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Technical information: (202) 691-6378 • cpsinfo@bls.gov • www.bls.gov/cps

Media contact: (202) 691-5902 • PressOffice@bls.gov

USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS THIRD QUARTER 2016

Median weekly earnings of the nation's 112.8 million full-time wage and salary workers were \$827 in the third quarter of 2016 (not seasonally adjusted), the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. This was 3.0 percent higher than a year earlier, compared with a gain of 1.1 percent in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) over the same period.

Data on usual weekly 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 in this news release.) Data shown in this release are not seasonally adjusted unless otherwise specified. Highlights from the third-quarter data are:

- **Median weekly earnings** of full-time workers were \$827 in the third quarter of 2016. **Women** had median weekly earnings of \$745, or 81.8 percent of the \$911 median for **men**. (See table 2.)
- The **women's-to-men's earnings ratio** varied by race and ethnicity. White women earned 81.5 percent as much as their male counterparts, compared with Black women (87.3 percent), Asian women (75.0 percent), and Hispanic women (88.9 percent). (See table 2.)
- Among the major **race and ethnicity groups**, median weekly earnings for Black men working at full-time jobs were \$732, or 78.5 percent of the median for White men (\$932). The difference was less among women, as Black women's median earnings (\$639) were 84.1 percent of those for White women (\$760). Overall, median earnings of Hispanics who worked full time (\$632) were lower than those of Blacks (\$685), Whites (\$854), and Asians (\$1,010). (See table 2.)
- Usual weekly earnings of full-time workers varied by **age**. Among men, those age 55 to 64 had the highest median weekly earnings, at \$1,117. For women, usual weekly earnings were highest for those ages 45 to 54 (\$842) and 35 to 44 (\$827). Workers age 16 to 24 had the lowest median weekly earnings, at \$497. (See table 3.)
- Among the major **occupational groups**, persons employed full time in management, professional, and related occupations had the highest median weekly earnings—\$1,408 for men and \$1,024 for women. Men and women employed in service jobs earned the least, \$592 and \$485, respectively. (See table 4.)

- By **educational attainment**, full-time workers age 25 and over without a high school diploma had median weekly earnings of \$504, compared with \$700 for high school graduates (no college) and \$1,266 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 \$3,722 or more per week, compared with \$2,416 or more for their female counterparts. (See table 5.)
- **Seasonally adjusted median weekly earnings** were \$834 in the third quarter of 2016, little changed from the previous quarter (\$828). (See table 1.)

Revision of Seasonally Adjusted Usual Weekly Earnings Data

The Usual Weekly Earnings news release for the fourth quarter of 2016 will incorporate annual revisions to seasonally adjusted data for the number of full-time wage and salary workers and median weekly earnings in current dollars. (See table 1.) Estimates for constant (1982-84) dollar median weekly earnings also will be affected by revisions to the current dollar series. Seasonally adjusted estimates back to the first quarter of 2012 will be subject to revision.

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), which provides basic information on the labor force, employment, and unemployment. The survey is conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau using a scientifically selected national sample of about 60,000 eligible households, with coverage in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The earnings data are collected from one-fourth of the CPS monthly sample and are limited to wage and salary workers. All self-employed workers, both incorporated and unincorporated, are excluded from CPS earnings estimates.

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Definitions

The principal definitions used in connection with the earnings data in this news release 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, or 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 determined by each respondent's own understanding of the term. 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 midpoint in a given earnings distribution, with half of workers having earnings above the median and the other half 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 BLS procedure for estimating the median of an earnings distribution places each reported or calculated weekly earnings value into a \$50-wide interval that is centered around a multiple of \$50. The median is calculated through the linear interpolation of the interval in which the median lies.

Changes over time 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 as follows: (1) there could be a change in the relative weights of the subgroups. For example, the median of 16- to 24-year-olds and the median earnings of those 25 years and over may rise, but if the lower earning 16-to-24 age 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 change could be caused by survey observations that are clustered at rounded values, such as \$400 or \$500. 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.

Constant dollars. The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) is used to convert current dollars to constant (1982-84) dollars.

Wage and salary workers. These are 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, it excludes all self-employed persons, both those with incorporated businesses and those with unincorporated businesses.

Full-time workers. For the purpose of producing estimates of earnings, workers who usually work 35 hours or more per week at their sole or principal job are defined as working full time.

Part-time workers. For the purpose of producing estimates of earnings, workers who usually work fewer than 35 hours per week at their sole or principal job are defined as working part time.

Race. In the survey process, race is determined by the household respondent. In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget guidelines, white, black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander are terms used to describe a person's race. Estimates for the latter two race groups and persons who selected more than one race are not included in this release due to insufficient sample size.

Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. This refers to people who identified themselves in the survey process as being of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. People whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

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 component of this difference that occurs because samples differ by chance is known as *sampling error*, and its 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.

Additional information about the reliability of data from the CPS is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#reliability.

Seasonal adjustment

Over the course of a year, the size of the nation's labor force and other measures of labor market activity undergo regularly occurring fluctuations. These recurring events include seasonal changes in weather, major holidays, and the opening and closing of schools. The effect of such seasonal variations can be very large.

Because seasonal events follow a more or less regular pattern each year, their influence on the level of a series can be tempered by adjusting for regular seasonal variation. These adjustments make nonseasonal developments easier to spot. The seasonally adjusted figures provide a more useful tool with which to analyze changes in quarter-to-quarter activity.

At the end of each calendar year, the seasonally adjusted data are revised for the past 5 years when the seasonal adjustment factors are updated. More information on seasonal adjustment is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#sa.

Table 1. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by sex, quarterly averages, seasonally adjusted

Year and quarter	Number of workers (in thousands)			Median weekly earnings					
	Total	Men	Women	In current dollars			In constant (1982-84) dollars		
				Total \$	Men \$	Women \$	Total \$	Men \$	Women \$
2007									
3rd Quarter.....	107,156	60,216	46,940	698	774	621	336	372	298
4th Quarter.....	108,178	60,508	47,670	700	774	615	332	368	292
2008									
1st Quarter.....	107,786	60,378	47,408	713	783	633	335	368	298
2nd Quarter.....	107,046	59,586	47,460	722	802	636	335	372	295
3rd Quarter.....	106,136	59,273	46,863	724	802	637	331	367	291
4th Quarter.....	105,617	58,511	47,106	727	806	647	340	377	302
2009									
1st Quarter.....	101,683	56,302	45,381	732	815	645	345	384	304
2nd Quarter.....	99,996	55,233	44,763	737	818	652	345	383	305
3rd Quarter.....	99,050	54,481	44,569	742	820	664	345	381	309
4th Quarter.....	98,555	54,410	44,145	747	823	666	344	379	307
2010									
1st Quarter.....	98,143	54,098	44,045	748	836	662	344	384	304
2nd Quarter.....	99,605	55,028	44,577	742	814	671	342	374	309
3rd Quarter.....	100,412	55,620	44,792	746	821	670	342	377	308
4th Quarter.....	99,958	55,486	44,472	750	826	676	341	376	308
2011									
1st Quarter.....	99,670	55,337	44,333	750	821	679	338	370	306
2nd Quarter.....	100,347	55,821	44,526	754	830	687	336	370	306
3rd Quarter.....	100,495	56,046	44,449	760	836	681	336	370	301
4th Quarter.....	101,337	56,687	44,650	760	838	686	335	369	302
2012									
1st Quarter.....	102,150	57,109	45,041	764	841	693	335	368	303
2nd Quarter.....	102,510	57,065	45,445	772	870	687	337	380	300
3rd Quarter.....	102,632	57,219	45,413	766	836	693	333	364	302
4th Quarter.....	103,727	57,770	45,957	772	868	691	333	375	298
2013									
1st Quarter.....	103,886	57,896	45,989	768	860	699	331	370	301
2nd Quarter.....	103,947	57,909	46,037	777	866	706	335	373	304
3rd Quarter.....	104,515	58,128	46,387	779	855	706	334	367	303
4th Quarter.....	104,733	58,064	46,669	782	862	712	334	368	304
2014									
1st Quarter.....	105,544	58,692	46,852	790	865	716	335	367	304
2nd Quarter.....	106,351	59,476	46,875	782	861	715	330	364	302
3rd Quarter.....	106,892	59,618	47,273	798	879	722	336	370	304
4th Quarter.....	107,336	60,025	47,310	794	876	723	335	369	305
2015									
1st Quarter.....	108,377	60,386	47,991	801	887	723	340	377	307
2nd Quarter.....	108,597	60,409	48,188	804	891	726	339	376	306
3rd Quarter.....	109,459	61,073	48,386	811	898	728	341	378	306
4th Quarter.....	109,894	61,119	48,776	820	901	728	344	378	306
2016									
1st Quarter.....	110,322	61,629	48,693	823	904	743	346	380	312
2nd Quarter.....	110,996	61,837	49,159	828	913	744	346	382	311
3rd Quarter.....	111,725	62,179	49,546	834	919	751	347	382	312

