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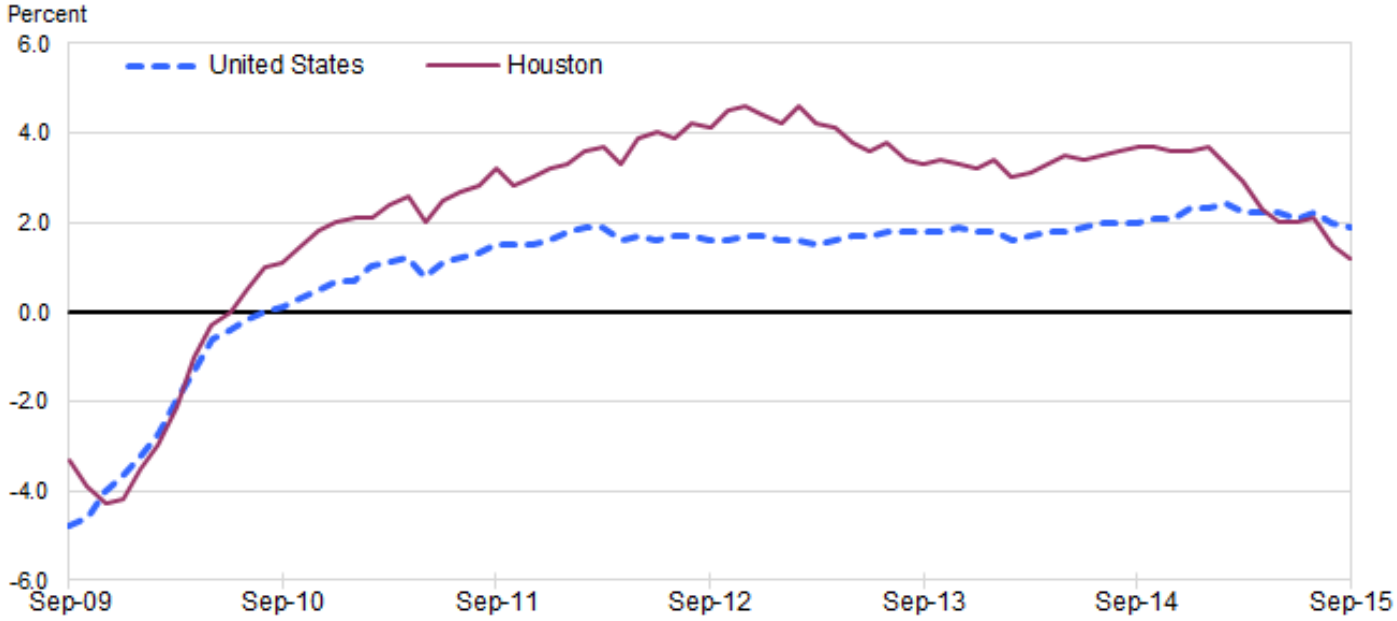
Houston Area Employment — September 2015

Total nonfarm employment in the Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land Metropolitan Statistical Area stood at 2,983,400 in September 2015, up 36,200, or 1.2 percent, from one year earlier, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. During the same period, the national job count increased 1.9 percent. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that the Houston metropolitan area has had over-the-year employment increases in each month since July 2010. (See chart 1 and table 1; the Technical Note at the end of this release contains metropolitan area definitions. All data in this release are not seasonally adjusted; accordingly, over-the-year analysis is used throughout.)

Chart 1. Total nonfarm employment, over-the-year percent change in the United States and the Houston metropolitan area, September 2009–September 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Industry employment

Leisure and hospitality registered the largest annual job gain among Houston's supersectors, adding 18,600 jobs since September 2014. The local rate of job growth, 6.5 percent, was more than double the national rate of 2.9 percent. Local growth was concentrated within food services and drinking places, which added 16,300 jobs during the period, a 7.0-percent increase. (See table 1 and chart 2.)

