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USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS OF WAGE AND SALARY WORKERS FIRST QUARTER 2016

Median weekly earnings of the nation's 109.1 million full-time wage and salary workers were \$830 in the first quarter of 2016 (not seasonally adjusted), the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. This was 2.7 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 first-quarter data are:

- **Median weekly earnings** of full-time workers were \$830 in the first quarter of 2016. **Women** had median weekly earnings of \$750, or 82.2 percent of the \$912 median for **men**. (See table 2.)
- The **women's-to-men's earnings ratio** varied by race and ethnicity. White women earned 81.9 percent as much as their male counterparts, compared with Black women (85.4 percent), Asian women (80.5 percent), and Hispanic women (89.5 percent). (See table 2.)
- Among the major **race and ethnicity groups**, median weekly earnings for Black men working at full-time jobs were \$732 per week, or 78.2 percent of the median for White men (\$936). The difference was less among women, as Black women's median earnings (\$625) were 81.5 percent of those for White women (\$767). Overall, median earnings of Hispanics who worked full time (\$612) were lower than those of Blacks (\$673), Whites (\$857), and Asians (\$1,032). (See table 2.)
- Usual weekly earnings of full-time workers varied by **age**. Among men, median weekly earnings were highest for those age 45 to 54 (\$1,075) and 55 to 64 (\$1,124). Usual weekly earnings were highest for women age 35 to 64: weekly earnings were \$822 for women age 35 to 44, \$832 for women age 45 to 54, and \$839 for women age 55 to 64. Workers age 16 to 24 had the lowest median weekly earnings, at \$502. (See table 3.)
- Among the major **occupational** groups, persons employed full time in management, professional, and related occupations had the highest median weekly earnings—\$1,431 for men and \$1,024 for women. Men and women employed in service jobs earned the least, \$609 and \$483, respectively. (See table 4.)

- By **educational attainment**, full-time workers age 25 and over without a high school diploma had median weekly earnings of \$494, compared with \$679 for high school graduates (no college) and \$1,250 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 \$3,871 or more per week, compared with \$2,409 or more for their female counterparts. (See table 5.)
- **Seasonally adjusted median weekly earnings** were \$823 in the first quarter of 2016, essentially unchanged from the previous quarter (\$820). (See table 1.)

Revision of Seasonally Adjusted Usual Weekly Earnings Data

Seasonally adjusted data for median usual weekly earnings in constant (1982-84) dollars have been updated using revised seasonally adjusted data for the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). (Data are shown in table 1 of this release.) Seasonally adjusted constant (1982-84) dollar estimates back to the first quarter of 2011 were 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									
1st Quarter.....	107,176	60,105	47,070	687	752	610	336	368	298
2nd Quarter.....	106,827	60,351	46,476	693	765	610	335	370	295
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

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			
	1st 2015	1st 2016	In current dollars		In constant (1982-84) dollars	
			1st 2015	1st 2016	1st 2015	1st 2016
SEX AND AGE						
Total, 16 years and over.....	107,194	109,147	\$808	\$830	\$344	\$350
Men, 16 years and over.....	59,361	60,639	895	912	381	384
16 to 24 years.....	5,067	5,278	491	511	209	215
25 years and over.....	54,294	55,361	944	963	402	406
Women, 16 years and over.....	47,833	48,508	730	750	311	316
16 to 24 years.....	4,039	4,065	461	488	196	205
25 years and over.....	43,794	44,443	759	779	323	328
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX						
White.....	84,008	85,226	835	857	356	361
Men.....	47,591	48,482	918	936	391	394
Women.....	36,416	36,744	746	767	318	323
Black or African American.....	13,241	13,582	650	673	277	283
Men.....	6,268	6,492	694	732	296	308
Women.....	6,972	7,090	614	625	262	263
Asian.....	6,570	6,742	966	1,032	411	435
Men.....	3,684	3,721	1,090	1,159	464	488
Women.....	2,886	3,021	869	933	370	393
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	18,124	18,545	590	612	251	258
Men.....	10,973	11,273	612	641	260	270
Women.....	7,151	7,273	547	574	233	242