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

Table 2. 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			
	3rd 2015	3rd 2016	In current dollars		In constant (1982-84) dollars	
			3rd 2015	3rd 2016	3rd 2015	3rd 2016
SEX AND AGE						
Total, 16 years and over.....	110,446	112,784	\$803	\$827	\$337	\$343
Men, 16 years and over.....	61,974	63,104	889	911	373	378
16 to 24 years.....	5,992	6,181	517	510	217	212
25 years and over.....	55,982	56,924	946	971	397	403
Women, 16 years and over.....	48,472	49,680	721	745	303	309
16 to 24 years.....	4,598	4,919	442	480	185	199
25 years and over.....	43,874	44,761	762	785	320	326
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX						
White.....	86,280	87,781	829	854	348	354
Men.....	49,662	50,231	919	932	386	387
Women.....	36,617	37,550	740	760	311	316
Black or African American.....	13,842	14,210	624	685	262	284
Men.....	6,582	6,849	652	732	274	304
Women.....	7,260	7,360	608	639	255	265
Asian.....	6,807	7,136	974	1,010	409	419
Men.....	3,813	3,961	1,133	1,154	476	479
Women.....	2,994	3,176	818	865	343	359
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	18,606	19,278	602	632	253	262
Men.....	11,367	11,892	624	667	262	277
Women.....	7,238	7,385	568	593	238	246

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. 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. Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by age, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex, 3rd quarter 2016 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.....	112,784	\$827	63,104	\$911	49,680	\$745
16 to 24 years.....	11,100	497	6,181	510	4,919	480
16 to 19 years.....	1,763	401	1,045	414	717	382
20 to 24 years.....	9,337	510	5,135	523	4,202	494
25 years and over.....	101,684	886	56,924	971	44,761	785
25 to 54 years.....	78,893	874	44,364	943	34,529	782
25 to 34 years.....	27,787	758	15,686	804	12,101	709
35 to 44 years.....	25,288	921	14,421	993	10,867	827
45 to 54 years.....	25,818	955	14,257	1,060	11,561	842
55 years and over.....	22,791	934	12,559	1,095	10,232	793
55 to 64 years.....	18,532	951	10,112	1,117	8,421	806
65 years and over.....	4,258	834	2,448	966	1,811	721
White						
16 years and over.....	87,781	854	50,231	932	37,550	760
16 to 24 years.....	8,643	505	4,986	517	3,657	489
25 years and over.....	79,138	909	45,245	992	33,893	805
25 to 54 years.....	60,598	894	34,810	964	25,788	799
55 years and over.....	18,540	970	10,434	1,134	8,105	820
Black or African American						
16 years and over.....	14,210	685	6,849	732	7,360	639
16 to 24 years.....	1,426	418	662	448	764	400
25 years and over.....	12,783	724	6,187	765	6,596	682
25 to 54 years.....	10,331	719	5,015	751	5,316	686
55 years and over.....	2,452	742	1,172	844	1,280	666
Asian						
16 years and over.....	7,136	1,010	3,961	1,154	3,176	865
16 to 24 years.....	538	580	258	591	280	554
25 years and over.....	6,599	1,077	3,703	1,208	2,896	924
25 to 54 years.....	5,239	1,137	2,987	1,241	2,252	976
55 years and over.....	1,360	875	716	1,101	644	714
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
16 years and over.....	19,278	632	11,892	667	7,385	593
16 to 24 years.....	2,500	488	1,497	496	1,004	476
25 years and over.....	16,777	675	10,396	699	6,381	617
25 to 54 years.....	14,354	669	8,921	697	5,433	611
55 years and over.....	2,423	709	1,474	716	948	696

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. 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 4. 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	
	3rd 2015	3rd 2016	3rd 2015	3rd 2016
TOTAL				
Management, professional, and related occupations.....	44,614	46,081	\$1,165	\$1,195
Management, business, and financial operations occupations.....	18,289	19,268	1,261	1,298
Professional and related occupations.....	26,325	26,813	1,126	1,140
Service occupations.....	15,882	16,759	504	520
Sales and office occupations.....	24,027	23,839	670	699
Sales and related occupations.....	9,902	9,840	732	744
Office and administrative support occupations.....	14,124	14,000	646	679
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.....	11,199	11,612	734	767
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.....	937	990	464	517
Construction and extraction occupations.....	6,005	6,387	721	767
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.....	4,256	4,235	868	850
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations.....	14,725	14,492	666	677
Production occupations.....	7,622	7,473	665	675
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	7,103	7,019	668	679
Men				
Management, professional, and related occupations.....	22,070	22,638	1,381	1,408
Management, business, and financial operations occupations.....	9,930	10,473	1,436	1,475
Professional and related occupations.....	12,140	12,165	1,345	1,352
Service occupations.....	7,685	8,264	571	592
Sales and office occupations.....	9,567	9,526	771	806
Sales and related occupations.....	5,548	5,479	866	903
Office and administrative support occupations.....	4,020	4,046	679	714
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.....	10,755	11,085	742	775
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.....	745	789	478	558
Construction and extraction occupations.....	5,871	6,217	721	768
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.....	4,139	4,079	864	853
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations.....	11,897	11,592	712	722
Production occupations.....	5,707	5,555	739	738
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	6,190	6,037	690	708
Women				
Management, professional, and related occupations.....	22,544	23,444	1,000	1,024
Management, business, and financial operations occupations.....	8,359	8,795	1,071	1,088
Professional and related occupations.....	14,185	14,648	970	997
Service occupations.....	8,197	8,495	465	485
Sales and office occupations.....	14,459	14,314	628	648
Sales and related occupations.....	4,355	4,360	599	591
Office and administrative support occupations.....	10,105	9,953	639	666
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.....	444	527	588	586
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.....	192	201	445	440
Construction and extraction occupations.....	134	171	720	692
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.....	117	155	917	723
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations.....	2,828	2,900	518	521
Production occupations.....	1,916	1,918	518	519
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	913	982	515	524