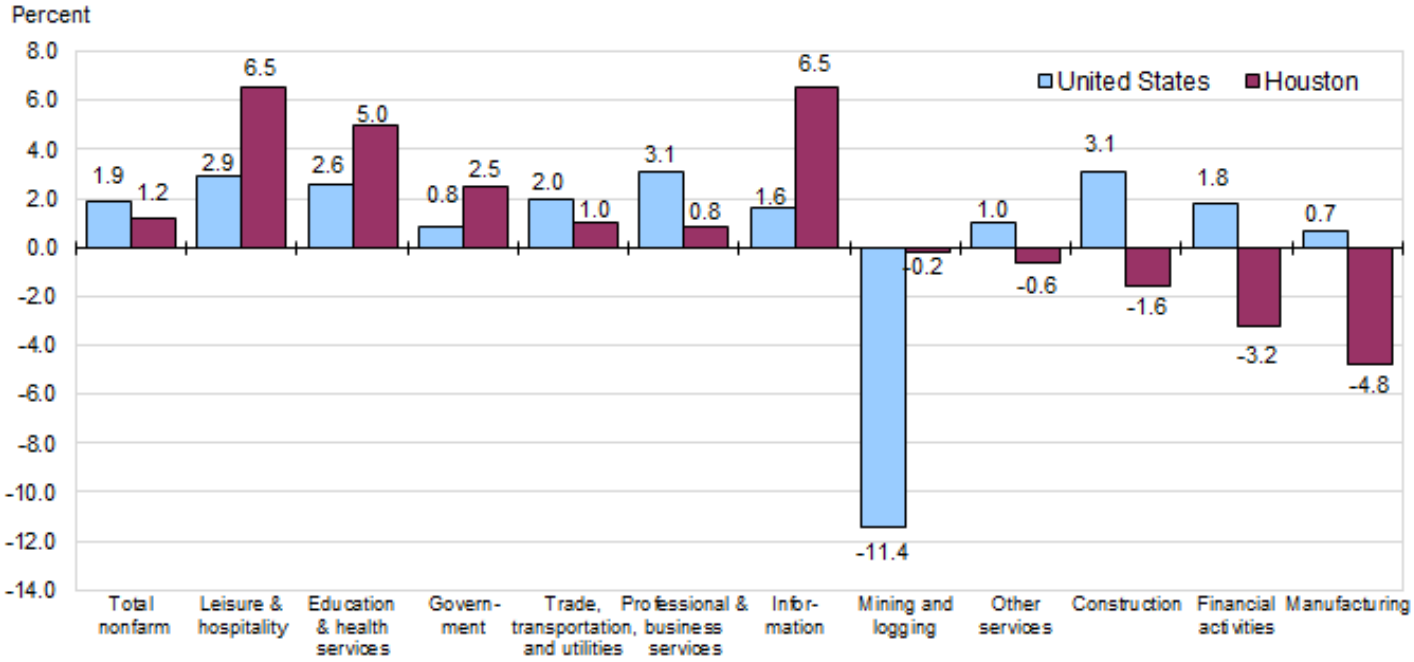
The education and health services supersector added 17,700 jobs, a 5.0-percent rise from September 2014; nationally, employment in this industry was up 2.6 percent. Local job gains for this major sector were strongest in ambulatory health care services and hospitals.

Government employment expanded by 9,400 jobs over the year, with local government accounting for nearly all of the increase, up 9,200. Employment gains in local government were led by educational services, which added 6,800 jobs. In the Houston area, total government employment increased 2.5 percent compared to a 0.8-percent gain nationally.

Trade, transportation, and utilities–the area's largest supersector–added 5,800 jobs, up 1.0 percent from September 2014 to September 2015. A gain of 11,300 jobs in the area's retail trade industry, an increase of 3.8 percent, was partially offset by declines in wholesale trade (-3,000) and transportation and utilities (-2,500) during the period. The trade, transportation, and utilities supersector expanded 2.0 percent nationally.

Professional and business services added 3,800 jobs from September 2014, a 0.8-percent rise. This local supersector has registered annual job gains each year since June 2010; however, its current rate was the lowest recorded during this period. Nationwide, the professional and business services supersector registered a 3.1-percent increase from September a year ago.

