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Majority of U.S. Workers Changing Jobs Are Seeing Real Wage Gains

Roughly one-in-five workers say they are very or somewhat likely to look for a new job in the next six months, but only about a third of these workers think it would be easy to find one

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How we did this

Amid reports of the [Great Resignation](#), Pew Research Center conducted this study to better understand the experiences of individual workers who switched employers in any given month from January 2019 to March 2022.

Part of the study is based on the analysis of monthly [Current Population Survey](#) (CPS) data from January 2019 to March 2022. The CPS is the U.S. government's official source for [monthly estimates of unemployment](#). About three-quarters of the people interviewed in one month of the CPS are also interviewed in the next month, and about half of the people interviewed in one year are also interviewed in the same month the next year. The analysis exploits these features to study the monthly transitions of individual workers from, say, employment to unemployment, and to examine the changes in their earnings from one year to the next.

Another part of the study is based on a nationally representative survey of U.S. adults conducted by Pew Research Center from June 27 to July 4, 2022, using the Center's [American Trends Panel](#). The survey encompassed 6,174 adults, including 3,784 employed adults.

The COVID-19 outbreak [affected data collection efforts](#) by the U.S. government in its surveys, especially in 2020 and 2021, limiting in-person data collection and affecting the response rate. It is possible that some measures of economic outcomes and how they vary across demographic groups are affected by these changes in data collection.

Terminology

“Employer switchers” or “job switchers” are workers who were employed in two consecutive months but report having changed employers. The switch may have happened voluntarily or involuntarily. Some of these workers may have been unemployed for up to four weeks in the transition from one job to the next.

“Unemployed” refers to workers who are currently without a job but are actively seeking work. “Not in labor force” refers to workers who are neither employed nor actively looking for work. This group includes those who are retired, as well as workers who intend to return to the labor force sometime in the future.

White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and who are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Other racial and ethnic groups are included in all totals but are not shown separately.

“High school graduate” refers to those who have a high school diploma or its equivalent, such as a General Education Development (GED) certificate, and those who had completed 12th grade, but their diploma status was unclear (those who had finished 12th grade but not received a diploma are excluded). “Some college” include workers with an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree.

“Real earnings” refers to earnings adjusted for inflation.

Majority of U.S. Workers Changing Jobs Are Seeing Real Wage Gains

Roughly one-in-five workers say they are very or somewhat likely to look for a new job in the next six months, but only about a third of these workers think it would be easy to find one

The [Great Resignation](#) of 2021 has continued into 2022, with quit rates reaching levels [last seen in the 1970s](#). Although not all workers who leave a job are working in another job the next month, the majority of those switching employers are seeing it pay off in higher earnings, according to a new Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. government data.

From April 2021 to March 2022, a period in which quit rates [reached post-pandemic highs](#), the majority of workers switching jobs (60%) saw an increase in their real earnings over the same month the previous year. This happened despite a [surge in the rate of inflation](#) that [has eroded real earnings](#) for many others. Among workers who remained with the same employer, fewer than half (47%) experienced an increase in real earnings.

Overall, 2.5% of workers – about 4 million – switched jobs on average each month from January to March 2022. This share translates into an annual turnover of 30% of workers – nearly 50 million – *if it is assumed that no workers change jobs more than once a year*. It is higher than in 2021, when 2.3% of workers switched employers each month, on average. About a third (34%) of workers who left a job

A rising share of workers who changed jobs are earning more as a result

% of U.S. workers who saw a real wage increase over the same month a year earlier (12-month average)

New employer

Apr. '21 – Mar. '22 60%

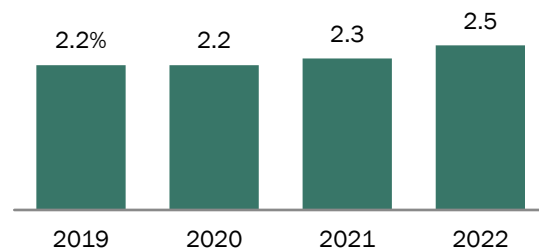
Apr. '20 – Mar. '21 51

Same employer

Apr. '21 – Mar. '22 47

Apr. '20 – Mar. '21 54

% of U.S. workers who changed employers each month, on average



Note: Workers with a new employer changed jobs in the last month. Wages are inflation-adjusted. Estimates are averages of monthly data over the periods shown, except for 2022, which is the average from January to March, nonseasonally adjusted.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey.

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from January to March 2022 – either voluntarily or involuntarily – were with a new employer the following month.

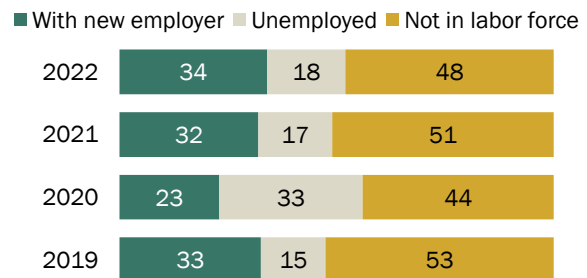
When it comes to the earnings of job switchers, the share finding higher pay has increased since the year following the start of the pandemic. From April 2020 to March 2021, some 51% of job switchers saw an increase in real earnings over the same months the previous year. On the other hand, among workers who did not change employers, the share reporting an increase in real earnings decreased from 54% over the 2020-21 period to 47% over the 2021-22 period. Put another way, the median worker who changed employers saw real gains in earnings in both periods, while the median worker who stayed in place saw a loss during the April 2021 to March 2022 period.¹ Perhaps not coincidentally, Americans cited low pay as one of the top reasons why they quit their job last year in a [Pew Research Center survey](#) conducted in February 2022.

A new Pew Research Center survey finds that about one-in-five workers (22%) say they are very or somewhat likely to look for a new job in the next six months. And despite [reports of widespread job openings](#), 37% of workers say they think finding a new job would be very or somewhat difficult. Workers who feel they have little or no job security in their current position are among the most likely to say they may look for new employment: 45% say this, compared with only 14% of those who say they have a great deal of security in their job. Similarly, those who describe their personal financial situation as only fair or poor are about twice as likely as those who say their finances are excellent or good to say they'd consider making a job change (29% vs. 15%).

Among workers leaving a job between 2019 and the first quarter of 2022, the majority were either unemployed the next month or had left the labor force and were, at least temporarily, not actively seeking work. Except for in 2020, between 15% and 18% of workers who left a job

Most workers who left a job one month either were unemployed the next month or had left the labor force

Among U.S. workers who left a job, % who were ____ in an average month



Note: Estimates are based on the annual average of monthly counts, except for 2022, which is the average from January to March, nonseasonally adjusted. Shares may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey.

