

**Labor force and employment estimates smoothed for population adjustments,
1990-2003**

With the release of January 2004 employment estimates from the Current Population Survey (CPS), the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) incorporated new population controls based on updated population information from the Census Bureau. The new controls lowered the estimated level of the civilian noninstitutional population with associated declines in the levels of the labor force, employment, and unemployment. The December 2003 level of employment, for example would have been 409,000 lower using the new controls. (See [Employment and Earnings, February 2004](#).) BLS did not revise the historical data series because of the extensive effort needed to completely revise and verify time series for all employment and unemployment estimates produced from the CPS and because the revisions would be negligible for most series. Thus, the introduction of the new population controls created a break in the data series between December 2003 and January 2004. Breaks also occurred at the beginning of 2000 and 2003 due to introductions of other adjustments in population controls. In the case of those breaks, there were upward [adjustments in the population](#) and associated labor force data series.

As a convenience to its data users, in December 2003 BLS outlined a method to "smooth" the January 2000 and January 2003 "bumps" in major data series. (See Marisa L. DiNatale, *Creating Comparability in CPS Employment Series*, on the BLS website at <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpscomp.pdf>.) This exercise has been repeated to create smoothed civilian labor force and employment series presented below which incorporate

the shifts in population incrementally rather than in January of the years that the population controls were implemented. Users should be aware that this smoothed employment series will not match the official estimates available in BLS publications and on the BLS website. In addition, these estimates would differ from those calculated using other smoothing methods.

Civilian labor force smoothed for adjustments in population controls, 1990-2003, seasonally adjusted

(In thousands)

Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
1990	125,845	125,734	125,837	125,697	125,953	125,645	125,816	126,087	126,001	126,116	126,203	126,287
1991	126,112	126,189	126,420	126,742	126,382	126,549	126,384	126,392	126,905	126,909	126,981	126,956
1992	127,566	127,524	127,934	128,184	128,475	128,829	128,945	129,008	128,908	128,444	128,872	128,998
1993	128,856	128,926	129,079	129,077	129,772	129,932	129,931	130,166	129,826	130,145	130,296	130,539
1994	131,210	131,296	131,038	131,272	131,444	131,237	131,341	131,980	132,139	132,477	132,637	132,710
1995	132,811	132,901	132,906	133,404	132,673	132,784	133,193	133,199	133,489	133,607	133,517	133,426
1996	133,545	133,896	134,138	134,381	134,654	134,697	135,302	135,083	135,560	135,982	136,082	136,202
1997	136,560	136,517	137,025	137,164	137,281	137,387	137,668	137,824	137,894	137,865	138,209	138,418
1998	138,370	138,401	138,539	138,465	138,703	138,800	138,947	138,942	139,679	139,685	139,801	140,070
1999	140,456	140,433	140,207	140,452	140,615	140,852	140,977	140,981	141,189	141,353	141,623	141,790
2000	142,266	142,468	142,422	142,778	142,408	142,618	142,320	142,625	142,610	142,742	143,046	143,368
2001	143,890	143,763	143,992	143,675	143,424	143,465	143,824	143,530	144,186	144,346	144,437	144,560
2002	144,040	144,753	144,598	144,898	145,133	144,977	145,126	145,401	145,870	145,714	145,388	145,444
2003	145,540	145,553	145,465	146,013	146,089	146,534	146,260	146,221	146,200	146,472	146,757	146,440

NOTE: This series reflects seasonally adjusted civilian labor force that has been revised from January 1990-December 2003 to smooth out the effects of population control revisions introduced in January 2000, 2003, and 2004.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of Labor Force Statistics, March 3, 2004

CPS employment smoothed for adjustments in population controls, 1990-2003, seasonally adjusted

(In thousands)

Year	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
1990	119,093	119,082	119,238	118,898	119,209	119,052	118,891	118,894	118,628	118,651	118,432	118,379
1991	118,089	117,915	117,823	118,293	117,634	117,845	117,785	117,712	118,169	118,052	118,033	117,740
1992	118,265	118,050	118,454	118,748	118,709	118,764	119,071	119,195	119,101	119,020	119,280	119,413
1993	119,503	119,715	119,995	119,938	120,594	120,781	120,970	121,373	121,081	121,363	121,722	122,031
1994	122,547	122,679	122,534	122,908	123,497	123,277	123,362	124,013	124,372	124,811	125,230	125,448
1995	125,402	125,681	125,720	125,722	125,207	125,321	125,629	125,677	125,972	126,241	126,052	125,963
1996	126,013	126,542	126,779	126,924	127,189	127,562	127,922	128,161	128,540	128,909	128,801	128,904
1997	129,358	129,370	129,981	130,247	130,584	130,544	130,970	131,172	131,194	131,368	131,859	131,898
1998	131,958	132,053	132,072	132,484	132,614	132,545	132,643	132,718	133,333	133,359	133,655	133,994
1999	134,436	134,276	134,381	134,402	134,775	134,855	134,905	135,097	135,227	135,529	135,862	136,092
2000	136,569	136,614	136,691	137,294	136,649	136,968	136,569	136,761	136,976	137,200	137,399	137,723
2001	137,889	137,687	137,852	137,396	137,191	136,978	137,234	136,464	137,027	136,612	136,406	136,258
2002	135,902	136,557	136,308	136,305	136,723	136,578	136,710	137,051	137,586	137,335	136,807	136,729
2003	137,134	136,997	136,971	137,240	137,158	137,317	137,240	137,320	137,263	137,704	138,133	138,070

NOTE: This series reflects seasonally adjusted CPS employment that has been revised from January 1990-December 2003 to smooth out the effects of population control revisions introduced in January 2000, 2003, and 2004.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of Labor Force Statistics, February 6, 2004