Chart 2. Total nonfarm and industry supersector employment, over-the-year percent change, United States and the Houston metropolitan area, September 2015



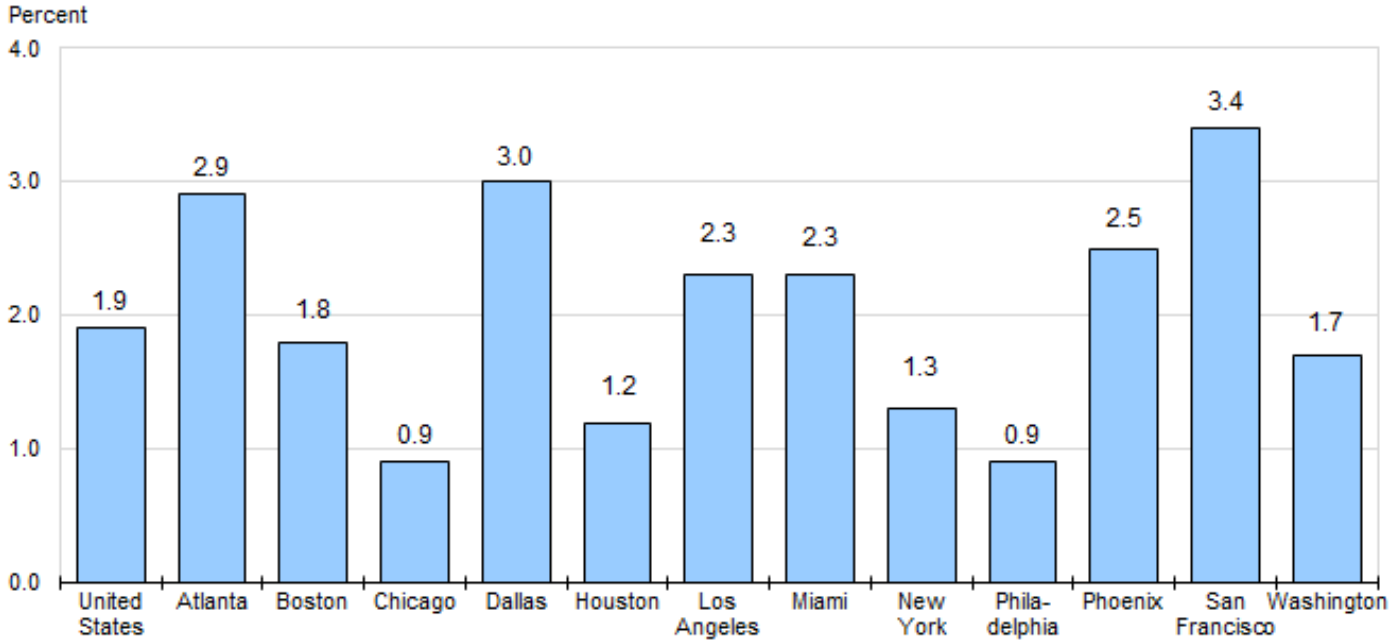
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Manufacturing had the largest job loss in Houston in September 2015, declining 12,300. Locally, manufacturing employment fell 4.8 percent compared to a national increase of 0.7 percent. Two other Houston area supersectors had job losses of 3,000 or more from the previous year–financial activities (-4,800) and construction (-3,300). The rates of job declines in both financial activities (-3.2 percent) and construction (-1.6 percent) were in contrast to the nationwide gains of 1.8 and 3.1 percent, respectively.

Employment in the 12 largest metropolitan areas

Houston was 1 of the nation's 12 largest metropolitan statistical areas in September 2015. All of these areas experienced over-the-year job growth during the period, with six exceeding the national average of 1.9 percent. The fastest rate of job growth was registered in San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, up 3.4 percent, followed by Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington (3.0 percent) and Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell (2.9 percent). The slowest rates of job growth were in Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington and Chicago-Naperville-Elgin (0.9 percent each). (See chart 3 and table 2.)

Chart 3. Total nonfarm employment, over-the-year percent change, United States and 12 largest metropolitan areas, September 2015



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim added the largest number of jobs, 129,900, since September 2014. Two other metropolitan areas, New York-Newark-Jersey City and Dallas, gained more than 98,000 jobs over the year. Philadelphia added the fewest jobs.

Professional and business services led employment growth in 6 of the 12 metropolitan areas from a year ago–Atlanta, Boston-Cambridge-Nashua, Chicago, Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, San Francisco, and Washington-Arlington-Alexandria. Education and health services recorded the largest gains in three areas–Los Angeles, New York, and Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale.

Over the year, manufacturing recorded the largest job losses in 8 of the 12 areas–Boston, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, New York, Philadelphia, Phoenix, and Washington. Miami was the only area that recorded no job loss of 1,000 or more in any supersector from September 2014 to September 2015.