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¹ The changes in earnings over the periods April 2020 to March 2021 and April 2021 to March 2022 encompass a sequence of changes over the same months the previous year. For example, changes in earnings of workers during April 2021 to March 2022 refer to changes from April 2020 to April 2021, from May 2020 to May 2021, and so on to the change from March 2021 to March 2022.

one month were unemployed the next month and 48% to 53% had left the labor force. In 2020, the year [the coronavirus pandemic](#) began, a third (33%) of workers who left a job were still unemployed the next month, reflecting the impact of the COVID-19 recession.

Looking across key demographic groups, Black and Hispanic workers, workers without a high school diploma and young adults are more likely to change jobs in any given month. About half of job switchers also change their industry or occupation in a typical month, but this share has not changed since 2019. Women who leave a job are more likely than men who leave a job to take a break from the labor force, and men with children at home are least likely to do the same.

These findings emerge in part from the Pew Research Center's analysis of monthly [Current Population Survey](#) (CPS) data from January 2019 to March 2022. The CPS is the U.S. government's official source for [monthly estimates of unemployment](#). In principle, about three-quarters of the people interviewed in one month of the CPS are also interviewed in the next month. Similarly, about half of the people interviewed in one year are scheduled for interviews in the next year. Much of the analysis exploits these features to study the monthly transitions of workers from, for example, employment to unemployment, and to examine the changes in their earnings from one year to the next.

The report also draws on findings from a nationally representative survey of 6,174 U.S. adults, including 3,784 employed adults. The survey was conducted June 27 to July 4, 2022, using the Center's [American Trends Panel](#). See the [methodology](#) for more details.

The U.S. government's job quits rate

The “quits rate,” [reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) (BLS) each month, is a measure of *voluntary* departures from employment. Workers who retired or transferred to another location are excluded from the quits rate but are included among “other separations” from employment. In addition, workers are classified as having been discharged or laid off, separating from their jobs *involuntarily*.

The quits rate stood at 2.8% [in May 2022](#), up from a recent low of 1.6% in April 2020, seasonally adjusted. The increase since 2019 – when the quits rate averaged 2.3% for the year – is less sizable. The overall job separations rate stood at 3.9% in May 2022, about the same as a pre-pandemic average of 3.8% in 2019.

Not all workers who quit a job voluntarily one month are employed the next month. Based on its [survey of business establishments](#), [the BLS estimates](#) roughly 4 million workers had quit their jobs each month in 2022. Separately, based on the [Current Population Survey](#) (CPS), a survey of households, [the BLS reports](#) that roughly 800,000 workers who were unemployed in an average month in 2022 were job leavers. Although these two estimates are based on different universes, they suggest that a substantial share of workers who voluntarily quit their jobs are unemployed, at least temporarily. Yet others [may be taking a break from work](#).

The measures used in this report

This report focuses on three groups of workers who have seen a change in their employment status since the previous month. One group consists of workers who changed employers. They had jobs in both time periods but made a switch, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. It is possible that some of these workers were unemployed for up to four weeks in the transition from one job to the next. This group differs from the universe for the quits rate for two reasons: It includes involuntary departures, but it excludes those who were either unemployed or not seeking work the next month.

The second group of workers in the report consists of those who separated from employment but were still unemployed the next month. The third group is comprised of workers who were not seeking work in the month following a job separation. They are not necessarily retired and may return to work later.

The estimates in this report are derived from the CPS, whereas the official quits and separation rates are based on a survey of establishments. There are [several differences](#) between these two surveys, including the fact that only the CPS encompasses the unincorporated self-employed, unpaid family workers, agricultural workers and private household workers.

Black and Hispanic workers, workers with no college education and younger workers are more likely to change jobs in any given month

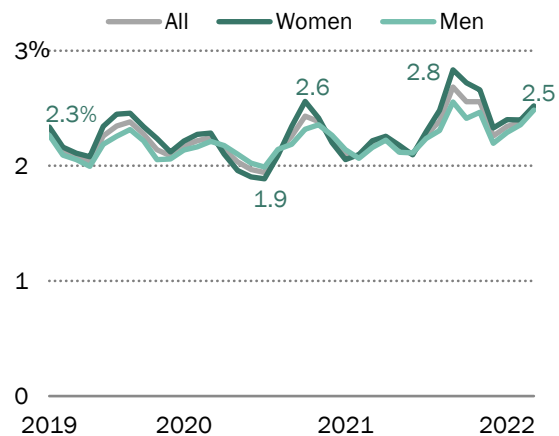
The rate at which workers switch jobs on average each month has seen its ups and downs since 2019. The turnover rate in the first quarter of 2022 (2.5%) was higher than in mid-2020, when the monthly rate had dropped to 1.9% during the COVID-19 downturn. However, it is similar to the rate that prevailed in the first quarter of 2019 (2.3%).²

Men and women changed employers monthly over the 2019-2022 period at a roughly comparable rate. Starting at 2.3% in the first quarter of 2019 for each, the monthly turnover across employers for men and women hit a low near 1.9% in mid-2020. Subsequently, the rate neared a peak for both women (2.8%) and men (2.6%) in the third quarter of 2021. In the first quarter of 2022, the shares of men and women who had changed employers in the last month both stood at 2.5%.

The presence of children at home is also not related to the shares of men and women changing employers. In the first quarter of 2019, the monthly rates for men and women with children at home stood at 2.1% and 2.2%, respectively. In the first quarter of 2022, the rates for these two groups of parents stood at 2.3% each.

Men and women are about equally likely to change employers monthly

% of U.S. workers who changed employers in the last month, March 2019 to March 2022



Note: Estimates shown are three-month moving averages, nonseasonally adjusted. Data labels shown are for women.
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey.
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² The [job separation rate](#) published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics stood at 3.5% in the first quarter of 2019 and 3.8% in the first quarter of 2022, nonseasonally adjusted.

