

## Jobs

### 1) How many American workers are unemployed?

8.3 million American workers are currently unemployed. Many of these individuals are the victims of trade and dislocation who will never get their old jobs back. In fact, more than 1.9 million workers were unemployed for more than six months in 2003, the highest rate of long-term unemployment since 1983.

*Source:* On the President's Fiscal Year 2005 Budget for the U.S. Department of Labor, Ross Eisenbrey, Submitted to the U.S. House Committee On Ways and Means on March 4, 2004,  
[http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/webfeatures\\_viewpoints\\_FY2005\\_FedBudget\\_and\\_jobs](http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/webfeatures_viewpoints_FY2005_FedBudget_and_jobs)

### 2) How many jobs have been created during this administration? (Net jobs created is the number created minus the number lost.)

None. We have lost 2.7 million jobs overall of these were 3.2 million lost in the private sector (small gains in the public sector)—making this the worst hiring slump since the Great Depression.

An estimated two million persons have given up the search for work and are thus not counted among active jobseekers, which if counted would put the unemployment rate at 7.0%.

*Sources:* "Labor market left behind: Evidence shows that post-recession economy has not turned into a recovery for workers," Jared Bernstein and Lawrence Mishel, Economic Policy Institute, Sept. 2003,  
[http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/briefingpapers\\_bp142](http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/briefingpapers_bp142)

"Bush's Job-Loss Recovery the Worst on Record Since the Great Depression," Cynthia Green, Labor Research, Oct. 7, 2003, <http://www.laborresearch.org/story2.php/327>

### 3) What is the result of the tax cuts the Bush Administration said would produce jobs?

Only 294,000 jobs were created out of a total 2,448,000 jobs projected to be created in the first seven months after the 2003 tax cuts took effect. This is 2,154,000 jobs short of the prediction of the Bush Administration. To reach the 5.5 million target by the end of 2004, job growth would have to average 473,000 per month over four times the level of job growth in January 2004.

*Source:* Bush Administration's tax cuts falling short in job creation, <http://www.jobwatch.org>, Missing the moving target: Meager job growth and the poor track record of the administration's job forecasts, by Jared Bernstein, Lee Price, and Isaac Shapiro, [http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/issuebriefs\\_ib197](http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/issuebriefs_ib197), February 12, 2004 | EPI Issue Brief #197,  
<http://www.jobwatch.org/creating/index.html>, [http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/webfeatures\\_econindicators\\_jobspict](http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/webfeatures_econindicators_jobspict)

### 4) What kind of jobs are being created?

In the last quarter, mainly low-paying service jobs were created. 40% of the new jobs were in temp and retail.

*Source:* "Agreement will just send more U.S. jobs overseas," John J. Sweeney, *Miami Herald*, Nov. 16, 2003,  
[http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/special\\_packages/focus/7264446.htm](http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/special_packages/focus/7264446.htm)

The new jobs typically pay barely half of what the old jobs did. Most don't offer pensions or health insurance for retirees.

*Source:* "Iowa plant closings mirror nationwide manufacturing job loss," Stephanie Simon, *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 07, 2003, <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/03341/247858.stm>

### 5) The unemployment rate, not including those no longer receiving unemployment benefits, reached 6.4% in June 2003. When was the last time it was this high?

The unemployment rate rose to the highest level in nine years.

“It’s hard to put a positive spin on this report,” said Ethan Harris, chief economist of Lehman Brothers. Not only did overall unemployment rise, he said, but also “the rest of the report didn’t look good, either.” The unemployment rate in May was 6.1%.

The Labor Department said that for blacks, the unemployment rate in June was 11.8%, up from 10.8% in May.

*Sources:* “National unemployment rate hits 6.4%,” *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* Staff and News Services, July 4, 2003, [http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/business/129515\\_economy04.html](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/business/129515_economy04.html)

“9 Million Still Officially Jobless—More Like 15.5 Million,” AFL-CIO, Oct. 3, 2003, <http://www.aflcio.org/yourjobeconomy/jobs/ns10032003.cfm?RenderForPrint=1>

## **6) Why is this called a “jobless recovery”?**

Employment growth at the moment is the lowest for any recovery since the government started keeping such statistics in 1939.

*Source:* “Mystery of the ‘jobless recovery’: As Americans celebrate Labor Day, they face a historically weak labor market and meager rise in paychecks,” David R. Francis, staff writer, *Christian Science Monitor*, <http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0829/p01s02-usec.html>

We are now facing the unprecedented phenomenon of a “job loss” recovery: two years into the rebound, a net loss of 768,000 jobs.

Normally our economy creates millions of jobs when it recovers from a recession. The last recession — the one that cost Bush’s father his job — was considered exceptional in that it was followed by a “jobless recovery.” But even that “jobless recovery” had produced a net gain of 1.4 million jobs by the time two years had passed. The two previous economic recoveries in 1982 and 1975 produced 7.2 million and 4.7 million jobs, respectively, in their first two years.

