Historical Economic Data Sources & Economic Time Travel

August 21, 2013
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Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis

The views expressed in the presentation are my own and not the views of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis or the Federal Reserve System.
Ohio unemployment rate remains at 7.2 percent for July

By Katie Byard
Beacon Journal business writer

Published: August 16, 2013 - 10:28 AM | Updated: August 17, 2013 - 01:46 AM

Ohio gained 5,300 jobs in July, but continues to lag the nation for job growth.

The state data released Friday also shows that June’s job loss was not as big as initially thought. The state released revised figures, showing that 8,400 jobs were lost in June, instead of 12,500.

Source: [http://www.ohio.com/news/ohio-unemployment-rate-remains-at-7-2-percent-for-july-1.421511](http://www.ohio.com/news/ohio-unemployment-rate-remains-at-7-2-percent-for-july-1.421511)
Why don’t they get it right the first time?

- Economic data are made from estimates.
- Over time, more information becomes available, and the estimates change.

Source: [http://www.ohio.com/news/ohio-unemployment-rate-remains-at-7-2-percent-for-july-1.421511](http://www.ohio.com/news/ohio-unemployment-rate-remains-at-7-2-percent-for-july-1.421511)
What happens to the old data?

- In most cases, they get overwritten, and even forgotten.

Source: Unemployment Rate (SA) LNS14000000 http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/surveymost?bls
What happens to the old data?

- In most cases, they get overwritten, and even forgotten.

Was there a negative saving rate in 2005?

Source: Personal Saving Rate [http://alfred.stlouisfed.org/graph/?g=lyN]
Changes to the NIPAs

- A comprehensive revision of the National Income and Product Accounts (NIPAs), was released on July 31, 2009.

- “Upward revisions to disposable personal income (DPI) beginning with 1994 are larger than upward revisions to personal outlays, resulting in upward revisions to personal saving and to the personal saving rate (personal saving as a percentage of DPI) (table 2).”

**Why would I want to find the vintage data?**

- Decisions are made based on data available at the time.
How do I find vintage data?

- First option: go to the source.
Archived News Releases

Caution
Data in archived news releases may have been revised in subsequent releases. The latest data, including any revisions, may be obtained from the databases accessible on the BLS program homepages.

Major Economic Indicators
- Consumer Price Index
- Employment Cost Index
- Employment Situation
- Producer Price Index
- Productivity and Costs
- Real Earnings
- U.S. Import and Export Price Indexes

All BLS News Releases
- Access to and Use of Leave
- American Time Use Survey
- Annual Pay Levels in Metropolitan Areas (Discontinued)
- Average Annual Pay by State and Industry (Discontinued)
- Bargaining Activity (Annual)
Employment Situation Archived News Releases


Caution
Data in archived news releases may have been revised in subsequent releases. The latest data, including any revisions, may be obtained from the databases accessible on the program homepages:

- Current Employment Statistics: databases
- Current Population Survey: databases

On This Page

LINKS TO ARCHIVE COPIES OF THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION NEWS RELEASES

- Current edition
- 2013
  - 2012
  - 2011
  - 2010
  - 2009
  - 2008
- 2007
- 2006
- 2005
- 2004
- 2003
- 2002
- 2001
- 2000
- 1999
- 1998
- 1997
- 1996
- 1995
- 1994

Current Edition of Employment Situation

- The current edition of The Employment Situation news release is always posted at www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm.

2013 Employment Situation

- July 2013 (HTML) (PDF)
- June 2013 (HTML) (PDF)
- May 2013 (HTML) (PDF)
- April 2013 (HTML) (PDF)
- March 2013 (HTML) (PDF)
- February 2013 (HTML) (PDF)
THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION: OCTOBER 2006

Employment increased in October, and the unemployment rate declined to 4.4 percent, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. Nonfarm payroll employment grew by 92,000 in October following gains of 148,000 in September and 230,000 in August (as revised). In October, job growth continued in several service-providing industries, while employment declined in manufacturing and construction. Average hourly earnings rose by 6 cents over the month.
The difficulty of finding vintage data

- Agencies historically wrote over the data, as the computing storage costs were high
- Libraries discarded news releases when the final versions were published
FRASER
Federal Reserve Archival System for Economic Research
http://fraser.stlouisfed.org
Types of documents available on FRASER

- Publications of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System
- Publications of District Federal Reserve Banks
- Statements and speeches of Fed policymakers
- Archival materials of Fed policymakers
- Government data publications
- Statistical releases
- Congressional hearings
- Books
- Reports by various organizations
FRASER
FEDERAL RESERVE ARCHIVE | DISCOVER ECONOMIC HISTORY

Data & Statistics Federal Reserve Collections All Titles Topics Timeline Authors

FEATURED

AUG 01 Records of the Federal Reserve System
A collection of archival records of the Federal Reserve System, from the National Archives at College Park, MD.