Metropolitan area employment data for October 2015 are scheduled to be released on Friday, November 20, 2015, at 10:00 a.m. (ET).

Technical Note

This release presents nonfarm payroll employment estimates from the Current Employment Statistics (CES) program. The CES survey is a Federal-State cooperative endeavor between State employment security agencies and the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Definitions. Employment data refer to persons on establishment payrolls who receive pay for any part of the pay period that includes the 12th of the month. Persons are counted at their place of work rather than at their place of residence; those appearing on more than one payroll are counted on each payroll. Industries are classified on the basis of their principal activity in accordance with the 2007 version of the North American Industry Classification System.

Method of estimation. The employment data are estimated using a "link relative" technique in which a ratio (link relative) of current-month employment to that of the previous month is computed from a sample of establishments reporting for both months. The estimates of employment for the current month are obtained by multiplying the estimates for the previous month by these ratios. Small-domain models are used as the official estimators for the approximately 39 percent of CES published series which have insufficient sample for direct sample-based estimates.

Annual revisions. Employment estimates are adjusted annually to a complete count of jobs, called benchmarks, derived principally from tax reports that are submitted by employers who are covered under state unemployment insurance (UI) laws. The benchmark information is used to adjust the monthly estimates between the new benchmark and the preceding one and also to establish the level of employment for the new benchmark month. Thus, the benchmarking process establishes the level of employment, and the sample is used to measure the month-to-month changes in the level for the subsequent months.

Reliability of the estimates. The estimates presented in this release are based on sample surveys, administrative data, and modeling and, thus, are subject to sampling and other types of errors. Sampling error is a measure of sampling variability—that is, variation that occurs by chance because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. Survey data also are subject to nonsampling errors, such as those which can be introduced into the data collection and processing operations. Estimates not directly derived from sample surveys are subject to additional errors resulting from the specific estimation processes used. The sums of individual items may not always equal the totals shown in the same tables because of rounding.

Employment estimates. Measures of sampling error are available for state CES data at the total nonfarm and supersector level and for metropolitan area CES data. Information on recent benchmark revisions for states is available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/sae/.

Area definitions. The substate area data published in this release reflect the delineations issued by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget on February 28, 2013. A detailed list of the geographic definitions is available online at www.bls.gov/lau/lausmsa.htm.

The **Houston-The Woodlands-Sugarland Metropolitan Statistical Area** includes Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller Counties in Texas.

Additional information

More complete information on the technical procedures used to develop these estimates and additional data appear in Employment and Earnings, which is available online at www.bls.gov/opub/ee/home.htm. Industry employment data for states and metropolitan areas from the Current Employment Statistics program are also available in the above mentioned news releases and from the Internet at www.bls.gov/sae/.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Employees on nonfarm payrolls by industry supersector, United States and Houston metropolitan area, not seasonally adjusted (numbers in thousands)

Area and Industry	Sep 2014	Jul 2015	Aug 2015	Sep 2015(p)	Change from Sep 2014 to Sep 2015(p)	
					Net Change	Percent Change
United States						
Total nonfarm	139,919	141,872	142,069	142,627	2,708	1.9
Mining and logging	923	842	832	818	-105	-11.4
Construction	6,429	6,653	6,684	6,628	199	3.1
Manufacturing	12,278	12,416	12,416	12,370	92	0.7
Trade, transportation, and utilities	26,391	26,966	26,959	26,906	515	2.0
Information	2,746	2,808	2,805	2,789	43	1.6
Financial activities	8,016	8,218	8,214	8,161	145	1.8
Professional and business services	19,311	19,919	19,966	19,915	604	3.1
Education and health services	21,504	21,753	21,797	22,058	554	2.6
Leisure and hospitality	14,970	15,876	15,844	15,398	428	2.9
Other services	5,573	5,721	5,679	5,628	55	1.0
Government	21,778	20,700	20,873	21,956	178	0.8
Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX Metropolitan Statistical Area						
Total nonfarm	2,947.2	2,982.2	2,977.0	2,983.4	36.2	1.2
Mining and logging	111.7	110.5	111.3	111.5	-0.2	-0.2
Construction	208.6	203.4	204.6	205.3	-3.3	-1.6
Manufacturing	256.8	248.8	246.4	244.5	-12.3	-4.8
Trade, transportation, and utilities	599.3	608.8	609.2	605.1	5.8	1.0
Information	32.4	34.1	34.5	34.5	2.1	6.5
Financial activities	148.8	145.9	144.4	144.0	-4.8	-3.2
Professional and business services	470.0	481.7	480.3	473.8	3.8	0.8
Education and health services	354.1	364.0	365.8	371.8	17.7	5.0
Leisure and hospitality	286.9	312.1	311.7	305.5	18.6	6.5
Other services	104.3	105.9	106.3	103.7	-0.6	-0.6
Government	374.3	367.0	362.5	383.7	9.4	2.5