*Source:* “Economy on upswing, but jobless recovery may do Bush no good,” Mark Weisbrot, *Salt Lake Tribune*, Dec. 5, 2003, <http://www.sltrib.com/2003/Dec/12052003/commenta/117189.asp>

## **7) Open: Do you feel secure in your job? Are you concerned about your job being contracted out, downsized, or privatized? Do you have lay-off protections such as are provided when working under protections provided by unions?**

## **8) How many months in a row have manufacturing jobs been lost during this administration?**

38 consecutive months. AFL-CIO-affiliated unions have been hit hard by the loss of 2.3 million jobs since January 2001, particularly in the manufacturing sector, which has cut payrolls.

*Source:* “200 AFL-CIO workers taking unpaid leave,” Leigh Strobe, AP labor writer, Sat., Nov. 29, 2003, [http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/business/apbiz\\_story.asp?category=1310&slug=Labor%20Money](http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/business/apbiz_story.asp?category=1310&slug=Labor%20Money)

## **9) How many manufacturing jobs have been lost in the United States during this administration?**

2.6 million. When President Bush took office, about 17.1 million Americans worked in factories; today, only 14.5 million do. Last month (November 2003), another seventeen thousand manufacturing jobs disappeared. Manufacturing employment has now fallen for forty straight months. In October, 73.5% of plants and equipment were in active use. Three years ago, more than 80% were.

*Source:* “The Talk of the Town,” John Cassidy, *The New Yorker*, Dec. 8, 2003, [http://www.newyorker.com/talk/content/?031215ta\\_talk\\_cassidy](http://www.newyorker.com/talk/content/?031215ta_talk_cassidy)

## **10) What are workplace policies in place or being promoted by the Bush administration?**

The administration wants to revoke overtime pay and has eliminated OSHA-based ergonomic standards that would protect workers. OSHA estimates the benefits of preventing work related injuries to be approximately \$9 billion per year saved and costing businesses only around \$4.5 million to implement.

*Sources:* “8 million may lose OT pay: Bush administration proposal would dramatically alter rules for paying overtime, study says,” CNN, June 27, 2003, <http://money.cnn.com/2003/06/26/news/economy/epi/>

“White House Wins Overtime Pay Flap,” CBS News, Nov. 22, 2003,

<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/07/11/politics/main562735.shtml>

“Bush Repeals Ergonomic Rule,” CBS News, July 1, 2003,  
<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/07/01/politics/main561163.shtml>

<http://www.cnn.com/2001/TECH/industry/03/07/senate.osha.rules.idg/>

[http://www.aft.org/publications/inside\\_aft/previous/2001/030501.html](http://www.aft.org/publications/inside_aft/previous/2001/030501.html)

[http://www.natat.org/natat/WASH\\_REPORT\\_ISSUES/2001%20Wash%20Reports/washrepmarch2001.htm](http://www.natat.org/natat/WASH_REPORT_ISSUES/2001%20Wash%20Reports/washrepmarch2001.htm)

### **11) How have wages been affected?**

The real wages of the typical (i.e., median) worker stopped growing entirely in 2002, after growing at an inflation-adjusted rate of 2% per year through 2001.

Over the past year, real wages have been falling about 1% for low-wage and high-wage workers, and wages have been stagnant for middle-wage workers.

*Source:* “Labor market left behind: Evidence shows that post-recession economy has not turned into a recovery for workers,” Jared Bernstein and Lawrence Mishel, Economic Policy Institute, Sept. 2003,  
[http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/briefingpapers\\_bp142](http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm/briefingpapers_bp142)

### **12) How do American voters feel about their jobs and the economy?**

The administration gets low marks on its efforts to create more jobs: 62% of voters say it has made either not much or no progress at all toward doing so. 79% of Democrats and 68% of Independents don’t see the administration making progress.

The issue of jobs is a pressing concern, as 41% of American voters say they’re at least somewhat worried about a possible job loss in their household.

Most voters (55%) say the national economy is in bad shape, and less than half think the administration is making much progress in improving it; 50% say the administration is not making much progress, or none at all.

*Source:* “CBS Poll: Bush Failing On Economy,” Sept. 7, 2003,  
<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2003/09/05/opinion/polls/main571872.shtml>

### **13) How do wages and profits compare at this time?**

In short, corporate profits have soared while wages and benefits have lagged. Labor compensation’s share of total income growth averaged 61% in previous recoveries. In this current “recovery,” labor compensation accounts for only 29% of the total income growth.