JUL 31 Treasury-Federal Reserve Accord
A collection of archival documents relating to the 1951 Treasury-Federal Reserve Accord, which was seen as a step forward in Fed independence.

WHAT'S NEW

AUG 16 Annual Reports of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta
Annual reports of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta are now available for the years 1915-2000.

AUG 01 Employment and Payrolls
Issues of Employment and Payrolls, published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics from 1935 through 1954, have now been posted.

TOP DOWNLOADS

Economic Indicators: May 2013 (3.5M)
Employment Situation: 1973-11-02 - October 1973 (1.3M)
Banking and Monetary Statistics 1914-1941: 1943 (5.1M)
Federal Reserve Bulletin: October 1982 (22.5M)
Macroeconomics of the Great Depression (2.1M)

Tweets
St Louis Fed FRASER
@FedFRASER
The 15th Amendment is ratified Aug 18, 1920, granting women the right to vote. Explore women's economic history
Employment Situation

Description:

Availability:
1973 to 1994

Source: http://fraser.stlouisfed.org/publication/?pid=144
Widespread increases in unemployment raised the Nation's unemployment rate to 5.8 percent in September compared with 5.4 percent in August, it was reported today by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor. Since last October, when the unemployment rate had receded to a 3-1/2-year low, the number of unemployed persons has risen by 1.2 million.
### Table A-2. Major unemployment indicators, seasonally adjusted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selected categories</th>
<th>Number of unemployed persons (in thousands)</th>
<th>Unemployment rates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total, 16 years and over</td>
<td>4,240</td>
<td>5,312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males, 20 years and over</td>
<td>1,513</td>
<td>1,947</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females, 20 years and over</td>
<td>1,482</td>
<td>1,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both sexes, 16-19 years</td>
<td>1,995</td>
<td>2,177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, total</td>
<td>3,330</td>
<td>4,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males, 20 years and over</td>
<td>1,827</td>
<td>2,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females, 20 years and over</td>
<td>1,503</td>
<td>1,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both sexes, 16-19 years</td>
<td>2,330</td>
<td>3,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negro and other races, total</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>1,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males, 20 years and over</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females, 20 years and over</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both sexes, 16-19 years</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household heads</td>
<td>1,381</td>
<td>1,406</td>
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<tr>
<td>Married men, spouse present</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>1,316</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full-time workers</td>
<td>3,185</td>
<td>4,133</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time workers</td>
<td>1,029</td>
<td>1,176</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed 15 weeks and over</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State insured</td>
<td>1,608</td>
<td>2,207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor force time lost</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Occupation:**
- White, collar workers
- White, collar workers
- Blue-collar workers
- Blue-collar workers
- Professional
- Professional
- Service workers
- Service workers
- Farm workers
- Farm workers
- Miscellaneous workers
- Miscellaneous workers
Grouping tables across time
Grouping tables across time

Description:

Availability:
1973 to 1994

Employment Situation

Employment Status of the Noninstitutional Population by Sex and Age, Seasonally Adjusted

Explanatory Note

Grouping tables across time

Major Unemployment Indicators, Seasonally Adjusted

Unemployment by Sex and Age, Seasonally Adjusted

Reason for Unemployment

Employment Status of Male Vietnam Era Veterans

Employment Status of the Black and Hispanic-Origin

Reason for Unemployment

Download this page from:

1973-11-02  go

Download this page in groups:

October 1973-December 1974 (6.8M)
January 1975-December 1979 (25.1M)
January 1980-December 1984 (29.5M)
January 1985-December 1989 (29.3M)
January 1990-December 1993 (23.3M)
Grouped table: Reason for Unemployment, October 1973-December 1974

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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lost last job</td>
<td>1,651</td>
<td>1,218</td>
<td>1,986</td>
<td>1,713</td>
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<tr>
<td>Left last job</td>
<td>708</td>
<td>692</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>671</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reentered labor force</td>
<td>1,508</td>
<td>1,284</td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>1,203</td>
<td>1,301</td>
<td>1,381</td>
<td>1,308</td>
<td>1,236</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never worked before</td>
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<td>570</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>637</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lost last job</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>16.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Left last job</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>28.7</td>
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<td>30.6</td>
<td>31.1</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Never worked before</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>15.2</td>
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## Table A-5: Unemployed persons by reason for unemployment