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, 1st 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.....	109,147	\$830	60,639	\$912	48,508	\$750
16 to 24 years.....	9,344	502	5,278	511	4,065	488
16 to 19 years.....	948	394	561	408	387	368
20 to 24 years.....	8,396	514	4,717	523	3,679	500
25 years and over.....	99,803	878	55,361	963	44,443	779
25 to 54 years.....	77,316	859	43,223	935	34,093	771
25 to 34 years.....	26,767	737	15,105	781	11,662	690
35 to 44 years.....	25,038	921	14,167	996	10,871	822
45 to 54 years.....	25,511	953	13,951	1,075	11,560	832
55 years and over.....	22,488	953	12,138	1,102	10,350	821
55 to 64 years.....	18,376	975	9,888	1,124	8,488	839
65 years and over.....	4,112	836	2,250	992	1,862	749
White						
16 years and over.....	85,226	857	48,482	936	36,744	767
16 to 24 years.....	7,166	506	4,189	517	2,977	488
25 years and over.....	78,060	905	44,293	988	33,768	801
25 to 54 years.....	59,597	885	34,154	955	25,443	791
55 years and over.....	18,463	982	10,138	1,135	8,325	835
Black or African American						
16 years and over.....	13,582	673	6,492	732	7,090	625
16 to 24 years.....	1,289	421	631	426	658	415
25 years and over.....	12,292	716	5,860	761	6,432	663
25 to 54 years.....	9,957	707	4,743	755	5,214	655
55 years and over.....	2,335	753	1,117	801	1,218	694
Asian						
16 years and over.....	6,742	1,032	3,721	1,159	3,021	933
16 to 24 years.....	383	595	182	630	201	560
25 years and over.....	6,358	1,072	3,539	1,200	2,820	973
25 to 54 years.....	5,101	1,068	2,878	1,207	2,223	976
55 years and over.....	1,258	1,090	660	1,188	597	949
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
16 years and over.....	18,545	612	11,273	641	7,273	574
16 to 24 years.....	2,216	480	1,281	494	935	447
25 years and over.....	16,329	644	9,992	680	6,338	601
25 to 54 years.....	14,105	634	8,709	670	5,396	600
55 years and over.....	2,224	685	1,282	760	942	620

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	
	1st 2015	1st 2016	1st 2015	1st 2016
TOTAL				
Management, professional, and related occupations.....	44,441	45,297	\$1,149	\$1,174
Management, business, and financial operations occupations.....	18,078	18,940	1,253	1,281
Professional and related occupations.....	26,363	26,357	1,089	1,134
Service occupations.....	15,011	15,709	505	526
Sales and office occupations.....	23,179	23,484	674	693
Sales and related occupations.....	9,526	9,484	718	739
Office and administrative support occupations.....	13,652	14,000	653	676
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.....	10,322	10,508	781	789
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.....	731	704	446	504
Construction and extraction occupations.....	5,365	5,529	768	772
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.....	4,226	4,275	847	880
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations.....	14,241	14,150	631	644
Production occupations.....	7,503	7,200	643	644
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	6,738	6,950	618	643
Men				
Management, professional, and related occupations.....	21,407	21,928	1,372	1,431
Management, business, and financial operations occupations.....	9,925	10,118	1,455	1,539
Professional and related occupations.....	11,481	11,810	1,314	1,356
Service occupations.....	7,538	7,852	575	609
Sales and office occupations.....	9,279	9,287	779	808
Sales and related occupations.....	5,322	5,440	914	898
Office and administrative support occupations.....	3,957	3,847	680	705
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.....	9,904	10,096	788	799
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.....	601	584	461	517
Construction and extraction occupations.....	5,234	5,410	773	776
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.....	4,069	4,102	855	886
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations.....	11,233	11,477	684	675
Production occupations.....	5,423	5,416	710	698
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	5,810	6,060	648	652
Women				
Management, professional, and related occupations.....	23,034	23,369	988	1,024
Management, business, and financial operations occupations.....	8,152	8,822	1,064	1,108
Professional and related occupations.....	14,881	14,547	959	986
Service occupations.....	7,473	7,857	461	483
Sales and office occupations.....	13,900	14,197	622	649
Sales and related occupations.....	4,204	4,044	581	590
Office and administrative support occupations.....	9,696	10,152	644	668
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations.....	418	412	584	579
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations.....	130	120	397	453
Construction and extraction occupations.....	131	119	618	519
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations.....	157	173	753	683
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations.....	3,008	2,674	505	539
Production occupations.....	2,080	1,784	510	521
Transportation and material moving occupations.....	928	890	494	588