(p) preliminary

Table 2. Employees on nonfarm payrolls by industry supersector, 12 largest metropolitan areas, not seasonally adjusted (numbers in thousands)

Area and Industry	Sep 2014	Jul 2015	Aug 2015	Sep 2015(p)	Change from Sep 2014 to Sep 2015(p)	
					Net Change	Percent Change
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA						
Total nonfarm	2,519.8	2,587.4	2,595.7	2,592.1	72.3	2.9
Mining and logging	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.3	0.0	0.0
Construction	103.9	107.8	110.6	109.5	5.6	5.4
Manufacturing	153.5	156.2	155.9	156.8	3.3	2.1
Trade, transportation, and utilities	554.3	573.0	572.1	570.8	16.5	3.0
Information	88.2	88.8	87.9	87.4	-0.8	-0.9
Financial activities	160.2	165.0	165.1	164.7	4.5	2.8
Professional and business services	469.0	491.9	490.6	487.2	18.2	3.9
Education and health services	309.4	312.4	317.8	317.2	7.8	2.5
Leisure and hospitality	260.5	280.1	275.4	270.1	9.6	3.7
Other services	95.1	95.6	94.6	93.8	-1.3	-1.4
Government	324.4	315.3	324.3	333.3	8.9	2.7
Boston-Cambridge-Nashua, MA-NH						
Total nonfarm	2,600.9	2,656.0	2,646.7	2,648.2	47.3	1.8
Mining, logging, and construction	99.7	104.9	105.7	103.3	3.6	3.6
Manufacturing	191.5	192.6	191.8	189.9	-1.6	-0.8
Trade, transportation, and utilities	410.6	417.4	416.2	412.7	2.1	0.5
Information	75.1	78.6	77.6	77.3	2.2	2.9
Financial activities	172.8	177.5	178.5	176.9	4.1	2.4
Professional and business services	446.0	464.4	463.3	459.9	13.9	3.1
Education and health services	537.7	546.6	543.7	550.8	13.1	2.4
Leisure and hospitality	255.7	272.5	271.7	259.3	3.6	1.4
Other services	100.5	108.0	107.2	102.5	2.0	2.0
Government	311.3	293.5	291.0	315.6	4.3	1.4
Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI						
Total nonfarm	4,536.2	4,592.2	4,579.7	4,575.3	39.1	0.9
Mining and logging	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	-0.1	-6.3
Construction	166.8	173.6	172.9	170.8	4.0	2.4
Manufacturing	408.9	408.3	406.6	406.3	-2.6	-0.6
Trade, transportation, and utilities	908.1	925.3	922.4	917.8	9.7	1.1
Information	80.3	80.7	79.7	79.9	-0.4	-0.5
Financial activities	290.3	290.3	290.7	288.6	-1.7	-0.6
Professional and business services	808.2	826.8	824.6	822.6	14.4	1.8
Education and health services	685.0	688.7	688.4	695.3	10.3	1.5
Leisure and hospitality	443.8	459.7	458.8	446.0	2.2	0.5
Other services	194.2	196.5	196.3	194.2	0.0	0.0
Government	549.0	540.8	537.8	552.3	3.3	0.6
Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX						
Total nonfarm	3,299.3	3,387.5	3,390.9	3,398.0	98.7	3.0
Mining, logging, and construction	197.8	195.3	195.0	193.7	-4.1	-2.1
Manufacturing	263.0	260.5	258.5	258.6	-4.4	-1.7
Trade, transportation, and utilities	686.7	708.6	709.9	711.5	24.8	3.6
Information	81.5	81.6	81.9	82.1	0.6	0.7
Financial activities	267.4	275.8	276.0	276.1	8.7	3.3
Professional and business services	544.2	567.5	569.6	567.4	23.2	4.3
Education and health services	404.7	422.2	425.1	427.1	22.4	5.5
Leisure and hospitality	337.7	363.6	360.5	355.5	17.8	5.3
Other services	116.5	120.5	121.9	120.8	4.3	3.7
Government	399.8	391.9	392.5	405.2	5.4	1.4
Houston-The Woodlands-Sugar Land, TX						
Total nonfarm	2,947.2	2,982.2	2,977.0	2,983.4	36.2	1.2
Mining and logging	111.7	110.5	111.3	111.5	-0.2	-0.2
Construction	208.6	203.4	204.6	205.3	-3.3	-1.6