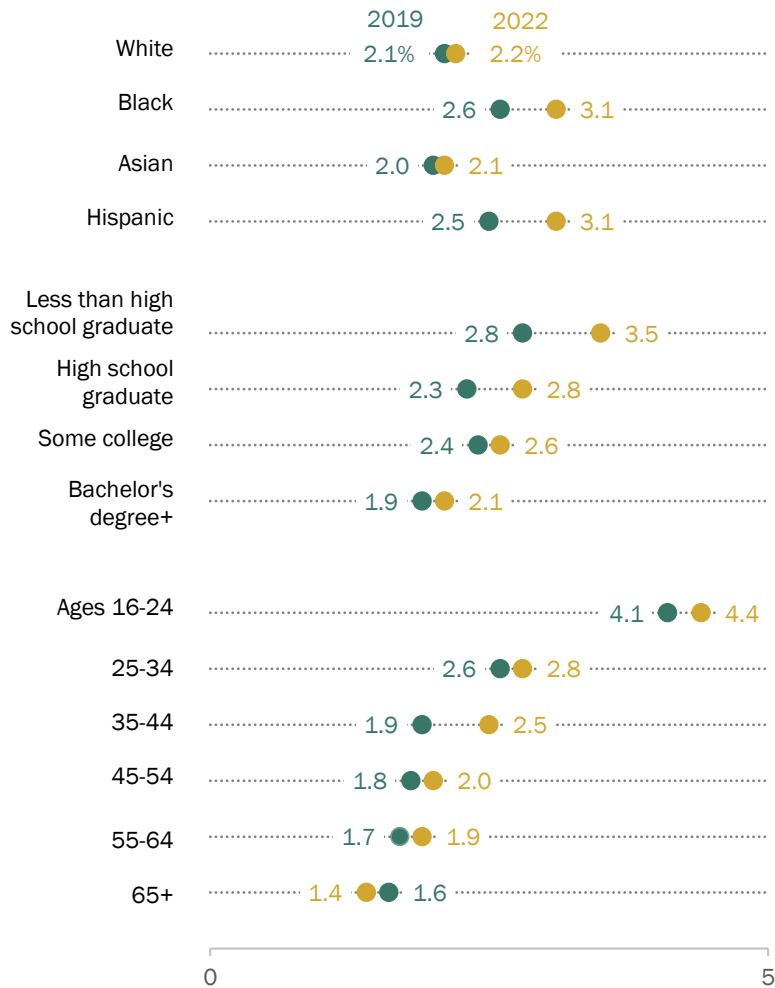
Among the major racial and ethnic groups, Hispanic and Black workers are more likely to switch employers than White and Asian workers. In 2019, 2.6% of Black workers and 2.5% of Hispanic workers moved from one employer to another on average each month, compared with 2.1% of White workers and 2.0% of Asian workers. Moreover, while the likelihood of changing employers increased among Hispanic workers from 2019 to 2022 – to 3.1% – it remained about the same among White and Asian workers.

There is also a clear pattern across workers of different levels of education. Less educated workers are more transient, with workers without a high school diploma moving across employers at a monthly rate of 3.5% in 2022, up from 2.8% in 2019. Workers with a bachelor’s degree or higher level of education switched at a rate of 2.1%, about the same as in 2019.

Similarly, young adults (ages 16 to 24) are more likely than older workers to change employers in an average month. Young

Black and Hispanic workers, less educated workers and younger workers more likely to change employers monthly than their counterparts

% of U.S. workers who changed employers in the last month, 2019 and 2022



Note: Estimates for 2019 are based on the annual average of monthly counts of workers who changed employers; estimates for 2022 are averages over January to March, nonseasonally adjusted. “Some college” includes those with an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree. White, Black and Asian workers include only single-race non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey. “Majority of U.S. Workers Changing Jobs Are Seeing Real Wage Gains”

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adults moved across employers at a monthly rate of 4.1% in 2019 and 4.4% in 2022. Workers nearing retirement (ages 55 to 64) moved at a rate of 1.9% in 2022.

Workers who move from one employer to another in the space of a month may experience unemployment in the interim, especially those whose departure was involuntary. Thus, one possible factor behind the patterns observed among demographic groups is how the [unemployment rate varies across groups](#). Historically, there is little difference in the unemployment rate between men and women. However, compared with their counterparts, Black and Hispanic workers, less educated workers, and younger workers tend to experience higher rates of unemployment through all stages of the business cycle, whether through voluntary or involuntary separations from their previous jobs. As a result, relatively higher shares of these workers are on the lookout for new job opportunities at any point in time or have switched jobs from one month to the next.

Workers who changed jobs saw higher wage growth than other workers following the COVID-19 downturn

After increasing by only 1.4% from December 2019 to December 2020, U.S. consumer prices surged by 7.0% from December 2020 to December 2021. The pace has only [picked up since then](#). As a result, the share of workers overall experiencing an increase in real earnings – over and above inflation – fell from 54% over the April 2020-March 2021 period to 47% over the April 2021-March 2022 period.

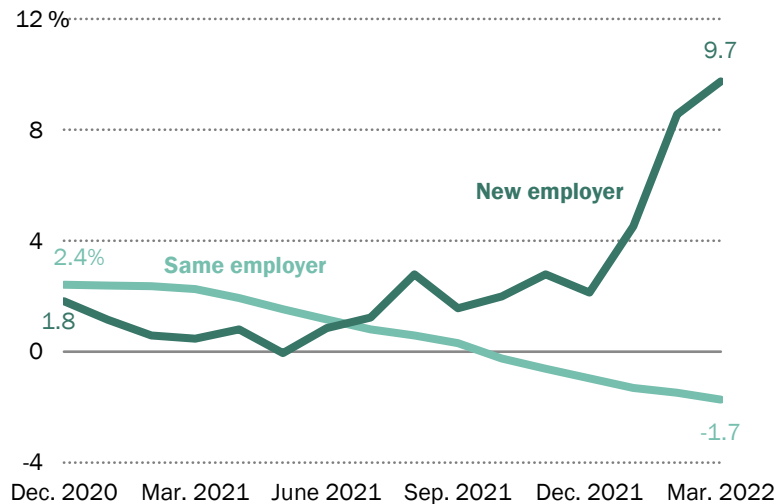
Considered another way, half of U.S. workers sampled in the April 2020-March 2021 period saw a real wage gain of 2.3% or higher, compared with the same month the year before. The other half either experienced a gain of less than 2.3% or saw their earnings decrease. But the script flipped a year later, with half of the workers experiencing a real wage *loss* of 1.6% or more over the April 2021- March 2022 period. Thus, the median worker in the U.S. has not fared well financially in the current inflationary environment.

However, most workers who switched employers continued to experience an increase in real earnings, and [amid a surge in demand for new hires](#), their advantage over other workers in this respect appears to be widening.

From January to December 2020, half of the workers who changed employers in some month that year experienced a wage increase of 1.8% or more, and half of the workers who stayed put saw an increase of 2.4% or more, compared with their wages in January to December 2019. The next year, from January to December 2021, the median worker among those who changed employers saw a wage increase of 2.1%, and the median worker who did not switch employers saw a loss of 1.0%. From April 2021 to March 2022, half of the workers who changed jobs experienced a real increase of 9.7% or more over their pay a year earlier. Meanwhile, the median worker who remained in the same job experienced a loss of 1.7%.

Most workers who changed employers are seeing real gains in earnings into 2022

Median % change in U.S. workers' real earnings over the same month the year before



Note: Estimates refer to 12-month periods ending in the month and year shown. For example, the March 2022 estimate refers to the median of the percentage change in the earnings of individual workers sampled over the period from April 2021 to March 2022. The estimate encompasses the change in earnings of workers over the same month the previous year, from April 2020 to April 2021, from May 2020 to May 2021, and so on to the change from March 2021 to March 2022. Wages are inflation-adjusted. Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey. "Majority of U.S. Workers Changing Jobs Are Seeing Real Wage Gains"

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Workers often change industry or occupation as they move from one employer to another

Wages are not all that change for workers moving across employers; many often change the industry or occupation in which they are working as they move from one employer to the next. From 2019 to 2021, about 48% of workers who changed employers also found themselves in a new industry, on average each month – a pattern undisturbed by the pandemic. Because large firms may [operate in more than one industry](#), workers who did not change employers are not entirely lacking in this opportunity. But only about 3% of these workers moved from one industry to another in a typical month.