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, 1st 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.....	109,147	\$393	\$544	\$830	\$1,328	\$1,999
Men.....	60,639	410	586	912	1,481	2,288
Women.....	48,508	377	506	750	1,148	1,733
White.....	85,226	401	566	857	1,355	2,074
Men.....	48,482	417	597	936	1,510	2,310
Women.....	36,744	384	519	767	1,166	1,742
Black or African American.....	13,582	352	472	673	1,004	1,579
Men.....	6,492	365	499	732	1,082	1,726
Women.....	7,090	344	441	625	946	1,408
Asian.....	6,742	423	613	1,032	1,734	2,483
Men.....	3,721	467	670	1,159	1,882	2,652
Women.....	3,021	402	568	933	1,475	2,205
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	18,545	352	436	612	946	1,472
Men.....	11,273	370	465	641	1,014	1,545
Women.....	7,273	333	411	574	851	1,295
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT						
Total, 25 years and over.....	99,803	409	583	878	1,380	2,091
Less than a high school diploma.....	7,150	315	386	494	670	957
High school graduates, no college ¹	24,807	377	490	679	980	1,408
Some college or associate degree.....	27,179	416	568	782	1,146	1,623
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	40,667	596	853	1,250	1,886	2,837
Bachelor's degree only.....	25,288	555	778	1,155	1,740	2,507
Advanced degree.....	15,379	695	982	1,435	2,110	3,120
Men, 25 years and over.....	55,361	435	616	963	1,542	2,322
Less than a high school diploma.....	4,933	334	407	526	730	1,031
High school graduates, no college ¹	14,978	401	528	751	1,106	1,544
Some college or associate degree.....	14,259	459	617	893	1,302	1,858
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	21,191	647	957	1,461	2,197	3,159
Bachelor's degree only.....	13,456	605	887	1,344	1,920	2,896
Advanced degree.....	7,734	773	1,132	1,705	2,512	3,871
Women, 25 years and over.....	44,443	389	529	779	1,178	1,765
Less than a high school diploma.....	2,217	290	347	415	533	696
High school graduates, no college ¹	9,828	339	431	596	800	1,111
Some college or associate degree.....	12,921	395	509	689	963	1,327
Bachelor's degree and higher ²	19,476	553	761	1,102	1,574	2,234
Bachelor's degree only.....	11,832	504	707	1,006	1,444	2,016
Advanced degree.....	7,644	642	897	1,232	1,768	2,409

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	
	1st 2015	1st 2016	1st 2015	1st 2016
SEX AND AGE				
Total, 16 years and over.....	24,860	25,309	\$246	\$246
Men, 16 years and over.....	8,651	8,655	241	245
16 to 24 years.....	3,772	3,768	191	193
25 years and over.....	4,878	4,888	280	293
Women, 16 years and over.....	16,209	16,654	250	248
16 to 24 years.....	4,766	4,909	174	186
25 years and over.....	11,443	11,745	291	285
RACE, HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY, AND SEX				
White.....	19,926	20,007	248	249
Men.....	6,855	6,728	242	243
Women.....	13,071	13,278	252	252
Black or African American.....	2,810	3,095	225	232
Men.....	1,017	1,123	223	241
Women.....	1,793	1,972	226	227
Asian.....	1,206	1,284	287	257
Men.....	404	453	294	263
Women.....	802	831	281	253
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	4,091	4,209	245	241
Men.....	1,642	1,544	248	248
Women.....	2,450	2,665	242	238

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.