



## **May Employment Report:** **Census Hiring to Have Increased Significantly During Month of May**

On Friday, June 4, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) will release its May 2010 employment report, showing the net number of jobs created or lost during the month of May as well as the unemployment rate. May's report is expected to show a significant increase in the number of temporary Census positions added, based on projections from the U.S. Commerce Department's Economics and Statistics Administration and weekly reporting on actual Census hiring currently available on the Census website. Historical data for the 2000 and 1990 censuses also show that May is the peak month for hiring of Census workers.

### ***BACKGROUND***

The U.S. Bureau of the Census collects data for the decennial census, as directed by the U.S. Constitution. Temporary workers are hired to canvass households. The hiring of temporary workers traditionally reaches its highest level in May. Census hiring then declines throughout the rest of the year. For example, in May 2000, the number of temporary Census workers increased by 348,000. In the next month, June 2000, the number of Census workers declined by 225,000 workers. Similarly, in May 1990, 182,000 temporary Census workers were added, and in June 1990, the number of Census workers decreased by 84,000.<sup>1</sup> In both 2000 and 1990, Census hiring declined every month after May.

### ***2010 CENSUS***

Through the first four months of 2010, Census hiring has been comparable to the same time period in 2000. From January-April 2010, 138,000 temporary Census workers were added, compared to 167,000 temporary Census workers added during the first four months of 2000.<sup>2</sup>

A February, 2010 report<sup>3</sup> prepared by the Commerce Department's Economics and Statistics Administration projected that the hiring of temporary Census workers could increase the BLS's nonfarm payroll employment estimate in May 2010 by more than half a million.<sup>4</sup> While predicting the exact number of Census jobs in May is difficult, it is clear that, as in past Census years, there will be a large May increase. Data from the Census website show that 573,779 Census workers were paid during the week of May 9-15, the most recent week for which data is available. This figure compares to 156,335 paid Census workers a month earlier, during the week of April 11-17.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, as the population increases, more Census workers are needed to carry out the decennial Census. Since the 2000 Census, the U.S. population has increased by 28 million, or 10 percent.<sup>6</sup> It is expected, therefore, that overall Census employment in 2010 will exceed the peak of 530,000<sup>7</sup> workers reached during the 2000 Census.

The links below offer more information on the 2010 Census:

- [The Impact of 2010 Census Operations on Jobs and Economic Growth](#) (Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce)
- [BLS Data on Past Census Hiring](#) (Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor)
- [Number of Temporary 2010 Census Workers Paid by Week and Census Region](#) (U.S. Census Bureau)

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<sup>1</sup> "Census 2010 temporary and intermittent workers and Federal government employment," Bureau of Labor Statistics. <http://www.bls.gov/ces/cescensusworkers.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> "The Impact of 2010 Census Operations on Jobs and Economic Growth," Prepared by the Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, February 2010. <http://www.esa.doc.gov/02182010.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. page 3.

<sup>5</sup> "Number of Temporary 2010 Census Workers Paid by Week and Census Region," U.S. Census Bureau. <http://2010.census.gov/news/releases/jobs/temp-workers.html>

<sup>6</sup> 2010 Statistical Abstract, Table 1. Population and Area: 1790 to 2000.

<http://www.census.gov/prod/2009pubs/10statab/pop.pdf> and U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Population Clock, <http://www.census.gov/main/www/popclock.html>

<sup>7</sup> Census employment peaked at 530,000 in May 2000. "Census 2010 temporary and intermittent workers and Federal government employment," Bureau of Labor Statistics. <http://www.bls.gov/ces/cescensusworkers.pdf>

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*The Joint Economic Committee, established under the Employment Act of 1946, was created by Congress to review economic conditions and to analyze the effectiveness of economic policy.*

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*Prepared by the Joint Economic Committee Majority Staff*