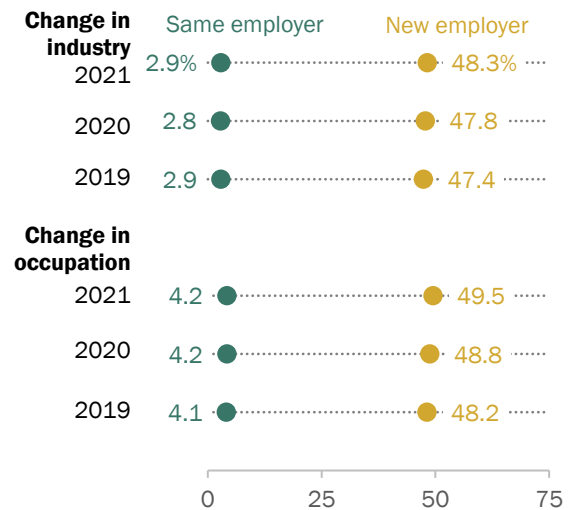
A similar pattern played out with respect to changes in occupation. Roughly half (49.5%) of workers who changed employers also changed occupations in an average month from 2019 to 2021. Some 4% of workers not changing employers experienced a change in occupation, an opportunity that may present itself through training or career progression within the same establishment or firm.

Overall, about 4% of all workers changed industries in an average month from 2019 to 2021. In 2021, the average rate at which workers left an industry for another in a single month varied from 2.2% in Educational Services to 5.8% in Social Services. The rates of departure from Hospitals and Other Health Services and Public Administration (about 3% or less) were also relatively low, and exits from Repair and Maintenance Services, Personal and Laundry Services/Private Household Services, and Arts and Entertainment (about 5% or higher) were relatively elevated. This general pattern was also present in 2019 and 2020.

About 5% of workers overall switched occupations in 2021. The share of workers leaving an occupation in a typical month in 2021 tended to be lower in professional occupations, such as Education, Instruction and Library Occupations and Legal Occupations (about 3% each), and relatively higher in more blue-collar jobs, such as Transportation and Material Moving, Production, and Farming, Fishing and Forestry Occupations (about 6% or higher). A similar pattern prevailed in 2019 and 2020.

About half of workers who changed employers also moved to a different industry or occupation

% of U.S. workers who changed the industry or occupation of their employment on average each month



Note: The transitions shown represent movements across 18 major industries and 22 major occupations enumerated in the source data. Armed forces are excluded. Estimates are based on the annual average of monthly counts of workers who changed industry or occupation.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey.

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Among workers who quit or lose a job one month, women are more likely than men to leave the labor force by the next month

In addition to workers who successfully transition from one employer to another within a month there are workers who are left unemployed and others who opt to leave the labor force. The latter two groups combined outnumber those moving from job to job.

From January to March 2022, about 9 million workers separated from their place of employment each month, on average. This included 3.1 million workers (34%) who were on the job with a different employer the next month. An additional 1.6 million workers (18%) were unemployed and looking for a new job, and 4.3 million (48%) had left the labor force, at least temporarily.

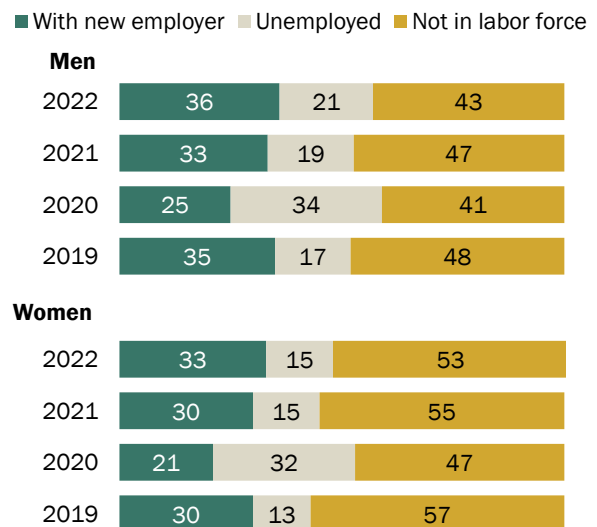
A similar pattern had existed in 2019 and 2021, when only about a third of workers who left employment one month were at work the next month, on average. In 2020, the year the pandemic struck and forced widespread business closures, only 23% of workers who left employment one month were at a new job within a month. About a third (33%) were still looking for a job, roughly double the shares in 2019, 2021 and 2022.

Among workers separating from employment in any given month, women are more likely than men to leave the labor force by the next month. For example, in 2021, 2.5 million women and 2.1 million men left the labor force on average each month. This represented 55% of women and 47% of men who separated from their previous place of employment.

The departure of workers from the labor force is balanced by the return or the new entry of workers into the labor force. From January to March 2022, some 2.9 million women and 2.5 million men entered the labor force each month, on average.

Women are more likely than men to leave the labor force each month, on average

Among U.S. workers who left a job, % who were ___ in an average month



Note: Estimates are based on the annual average of monthly counts, except for 2022, which is the average from January to March, nonseasonally adjusted. Shares may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey.

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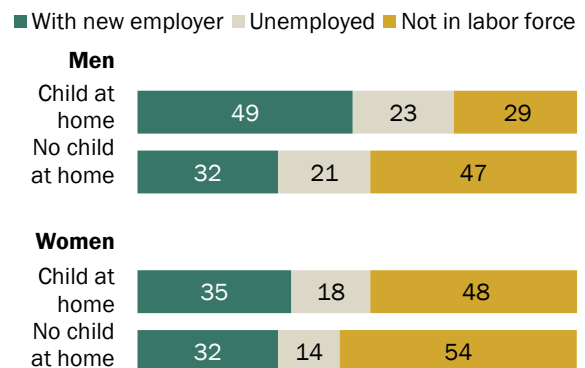
Overall, a greater number of women than men tend to enter or exit the labor force in an average month. To some extent, this is likely driven by the demands of childbirth. But women also generally devote [more time than men to familial duties](#), whether caring for children or on household activities, and are more likely to [adapt their careers to care for family](#).

Among workers with children at home who leave employment in any month, there is a significant gap between men and women in the shares that opt to leave the labor force. About half (48%) of women with children at home did so on average from January to March 2022, compared with 29% of men with children at home. Men with no children at home are also more likely than men with children at home to exit the labor force monthly. That is, in part, due to the fact that adults with no children at home are older on average, encompassing many of the workers nearing retirement age.