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Employees on nonfarm payrolls by industry supersector, 12 largest metropolitan areas, not seasonally adjusted (numbers in thousands) - Continued

Area and Industry	Sep 2014	Jul 2015	Aug 2015	Sep 2015(p)	Change from Sep 2014 to Sep 2015(p)	
					Net Change	Percent Change
Manufacturing	256.8	248.8	246.4	244.5	-12.3	-4.8
Trade, transportation, and utilities	599.3	608.8	609.2	605.1	5.8	1.0
Information	32.4	34.1	34.5	34.5	2.1	6.5
Financial activities	148.8	145.9	144.4	144.0	-4.8	-3.2
Professional and business services	470.0	481.7	480.3	473.8	3.8	0.8
Education and health services	354.1	364.0	365.8	371.8	17.7	5.0
Leisure and hospitality	286.9	312.1	311.7	305.5	18.6	6.5
Other services	104.3	105.9	106.3	103.7	-0.6	-0.6
Government	374.3	367.0	362.5	383.7	9.4	2.5
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA						
Total nonfarm	5,739.4	5,820.1	5,826.0	5,869.3	129.9	2.3
Mining and logging	5.5	5.2	5.2	5.2	-0.3	-5.5
Construction	206.7	216.9	220.4	218.7	12.0	5.8
Manufacturing	522.8	527.8	524.3	526.7	3.9	0.7
Trade, transportation, and utilities	1,058.8	1,078.4	1,078.6	1,080.9	22.1	2.1
Information	221.0	216.4	219.1	218.3	-2.7	-1.2
Financial activities	323.8	327.4	327.2	323.5	-0.3	-0.1
Professional and business services	891.1	906.6	907.7	909.0	17.9	2.0
Education and health services	942.2	957.0	959.9	976.7	34.5	3.7
Leisure and hospitality	665.8	692.8	693.3	692.2	26.4	4.0
Other services	201.9	208.0	206.7	207.3	5.4	2.7
Government	699.8	683.6	683.6	710.8	11.0	1.6
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL						
Total nonfarm	2,427.0	2,449.7	2,477.9	2,483.4	56.4	2.3
Mining and logging	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0
Construction	105.0	106.7	108.9	108.7	3.7	3.5
Manufacturing	81.2	80.4	80.4	80.9	-0.3	-0.4
Trade, transportation, and utilities	564.0	571.4	573.3	572.5	8.5	1.5
Information	47.8	48.2	48.2	48.0	0.2	0.4
Financial activities	169.1	174.3	173.7	173.5	4.4	2.6
Professional and business services	390.4	404.1	407.5	409.2	18.8	4.8
Education and health services	358.5	363.4	365.3	366.5	8.0	2.2
Leisure and hospitality	291.9	303.0	303.1	303.6	11.7	4.0
Other services	117.1	120.3	119.9	119.3	2.2	1.9
Government	301.4	277.3	297.0	300.6	-0.8	-0.3
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ-PA						
Total nonfarm	9,163.3	9,332.7	9,291.6	9,278.7	115.4	1.3
Mining, logging, and construction	366.3	375.8	378.4	375.9	9.6	2.6
Manufacturing	370.3	367.5	369.0	367.1	-3.2	-0.9
Trade, transportation, and utilities	1,696.1	1,706.6	1,705.8	1,713.5	17.4	1.0
Information	282.7	284.5	283.0	280.0	-2.7	-1.0
Financial activities	757.2	767.8	766.1	759.9	2.7	0.4
Professional and business services	1,447.1	1,467.8	1,467.3	1,452.4	5.3	0.4
Education and health services	1,718.2	1,740.1	1,732.9	1,763.8	45.6	2.7
Leisure and hospitality	860.6	922.8	916.8	885.3	24.7	2.9
Other services	403.8	426.7	424.3	416.3	12.5	3.1
Government	1,261.0	1,273.1	1,248.0	1,264.5	3.5	0.3
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD						
Total nonfarm	2,793.6	2,807.1	2,794.6	2,819.6	26.0	0.9
Mining, logging, and construction	109.3	116.8	119.4	118.0	8.7	8.0
Manufacturing	179.3	177.9	177.3	177.4	-1.9	-1.1
Trade, transportation, and utilities	511.8	521.8	519.9	520.5	8.7	1.7
Information	46.1	45.5	45.3	45.1	-1.0	-2.2