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of unemployed</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost last job</td>
<td>1,587</td>
<td>1,523</td>
<td>1,682</td>
<td>1,584</td>
<td>1,609</td>
<td>1,659</td>
<td>1,667</td>
<td>1,700</td>
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<td>Left last job</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>813</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reentered labor force</td>
<td>1,377</td>
<td>1,213</td>
<td>1,375</td>
<td>1,301</td>
<td>1,381</td>
<td>1,398</td>
<td>1,235</td>
<td>1,215</td>
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<tr>
<td>Never worked before</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>572</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent distribution</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total unemployed</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lost last job</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>37.9</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>39.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Left last job</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>18.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reentered labor force</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>28.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not in labor force</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
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</table>
### Table A-5: Unemployed persons by reason for unemployment

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<tr>
<td>Number of unemployed</td>
<td>1,697</td>
<td>1,818</td>
<td>1,846</td>
<td>1,605</td>
<td>1,659</td>
<td>1,467</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>1,770</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lost last job</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>805</td>
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<td>Left last job</td>
<td>1,129</td>
<td>1,069</td>
<td>1,322</td>
<td>1,381</td>
<td>1,308</td>
<td>1,436</td>
<td>1,213</td>
<td>1,253</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reentered labor force</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>629</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>569</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total unemployed</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost last job</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>18.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Left last job</td>
<td>27.4</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>30.6</td>
<td>31.1</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never worked before</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unemployed as a percent of the civilian labor force:

- Lost last job: 40.1%
- Left last job: 40.1%
- Never worked before: 40.1%
There has to be a better way
ALFRED
ArchivaL Federal Reserve Economic Data
http://alfred.stlouisfed.org/

ArchivaL Federal Reserve Economic Data

Economic Data Time Travel from the St. Louis Fed's Economic Research Division.

ALFRED® allows you to retrieve vintage versions of economic data that were available on specific dates in history. In general, economic data for past observation periods are revised as more accurate estimates become available. As a result, previous vintages of data can be superseded and may no longer be available from various data sources. Vintage or real time economic data allows academics to reproduce others' research, build more accurate forecasting models, and analyze economic policy decisions using the data available at the time. For more information, read the help page and the presentation ALFRED: Capturing data as it happens.

Notify Me When New Series and Features Are Added

Currently, vintage data are available for 140,826 series in 9 categories:

- Academic Data (10,443)
- Money, Banking, & Finance (4,750)
- National Accounts (16,540)
- Population, Employment, & Labor Markets (2,391)
- Production & Business Activity (1,193)
- Prices (2,412)
- International Data (76,629)
- Greenbook Projections (26)
- U.S. Regional Data (32,645)

The earliest vintage available is 1927-01-26 for series Industrial Production Index.

Release Calendar

<table>
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<th>Release Date</th>
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<td>2013-08-19</td>
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<td>Gasoline and Diesel Fuel Update</td>
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<td>H.15 Selected Interest Rates</td>
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<td></td>
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<table>
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How ALFRED works

- ALFRED was populated by collecting historical data for series in FRED, and ALFRED continues to be extended by capturing "expiring" FRED values when new ones are published.
Was there a negative saving rate in 2005?

Source: Personal Saving Rate [http://alfred.stlouisfed.org/graph/?g=lyN]
Personal Saving Rate
Bar Series 4: Personal Saving Rate (PSAVERT) Vintage: 2013-08-02

Observation Date Range: 2005-01-01 to 2007-01-01

Frequency: Monthly

(a) Personal Saving Rate (PSAVERT), Monthly, Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate, 1959-01-01 to 2013-06-01

Units: Percent

Enter an as-of Date: 2013-08-02

Create Your Own Data Transformation

Add Data Series
Personal Saving Rate (PSAVERT) Vintages: 2005-10-31, 2009-06-26, 2009-08-04, 2013-08-02
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce: Bureau of Economic Analysis
Call to action

- Donate news releases
- Include FRASER, ALFRED, and FRED in your libguides
Questions?

Pamela Campbell
pamela.d.campbell@stls.frb.org
Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis
Upcoming Accidental Librarian Webinars

- September 25: Gov Info Tour with Alex Simons
- October 16-18: NCLA Biennial Conference

Brought to you by the North Carolina Library Association’s Government Resources Section. Join us! [http://www.nclaonline.org/government-resources](http://www.nclaonline.org/government-resources)