Among racial and ethnic groups, Asian workers leaving employment one month are less likely than other workers to still be unemployed the next month. On average from January to March 2022, only 7% of Asian workers were unemployed the month following a job separation compared with 24% of Black workers, 21% of Hispanic workers and 16% of White workers.

Men with children at home are least likely to leave the labor force

Among U.S. workers who left a job, % who were ____ in an average month, January to March 2022



Note: Estimates are based on the average of monthly counts from January to March 2022, nonseasonally adjusted. Shares may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey.

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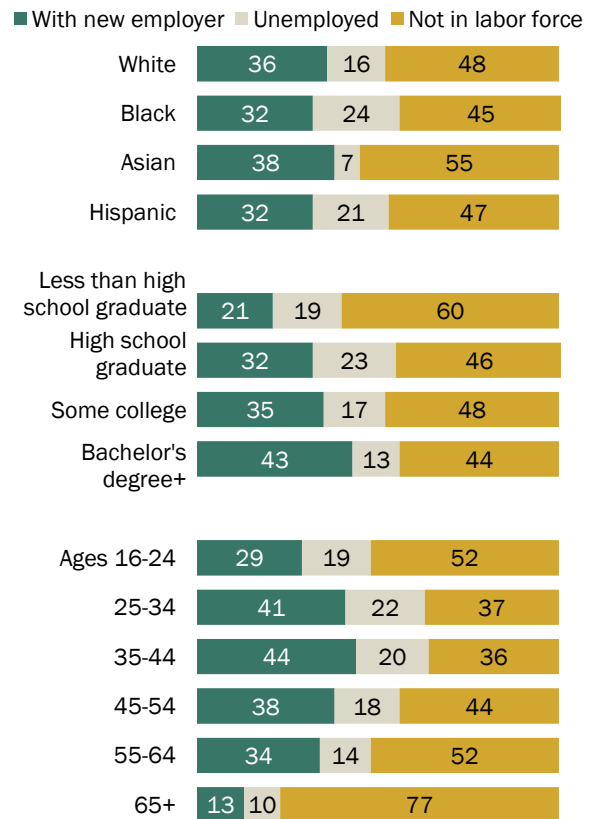
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Workers with at least a high school diploma are less likely to exit the labor force and more likely to be with a new employer a month after leaving a job compared with their counterparts. Among workers who did not receive a high school diploma, 60% of those who left employment one month had left the labor force by the next month and only 21% were reemployed. On the other hand, among workers with a bachelor's degree or higher level of education, 43% were reemployed the next month, about the same as the share (44%) that left the labor force.

Not surprisingly, a large share (77%) of workers ages 65 and older – the traditional retirement age bracket – exit the labor force monthly. About half of young adult workers (ages 16 to 24) and those nearing retirement (ages 55 to 64) also exit the labor force monthly upon separation from employment. Among adults in the prime of their working years (ages 25 to 54), 38% to 44% are reemployed within a month, about the same as the share that step away from the labor force.

Less educated and older workers are more likely to exit the labor force on average each month

Among U.S. workers who left a job, % who were ____ in an average month, January to March 2022



Note: Estimates are based on the average of monthly counts from January to March 2022, nonseasonally adjusted. Shares may not sum to 100 due to rounding.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of the Current Population Survey.

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Roughly one-in five workers say they're likely to look for a new job in the next six months

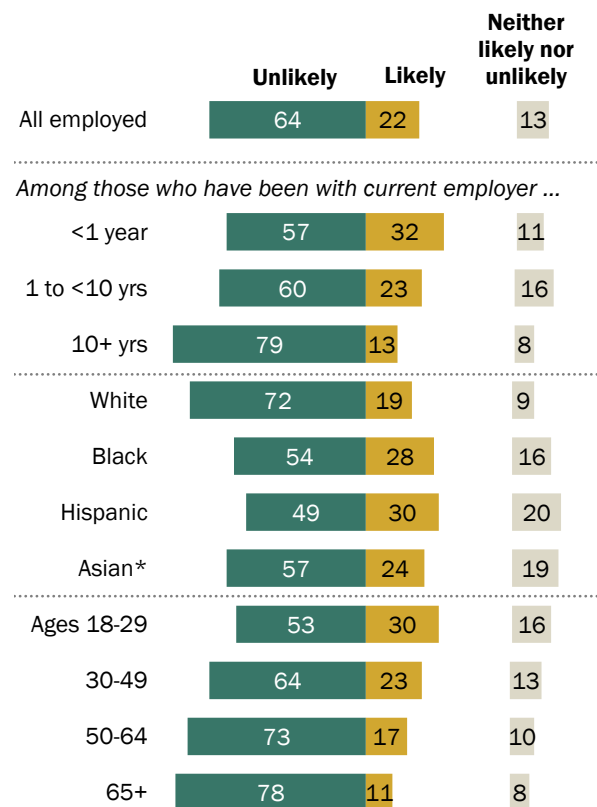
While most workers have no near-term plans to leave their jobs, 22% say they are very or somewhat likely to look for a new job in the next six months. Most (64%) say they are very or somewhat *unlikely* to look for a new job in the coming months.

Workers who have been with their employer for less than a year are significantly more likely than those who've been in their current job longer to say they're likely to look for a new job in the next six months. About a third (32%) of those who've been in their job for less than a year say this, including 20% who say they are very likely to seek a new job. Among those who've been with their current employer between one and 10 years, 23% say they're very or somewhat likely to look for a new job; 13% who've been in their job longer say the same.

The likelihood of changing jobs in the near future also differs across key demographic groups. Higher shares of Black (28%) and Hispanic (30%) workers, compared with White workers (19%), say they are very or somewhat likely to look for a new job in the next six months. About a quarter of Asian workers (24%) say the same. And younger workers are more likely than middle-aged and older workers to say this: 30% of workers ages 18 to 29 say they are likely to look for a new job in the next six months, compared with 23% of workers ages 30 to 49, 17% of those ages 50 to 64 and 11% of those 65 and older. This is related to the fact that younger workers are by far the most likely to have been with their current employer for less than a year.

Workers with less tenure are more open to changing jobs in the coming months

Among employed U.S. adults, % saying they are very or somewhat ___ to look for a new job in the next six months



*Estimates for Asian adults are representative of English speakers only.

Note: Share of respondents who didn't offer an answer not shown. White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 27-July 4, 2022. "Majority of U.S. Workers Changing Jobs Are Seeing Real Wage Gains"

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The share who say they are likely to look for a new job in the coming months does not differ significantly by educational attainment.

Workers who are more downbeat about their own financial situation are more likely to say they may make a job change. Among those who describe their current financial situation as only fair or poor, 29% say they are likely to look for a new job in the next six months. Only 15% of those who rate their financial situation as excellent or good say the same.