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

Table 5. Quartiles and selected deciles of usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, 3rd quarter 2016 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.....	112,784	\$395	\$546	\$827	\$1,338	\$1,985
Men.....	63,104	416	593	911	1,470	2,191
Women.....	49,680	375	504	745	1,152	1,760
White.....	87,781	403	565	854	1,361	2,000
Men.....	50,231	424	604	932	1,494	2,202
Women.....	37,550	382	515	760	1,171	1,766
Black or African American.....	14,210	353	473	685	989	1,554
Men.....	6,849	379	495	732	1,063	1,701
Women.....	7,360	339	431	639	916	1,492
Asian.....	7,136	420	609	1,010	1,702	2,419
Men.....	3,961	460	687	1,154	1,894	2,880
Women.....	3,176	398	554	865	1,420	1,994
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	19,278	358	455	632	950	1,514
Men.....	11,892	377	480	667	1,003	1,568
Women.....	7,385	333	418	593	888	1,401
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
Total, 25 years and over.....	101,684	416	591	886	1,403	2,079
Less than a high school diploma.....	7,107	326	396	504	697	947
High school graduates, no college ¹	25,518	383	502	700	998	1,440
Some college or associate degree.....	27,688	412	555	779	1,147	1,653
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	41,371	609	852	1,266	1,893	2,719
Bachelor's degree only.....	25,471	580	785	1,152	1,764	2,488
Advanced degree.....	15,901	725	985	1,447	2,094	3,079
Men, 25 years and over.....	56,924	454	634	971	1,544	2,287
Less than a high school diploma.....	4,868	354	420	550	753	1,015
High school graduates, no college ¹	15,594	412	558	785	1,122	1,573
Some college or associate degree.....	14,706	454	617	895	1,279	1,832
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	21,756	679	952	1,461	2,111	3,094
Bachelor's degree only.....	13,594	636	885	1,357	1,917	2,886
Advanced degree.....	8,162	773	1,103	1,693	2,405	3,722
Women, 25 years and over.....	44,761	391	535	785	1,212	1,847
Less than a high school diploma.....	2,239	296	355	426	569	716
High school graduates, no college ¹	9,924	344	441	600	808	1,127
Some college or associate degree.....	12,982	389	503	694	967	1,403
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	19,616	575	771	1,099	1,616	2,253
Bachelor's degree only.....	11,877	525	708	977	1,477	2,091
Advanced degree.....	7,739	661	904	1,274	1,798	2,416

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. 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 6. 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	
	3rd 2015	3rd 2016	3rd 2015	3rd 2016
SEX AND AGE				
Total, 16 years and over.....	23,619	23,973	\$248	\$255
Men, 16 years and over.....	8,135	8,300	237	245
16 to 24 years.....	3,719	3,666	197	201
25 years and over.....	4,417	4,634	287	292
Women, 16 years and over.....	15,483	15,673	254	260
16 to 24 years.....	4,660	4,400	197	202
25 years and over.....	10,823	11,273	290	294
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX				
White.....	18,754	18,681	252	258
Men.....	6,375	6,257	242	246
Women.....	12,379	12,424	258	264
Black or African American.....	2,862	2,947	226	238
Men.....	1,082	1,115	210	235
Women.....	1,779	1,833	237	240
Asian.....	1,211	1,379	264	265
Men.....	394	537	260	264
Women.....	817	842	266	266
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	3,946	3,998	249	246
Men.....	1,478	1,366	254	246
Women.....	2,467	2,631	246	247

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. 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.