in Consumer Prices

www.bls.gov/cpi

The CPI measures changes in the prices consumers pay for goods and services. The rate of inflation, as measured by the CPI, also provides valuable information for determining pay adjustments.



Changes in Producer Prices

www.bls.gov/ppi

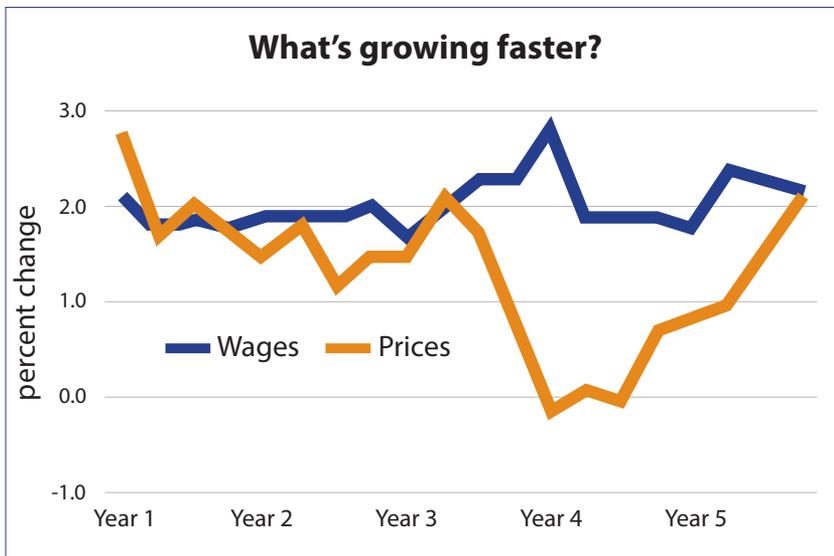
The PPI measures changes in the prices producers receive for their output. PPI data are commonly used in adjusting purchase and sales contracts.

Escalation guides are available at
www.bls.gov/audience/business.htm

How fast are wages rising? Are prices rising or declining? What is the average wage increase for the retail trade industry?

These data are used by contract administrators to to:

- Determine if wage increases are keeping pace with price inflation
- Ensure provision of competitive annual pay increases
- Negotiate collective bargaining agreements and labor contracts
- Guard contracts against inflation
- Apply cost-of-living adjustments to pensions
- Analyze trends in labor costs
- Compare changes in company labor costs to industry averages



Other BLS Data

Job Requirements and Employment Projections

The *Occupational Requirements Survey (ORS)* provides information about specific job-related requirements, like physical demands, environmental conditions, and education and training, of occupations in the United States. www.bls.gov/ors

The *Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)* is the premier resource for career information that enables students to make informed decisions. Profiles on more than 500 occupations describe education and training requirements, pay, and the work environment. www.bls.gov/ooh

Employment Projections (EP) data provide estimates on the economy and labor market 10 years into the future, including industry and occupation job growth and replacement needs. www.bls.gov/emp

Safety and Health

Injuries, Illnesses, and Fatalities (IIF) data provide the frequency of work-related injuries, illnesses, and fatalities, as well as details about the worker and the incident. www.bls.gov/iif

"There's a Stat for That."



What occupations are projected to grow fastest?

**What is the turnover rate for
the manufacturing industry?**

**What are typical job-related requirements
for an occupation?**

More Employment and Wage Data

The *Current Employment Statistics (CES)* program publishes average hourly earnings, average weekly earnings, and employment by detailed industry for the U.S., individual states, and metropolitan areas.

www.bls.gov/ces

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) data provide industry employment and wage data by ownership and establishment size at the county, metropolitan area, state, and national levels.

www.bls.gov/cew

The *Current Population Survey (CPS)* produces employment and median weekly earnings by occupation for selected demographic characteristics, such as gender, age, and race. www.bls.gov/cps

Turnover and Unemployment

The *Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS)* publishes estimates of the number and rate of job openings, hires, and separations for the nation, by industry and geographic region.

www.bls.gov/jlt

Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) provide monthly and annual employment, unemployment, and labor force data for census regions and divisions, states, counties, metropolitan areas, and many cities.

www.bls.gov/lau

The *Current Population Survey (CPS)* produces a comprehensive body of data on the labor force, including the national unemployment rate.

www.bls.gov/cps



BLS.GOV Resource Guide

Programs

Inflation & Prices	www.bls.gov/bls/inflation.htm
Pay & Benefits	www.bls.gov/bls/wages.htm
Spending & Time Use	www.bls.gov/bls/spending.htm
Unemployment	www.bls.gov/bls/unemployment.htm
Employment	www.bls.gov/bls/employment.htm
Workplace Injuries, Illnesses & Fatalities	www.bls.gov/iif
Productivity	www.bls.gov/bls/productivity.htm
International	www.bls.gov/bls/mxp

Data

Publications	www.bls.gov/opub
News Releases	www.bls.gov/bls/newsrels.htm
Databases, Tables & Calculators	www.bls.gov/data
Geographic Guide to Data by Area	www.bls.gov/guide/geography
Charts	www.bls.gov/charts
Videos	www.bls.gov/video

Economic Overviews

Industry At-A-Glance Tables	www.bls.gov/eag
Area At-A-Glance Tables	www.bls.gov/iag
Area Economic Summaries	www.bls.gov/regions/economic-summaries.htm

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beta.bls.gov/labs

Stay informed with The Economics Daily

www.bls.gov/ted

Read career-focused articles

www.bls.gov/careeroutlook

View charts and create maps

www.bls.gov/oes/charts.htm

Use the inflation calculator

www.bls.gov/data/#calculators

Find bulletins on benefits

www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/benefits

Explore resources for you

www.bls.gov/audience



Services and Contact Information

Contacting the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) is as easy as sending an e-mail or picking up a phone. We provide an array of services—all of them free—to meet your informational needs.

Personal Assistance



- Speak directly with an economist to help you understand the statistics
- Contact an information specialist to help you navigate the website
- Invite a BLS expert to discuss our information or conduct a workshop
- Request authentication of BLS documents

Data and Information on the web: www.bls.gov

- Go to online tutorials and videos to guide you to data you can use
- Access BLS databases, publications, and online tools at any time
- Subscribe to RSS feeds 
- Join an e-mail subscription service to get the latest data
- Subscribe to iCal calendar 
- Follow us on Twitter @BLS_gov

Check out new tools in the BLS Beta Labs at beta.bls.gov/labs

We're here to help!



Contact a BLS information office:

Atlanta	BLSinfoAtlanta@bls.gov	404.893.4222
Boston	BLSinfoBoston@bls.gov	617.565.2327
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Kansas City	BLSinfoKansasCity@bls.gov	816.285.7000
New York	BLSinfoNY@bls.gov	646.264.3600
Philadelphia	BLSinfoPhiladelphia@bls.gov	215.597.3282
San Francisco	BLSinfoSF@bls.gov	415.625.2270
Washington, D.C.	BLSdata_staff@bls.gov	202.691.5200
Federal Relay Service		800.877.8339

Contact BLS: www.bls.gov/bls/contact.htm





**ACCURATE
OBJECTIVE
RELEVANT
TIMELY
ACCESSIBLE**







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