Roughly four-in-ten workers say it would be easy to find a new job if they looked today

Workers are split over how easy or difficult it would be for them to get the kind of job they'd want if they were to look for a new job today. About four-in-ten (39%) say it would be very or somewhat easy, while a similar share (37%) say it would be very or somewhat difficult. About a quarter (23%) say it would be neither easy nor difficult for them to get the kind of job they want if they were looking right now.

Workers who aren't actually intending to look for a new job soon are more likely than those who are to say it would be easy for them to find one. Among those who say it's unlikely they will look for a job in the next six months, 43% say it would be easy for them to get the kind of job they want if they were looking today. Among those who say they are likely to look for another job soon, 32% say the same.

Upper-income workers are significantly more likely than middle- and lower-income workers to say they'd have an easy time finding a job if they were looking today. Fully half of upper-income workers say it would be easy for them to find the kind of job they wanted, compared with 38% of middle-income workers and 34% of those with lower incomes.³

Workers who don't plan on changing jobs more likely to say they'd have an easy time landing a new position

Among employed U.S. adults, % saying it would be very or somewhat ___ for them to get the kind of job they want if they were to look for a new job today

	Difficult	Easy	Neither easy nor difficult
All employed	37	39	23
<i>Among those who are very or somewhat ___ to look for a new job in the next six months</i>			
Likely	43	32	24
Unlikely	36	43	21

Note: Share of respondents who didn't offer an answer not shown.
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 27-July 4, 2022.
"Majority of U.S. Workers Changing Jobs Are Seeing Real Wage Gains"

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³ Family incomes are based on 2020 earnings and adjusted for differences in purchasing power by geographic region and for household sizes. Middle income is defined here as two-thirds to double the median annual family income for all panelists on the American Trends Panel. Lower income falls below that range; upper income falls above it. See [Methodology](#) section of the report for more details.

Perceived job security is linked with likelihood of looking for a new job

Most workers feel they have at least a fair amount of job security in their current position. About a third (35%) say they have a great deal of job security, and a similar share (34%) say they have a fair amount. Smaller shares say they have some (16%) or a little (9%) job security, and 6% say they have none at all.

Job security is more tenuous for those workers who say they’re likely to look for a new job in the next six months. Only 22% of these workers say they have a great deal of job security in their current position. By contrast,

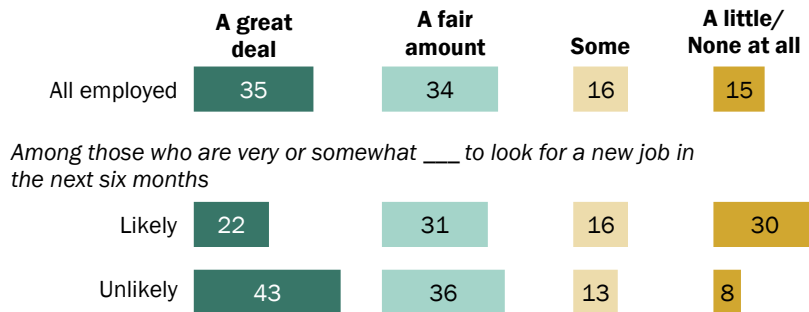
among those who say it’s unlikely they’d look for a job in the coming months, 43% say they have a great deal of security in their current job.

Workers who’ve been with their current employer for 10 years or longer are among the most likely to say they have a great deal of job security: 46% say this, compared with about a third (32%) of those who’ve been with their employer between one and 10 years and 26% who’ve been with their employer less than a year.

There are wide differences by income as well: 51% of upper-income workers say they have a great deal of job security, compared with 35% of middle-income workers and 25% of those with lower incomes.

Relatively few workers who say they’re likely to look for a new job in the coming months say they have a great deal of job security in their current position

Among employed U.S. adults, % saying they feel they currently have ___ job security



Note: Share of respondents who didn’t offer an answer not shown.
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 27-July 4, 2022.
 “Majority of U.S. Workers Changing Jobs Are Seeing Real Wage Gains”

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Methodology

Secondary data analysis

The estimates of labor market trends in this report are derived from [Current Population Survey](#) (CPS) data. Conducted jointly by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the CPS is a monthly survey of about 60,000 households and is the source of the nation's official [statistics on unemployment](#). The COVID-19 outbreak [affected data collection efforts](#) by the U.S. government in its surveys, especially in 2020 and 2021, limiting in-person data collection and affecting the response rate. It is possible that some measures of economic outcomes and how they vary across demographic groups are affected by these changes in data collection.

The CPS microdata used in this analysis are the [Public Use Microdata Files](#) released by the Census Bureau. The specific files are for the months of January 2019 to March 2022.

The employer-switching rate

Estimates of the rates at which workers switched employers from one month to the next are based on the following question asked each month in the CPS:

PUIODP1: Last month, it was reported that you worked for (employer's name). Do you still work for (employer's name) (at your main job)?

The universe for this question includes employed workers who were also interviewed in the previous month. That represents about 75% of employed workers in any given month.

Estimates of employer switching are derived from the monthly cross-section files. Most of the estimates are based on the annual average of monthly counts of workers who reported changing or not changing employers. Some estimates are simple three-month moving averages of monthly estimates of the shares changing employers.

Longitudinal analysis

The CPS data have the characteristic that, in principle, about three-quarters of the people interviewed in one month are also interviewed in the next month. Much of the analysis exploits this feature to study the monthly transitions of workers from, say, employment to unemployment or from one industry to another. Similarly, about half the people interviewed in one year are also interviewed in the same month next year. Earnings data are only available for these workers and the matching of CPS files from year to year is used to examine the 12-month change in their earnings.

These aspects of the analysis call for the matching of the records of individuals from month to month or from year to year. The matching is based on household identification variables included in the CPS, a person's relationship to the reference person, the line number of the person's record within the household, and state of residence. Additional edits were imposed to ensure that respondents who were matched were of the same sex, race and nativity. Age was allowed to advance by one year for month-to-month matches and up to two years for year-to-year matches. See the [guidance provided](#) by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) for more on the matching of CPS data over time.

In the longitudinal analysis, the estimates for 2019 are based on 11 months of matched files, from January-February 2019 through November-December 2019. Estimates for 2020 and 2021 are based on 12 months of matched files. For example, the estimates for 2020 include the December 2019-January 2020 matched file. Estimates for 2022 are based on three matched files, starting with December 2021-January 2022 and ending with February-March 2022.

The monthly estimates from the matched files use the longitudinal weight in the CPS for the second of the two months in the pair. The year-to-year longitudinal estimates use the outgoing rotation weight from the CPS. It should be noted that longitudinal analyses may be subject to [attrition bias](#), the result of respondents exiting the sample prior to their second or subsequent rounds of interviews, perhaps because of an address change. For example, if it is the case that workers switching employers are more likely to leave the CPS sample that would tend to lower the estimated rate of employer switching.