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Employees on nonfarm payrolls by industry supersector, 12 largest metropolitan areas, not seasonally adjusted (numbers in thousands) - Continued

Area and Industry	Sep 2014	Jul 2015	Aug 2015	Sep 2015(p)	Change from Sep 2014 to Sep 2015(p)	
					Net Change	Percent Change
Financial activities	203.9	209.4	208.7	207.3	3.4	1.7
Professional and business services	451.3	449.2	446.9	449.9	-1.4	-0.3
Education and health services	591.4	585.1	584.8	594.2	2.8	0.5
Leisure and hospitality	251.3	269.8	265.4	257.4	6.1	2.4
Other services	117.9	121.5	120.1	119.7	1.8	1.5
Government	331.3	310.1	306.8	330.1	-1.2	-0.4
Phoenix-Mesa-Scottsdale, AZ						
Total nonfarm	1,857.8	1,860.4	1,888.0	1,904.6	46.8	2.5
Mining and logging	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	0.0	0.0
Construction	94.6	102.0	101.9	102.8	8.2	8.7
Manufacturing	118.3	117.1	118.1	116.9	-1.4	-1.2
Trade, transportation, and utilities	363.0	368.4	370.2	369.0	6.0	1.7
Information	34.7	35.8	35.2	34.9	0.2	0.6
Financial activities	162.7	167.4	167.7	168.0	5.3	3.3
Professional and business services	308.4	320.4	318.3	316.5	8.1	2.6
Education and health services	270.8	275.5	280.2	279.2	8.4	3.1
Leisure and hospitality	196.7	198.8	201.6	204.8	8.1	4.1
Other services	64.7	68.0	66.8	67.3	2.6	4.0
Government	240.5	203.6	224.6	241.8	1.3	0.5
San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA						
Total nonfarm	2,199.2	2,255.7	2,268.5	2,275.0	75.8	3.4
Mining and logging	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.8	-0.1	-11.1
Construction	104.4	107.8	110.3	108.8	4.4	4.2
Manufacturing	122.4	124.6	124.8	124.2	1.8	1.5
Trade, transportation, and utilities	355.3	362.4	362.5	363.7	8.4	2.4
Information	78.8	82.2	82.7	82.5	3.7	4.7
Financial activities	128.8	127.6	128.1	127.6	-1.2	-0.9
Professional and business services	447.4	479.4	482.6	482.3	34.9	7.8
Education and health services	326.4	325.6	325.4	331.4	5.0	1.5
Leisure and hospitality	252.9	261.7	266.5	263.3	10.4	4.1
Other services	83.6	85.9	85.7	86.3	2.7	3.2
Government	298.3	297.7	299.1	304.1	5.8	1.9
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV						
Total nonfarm	3,118.7	3,190.3	3,164.3	3,172.0	53.3	1.7
Mining, logging, and construction	151.0	153.8	154.1	155.7	4.7	3.1
Manufacturing	50.3	49.8	49.5	49.1	-1.2	-2.4
Trade, transportation, and utilities	395.3	405.5	403.2	398.9	3.6	0.9
Information	76.9	77.2	75.9	76.2	-0.7	-0.9
Financial activities	151.9	151.6	151.4	150.8	-1.1	-0.7
Professional and business services	704.6	733.7	729.9	722.8	18.2	2.6
Education and health services	405.3	415.0	414.7	420.3	15.0	3.7
Leisure and hospitality	302.1	319.6	315.8	307.8	5.7	1.9
Other services	194.0	198.9	197.8	197.3	3.3	1.7
Government	687.3	685.2	672.0	693.1	5.8	0.8

(p) preliminary