*Source:* “Fast growth for profits, slow growth for wages and benefits,” Snapshot for Dec. 3, 2003, Josh Bivens, Economic Policy Institute, <http://www.epinet.org/content.cfm?id=1558> [Excellent graphic on this site]

### **14) Where is the job growth?**

23 months into the recovery, private sector jobs are running nearly seven million workers below the norm of the typical hiring cycle. America is short of jobs as never before and offshore outsourcing [jobs overseas] is ramping up as never before. In China, foreign-invested enterprises employ about 3.5 million workers. That number has tripled over the past decade. Add in the subsidiaries funded out of Hong Kong, Macao, and Taiwan, you’ve got another 3.25 million workers. Employment in the information technology business in India is 650,000 right now and is expected to go up another three to four times in the next five years.

*Sources:* “Outsourcing: The calculus of migrating jobs,” Erika Kinetz, *New York Times*, Dec. 6, 2003,  
<http://www.iht.com/articles/120443.html>

“Who Wins and Who Loses as Jobs Move Overseas?” Erika Kinetz, *New York Times*, Dec. 7, 2003,  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/12/07/business/yourmoney/07out.html?ex=1071378000&en=9b0b3f301239bb62&ei=5062&partner=GOOGLE>

Productivity gains in this recovery are mostly the result of trimming workers from the payroll, which benefits business earnings. Alas, this elixir can’t keep working forever. Look out.

*Source:* “Profits and Layoffs,” A. Gary Shilling, 12.22.03,  
[http://www.forbes.com/columnists/free\\_forbes/2003/1222/224.html](http://www.forbes.com/columnists/free_forbes/2003/1222/224.html)

### **15) What is President Bush’s attitude toward federal civilian workers?**

“The 170,000 employees . . . will not receive civil service protection” and private contractors will increasingly take over jobs now in the federal workforce. “President Bush’s current plan, as shown in the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, is nothing less than the privatization of the federal government,” writes Professor Ezra Suleiman in *Dismantling Democratic States*, just published by Princeton University Press.

Source: “Dissing Government,” Jim Hoagland, Nov. 30, 2003, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A20245-2003Nov28.html>

As of November 2002, Bush announced plans to allow the private sector to compete for nearly half the nation’s 1.8 million federal civilian jobs, a move that enraged labor unions and their Democratic allies in Congress.

“This proposal means that the safety of our communities could be entrusted to the administration’s favorite companies and their lobbyists, instead of to dedicated, trained federal workers. Now we see the real White House agenda — it’s not homeland security; it’s union-busting,” said Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA), the senior Democrat on the Labor and Human Resources Committee.

Source: “Bush plans to privatize jobs,” Edwin Chen, *Los Angeles Times*, Fri., Nov. 15, 2002, <http://www.dfw.com/mld/dfw/news/4526019.htm>

### **16) What is President Bush’s attitude toward the well-being of our servicemen and women?**

“For example, last week the *Army Times* ran a story with the headline “An Act of ‘Betrayal’” and the subtitle “In the midst of war, key family benefits face cuts.” The article went on to assert that there has been “a string of actions by the Bush administration to cut or hold down growth in pay and benefits, including basic pay, combat pay, health-care benefits, and the death gratuity paid to survivors of troops who die on active duty.

“It’s hard to deny the stunning insensitivity of Bush’s remarks back on July 2: ‘There are some who feel like that, you know, the conditions are such that they can attack us there. My answer is bring ’em on. We got the force necessary to deal with the security situation.’”

Source: “Spurned soldiers of the U.S.,” Paul Krugman, *New York Times*, Nov. 15, 2003, <http://www.dfw.com/mld/dfw/news/opinion/7270187.htm>

A Democratic presidential candidate assailed Bush for having announced that “he was going to cut the combat pay” for soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan and for having “cut 164,000 veterans off” from health care benefits.

As a Pentagon spokeswoman noted, Bush signed a bill last week that boosts monthly combat pay from \$150 to \$225, along with family separation benefits.

But the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that the administration changed its stance only after publicity about its position last summer.

Source: “Dean Assails Bush on Defense: Rival Cites Combat Pay, Veterans’ Health Benefits,” Howard Kurtz, *Washington Post* staff writer, Dec. 1, 2003, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A23741-2003Nov30.html>

### **17) What is the trend in health care costs for American workers?**

One survey found that the average health benefit cost per employee rose 10.1% this year and increased 14.7% in 2002, according to a new study by Mercer Human Resource Consulting.

Companies lowered their costs, the survey found, by shifting more of the burden to workers.

Sources: “Texas HMOs keep profitable streak going,” Darrin Schlegel, *Houston Chronicle*, Dec. 10, 2003, <http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/ssistory.mpl/business/2283563>

“City workers must pay more for health plan,” Dec. 7, 2003, <http://www.coloradoan.com/news/stories/20031207/opinion/782054.html>