Workers who were employed one month may be employed, unemployed or not in the labor force the next month. Those who are employed in both months are additionally separated into two groups – those who changed employers and those who did not. This separation is based on the employer-switching rate estimated as described above. Because the sample in the longitudinal files differs from the sample in the cross-section files, the resulting estimate of the employer-switching rate may also be different. For example, using the monthly longitudinal files, the average monthly rate of employer-switching in 2021 is estimated to be 2.0%. But, using the cross-section files, the average monthly rate of employer-switching in 2021 is estimated to be 2.3%. The lower rate of employer switching in the longitudinal files suggests that workers who make the switch are more likely to be among those who bowed out of the CPS sample.

Industry and occupation

The industry groups used in this analysis are based on the detailed industries (PRDTIND1) listed in the CPS. The 51 detailed industries identified in the CPS, excluding Armed Forces, are

regrouped into 18 categories for use in this analysis. For example, nine durable goods manufacturing industries are grouped into a single durable goods manufacturing category. The occupation categories in this analysis are the same as the 22 detailed occupations (PRDTOCC1) listed in the CPS (excluding Armed Forces).

Because of changes to the CPS occupation and industry classifications in January 2020, estimates of the shares of workers changing occupation or industry do not include the period from December 2019 to January 2020.

The estimates of the rates at which workers moved across industries or occupations are adjusted for missing information on employer switching. In 2019, for example, 3.7% of workers overall who were employed in both months were estimated to have switched industries. But among workers with information on whether they changed employers, only 1.4% reported a change in industry. This skew resulted from the fact that records of workers reporting an industry change disproportionately lacked information on whether they changed employers. To correct for this skew, cases with data on industry of employment in both periods but not on employer change were assumed to have switched employers at the same rate as workers overall, 2.0% in an average month in the matched data files for 2019. This boosted the rate of industry switching among workers with information on whether they changed employers from 1.4% to 3.7%. The post-estimation procedure changed the rate of industry switching among job stayers from 0.4% to 2.9%. The rate of movement across industries among job switchers changed from 49.5% to 47.4%.

Estimating the change in earnings

Wages are adjusted for inflation with the [Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers](#) (CPI-U) as published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

In the analysis of changes in earning from one year to the next, job switchers are workers who reported changing employers in the last month. For example, consider a worker who was present in the CPS sample in both March 2021 and March 2022. The change in earnings for this worker is based on their reported wages in March 2021 and March 2022, adjusted for inflation. They are additionally classified as job switchers if they also reported a change in employer from February to March 2022.

Because the CPS asks about wages from only one-fourth of the overall sample of employed workers, the number of job switchers who also reported wages can be small for any given month. For that reason, a series of 12-month files were constructed to estimate how the earnings of job switchers and job stayers have evolved over time. The first of these files contains data on the wages

of workers from January 2020 to December 2020, matched to their wages from January 2019 to December 2019. The last of these files contains data on the wages of workers from April 2021 to March 2022, matched to their wages from April 2020 to March 2021. Changes in earnings from one year to the next are estimated for individual workers and the median of these individual changes is presented in the report, as well as the shares of workers seeing a gain in earnings.

Race, ethnicity, and educational attainment

White, Black and Asian adults include those who report being only one race and who are not Hispanic. Hispanics are of any race. Other racial and ethnic groups are included in all totals but are not shown separately.

“High school graduate” refers to those who have a high school diploma or its equivalent, such as a General Education Development (GED) certificate, and those who had completed 12th grade, but their diploma status was unclear (those who had finished 12th grade but not received a diploma are excluded). Adults with “some college” include those with an associate degree and those who attended college but did not obtain a degree.

Statistical significance

Comparisons between estimates are tested for statistical significance using the ‘pweight’ option in Stata and the 99% confidence interval, unless otherwise mentioned. [Replicate weights](#) are not included in the monthly CPS files.

The American Trends Panel survey methodology

Overview

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report is drawn from the panel wave conducted from June 27 to July 4, 2022, and included oversamples of Asian, Black and Hispanic adults, as well as 18- to 29-year-old Republicans and Republican-leaning independents in order to provide more precise estimates of the opinions and experiences of these smaller demographic subgroups. These oversampled groups are weighted back to reflect their correct proportions in the population. A total of 6,174 panelists responded out of 7,176 who were sampled, for a response rate of 86%. The cumulative response

rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 3%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged on to the survey and completed at least one item is 2%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 6,174 respondents is plus or minus 1.8 percentage points.

Panel recruitment

The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 9,942 (50%) agreed to participate.

American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

Recruitment dates	Mode	Invited	Joined	Active panelists remaining
Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014	Landline/ cell RDD	9,809	5,338	1,593
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	936
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	470
Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018	ABS	9,396	8,778	4,420
Aug. 19 to Nov. 30, 2019	ABS	5,900	4,720	1,618
June 1 to July 19, 2020; Feb. 10 to March 31, 2021	ABS	3,197	2,812	1,692
May 29 to July 7, 2021				
Sept. 16 to Nov. 1, 2021	ABS	1,329	1,162	931
	Total	39,540	27,414	11,660

Note: Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

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In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based recruitment. Invitations were sent to a stratified, random sample of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. Sampled households receive mailings asking a randomly selected adult to complete a survey online. A question at the end of the survey asks if the respondent is willing to join the ATP. Starting in 2020 another stage was added to the recruitment. Households that do not respond to the online survey are sent a paper version of the questionnaire, \$5 and a postage-paid return envelope. A subset of the adults returning the paper version of the survey are invited to join the ATP. This subset of adults receive a follow-up mailing with a \$10 pre-incentive and invitation to join the ATP.

Across the four address-based recruitments, a total of 19,822 adults were invited to join the ATP, of whom 17,472 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. In each household, the adult with the next birthday was asked to go online to complete a survey, at the end of which they were invited to join the panel. Of the 27,414 individuals who have ever joined the

ATP, 11,660 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File has been estimated to cover as much as 98% of the population, although some studies suggest that the coverage could be in the low 90% range.⁴ The American Trends Panel never uses breakout routers or chains that direct respondents to additional surveys.

Sample design

The overall target population for this survey was non-institutionalized persons ages 18 and older living in the U.S., including Alaska and Hawaii. It featured a stratified random sample from the ATP in which Asian, Black and Hispanic adults, as well as 18- to 29-year-old Republicans and Republican-leaning independents were selected with certainty. The remaining panelists were sampled at rates designed to ensure that the share of respondents in each stratum is proportional to its share of the U.S. adult population to the greatest extent possible. Respondent weights are adjusted to account for differential probabilities of selection as described in the Weighting section below.

Questionnaire development and testing

The questionnaire was developed by Pew Research Center in consultation with Ipsos. The web program was rigorously tested on both PC and mobile devices by the Ipsos project management team and Pew Research Center researchers. The Ipsos project management team also populated test data that was analyzed in SPSS to ensure the logic and randomizations were working as intended before launching the survey.

Incentives

All respondents were offered a post-paid incentive for their participation. Respondents could choose to receive the post-paid incentive in the form of a check or a gift code to Amazon.com or could choose to decline the incentive. Incentive amounts ranged from \$5 to \$20 depending on whether the respondent belongs to a part of the population that is harder or easier to reach. Differential incentive amounts were designed to increase panel survey participation among groups that traditionally have low survey response propensities.

⁴ AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling. 2016. "[AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling.](#)"

Data collection protocol

The data collection field period for this survey was June 27 to July 4, 2022. Postcard notifications were mailed to all ATP panelists with a known residential address on June 27, 2022.

Invitations were sent out in two separate launches: Soft Launch and Full Launch. Sixty panelists were included in the soft launch, which began with an initial invitation sent on June 27, 2022. The ATP panelists chosen for the initial soft launch were known responders who had completed previous ATP surveys within one day of receiving their invitation. All remaining English- and Spanish-speaking panelists were included in the full launch and were sent an invitation on June 28, 2022.

All panelists with an email address received an email invitation and up to two email reminders if they did not respond to the survey. All ATP panelists that consented to SMS messages received an SMS invitation and up to two SMS reminders.

Invitation and reminder dates

	Soft Launch	Full Launch
Initial invitation	June 27, 2022	June 28, 2022
First reminder	June 30, 2022	June 30, 2022
Final reminder	July 2, 2022	July 2, 2022

Data quality checks

To ensure high-quality data, the Center's researchers performed data quality checks to identify any respondents showing clear patterns of satisficing. This includes checking for very high rates of leaving questions blank, as well as always selecting the first or last answer presented. As a result of this checking, one ATP respondent was removed from the survey dataset prior to weighting and analysis.

Weighting

The ATP data is weighted in a multistep process that accounts for multiple stages of sampling and nonresponse that occur at different points in the survey process. First, each panelist begins with a base weight that reflects their probability of selection for their initial recruitment survey. The base weights for panelists recruited in different years are scaled to be proportionate to the effective sample size for all active panelists in their cohort and then calibrated to align with the population benchmarks in the accompanying table to correct for nonresponse to recruitment surveys and

panel attrition. If only a subsample of panelists was invited to participate in the wave, this weight is adjusted to account for any differential probabilities of selection.

Among the panelists who completed the survey, this weight is then calibrated again to align with the population benchmarks identified in the accompanying table and trimmed at the 1st and 99th percentiles to reduce the loss in precision stemming from variance in the weights. Sampling errors and tests of statistical significance take into account the effect of weighting.

Some of the population benchmarks used for weighting come from surveys conducted prior to the coronavirus outbreak that began in February 2020. However, the weighting variables for panelists recruited in 2021 were measured at the time they were recruited to the panel. Likewise, the profile variables for existing panelists were updated from panel surveys conducted in July or August 2021.

This does not pose a problem for most of the variables used in the weighting, which are quite stable at both the population and individual levels. However, volunteerism may have changed over the intervening period in ways that made their 2021 measurements incompatible with the available (pre-pandemic) benchmarks. To address this, volunteerism is weighted using the profile variables that were measured in 2020. For all other weighting dimensions, the more recent panelist measurements from 2021 are used.

For panelists recruited in 2021, plausible values were imputed using the 2020 volunteerism values from existing panelists with similar characteristics. This ensures that any patterns of change that were observed in the existing panelists were also reflected in the new recruits when the weighting was performed.

Weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Age x Gender	2019 American Community Survey (ACS)
Education x Gender	
Education x Age	
Race/Ethnicity x Education	
Born inside vs. outside the U.S. among Hispanics and Asian Americans	
Years lived in the U.S.	
Census region x Metro/Non-metro	2020 CPS March Supplement
Volunteerism	2019 CPS Volunteering & Civic Life Supplement
Voter registration	2018 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Party affiliation	2021 National Public Opinion Reference Survey (NPORS)
Frequency of internet use	
Religious affiliation	

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on non-institutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total U.S. adult population.

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The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey.

Group	Unweighted sample size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	6,174	1.8 percentage points
All employed	3,784	2.3 percentage points

Note: This survey includes an [oversample](#) of Asian, Black and Hispanic adults, as well as Republican respondents ages 18 to 29. Unweighted sample sizes do not account for the sample design or weighting and do not describe a group's contribution to weighted estimates. See the [Sample design](#) and [Weighting](#) sections above for details.

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

Dispositions and response rates

Final dispositions	AAPOR code	Total
Completed interview	1.1	6,174
Logged onto survey; broke-off	2.12	101
Logged onto survey; did not complete any items	2.1121	51
Never logged on (implicit refusal)	2.11	847
Survey completed after close of the field period	2.27	2
Completed interview but was removed for data quality		1
Screened out		0
Total panelists in the survey		7,176
Completed interviews	I	6,174
Partial interviews	P	0
Refusals	R	1,000
Non-contact	NC	2
Other	O	0
Unknown household	UH	0
Unknown other	UO	0
Not eligible	NE	0
Total		7,176
AAPOR RR1 = $I / (I+P+R+NC+O+UH+UO)$		86%

Cumulative response rate	Total
Weighted response rate to recruitment surveys	12%
% of recruitment survey respondents who agreed to join the panel, among those invited	69%
% of those agreeing to join who were active panelists at start of Wave 110	43%
Response rate to Wave 110 survey	86%
Cumulative response rate	3%

Adjusting income and defining income tiers

To create upper-, middle- and lower-income tiers, respondents' 2020 family incomes were adjusted for differences in purchasing power by geographic region and household size. "Middle-income" adults live in families with annual incomes that are two-thirds to double the median family income in the panel (after incomes have been adjusted for the local cost of living and household size). The middle-income range for the American Trends Panel is about \$42,000 to \$125,900 annually for an average family of three. Lower-income families have incomes less than

roughly \$42,000, and upper-income families have incomes greater than roughly \$125,900 (all figures expressed in 2020 dollars).

Based on these adjustments, 32% of respondents are lower income, 47% are middle income and 16% fall into the upper-income tier. An additional 5% either didn't offer a response to the income question or the household size question.

For more information about how the income tiers were determined, please see [here](#).

A note about the Asian sample

This survey includes a total sample size of 357 Asian Americans. The sample includes English-speaking Asian Americans only and, therefore, may not be representative of the overall Asian American population (73% of our weighted Asian American sample was born in another country, compared with 77% of the Asian American adult population overall). Despite this limitation, it is important to report the views of Asian Americans on the topics in this study. As always, Asian Americans' responses are incorporated into the general population figures throughout this report.

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