



# U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

OFFICE OF COMPENSATION LEVELS AND TRENDS

Postal Square Building, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20212-0001 • 202-691-5200 • [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)

## National Compensation Survey

### *What is the National Compensation Survey (NCS)?*

The NCS is an establishment-based survey that provides comprehensive measures of occupational wages; employment cost trends, and benefit incidence and detailed plan provisions. Detailed occupational earnings are available for metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas, broad geographic divisions, and on a national basis. The index component of the NCS (Employment Cost Index) measures changes in labor costs. Average hourly employer cost for employee compensation is presented in the Employer Costs for Employee Compensation.

### *Who uses NCS data?*

- Union representatives use the information to aid collective bargaining negotiations.
- Prospective employees use ECEC data to compare pay and benefit packages.
- Students use NCS wage information in deciding between possible careers.
- Employers use NCS wage data to set pay and to decide between potential business locations.
- Payroll administrators use ECI data to adjust wages in long-term contracts.
- The Federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services uses ECI data to adjust payments to doctors and hospitals.
- The Federal Reserve uses ECI data to formulate monetary policy.

### *How can NCS data help you?*

- You can compare your pay and benefits to national and local averages.
- You can track wage increases in your industry or occupation.

### *Where can you find this information?*

You can find our data online at <http://www.bls.gov/ncs>. There you will find the latest news releases and can search for detailed information.

### *Whom should you contact if you have additional questions?*

Contact the NCS Information Staff by e-mail at [ncsinfo@bls.gov](mailto:ncsinfo@bls.gov) or by telephone at (202) 691-6199.

# U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

OFFICE OF COMPENSATION LEVELS AND TRENDS

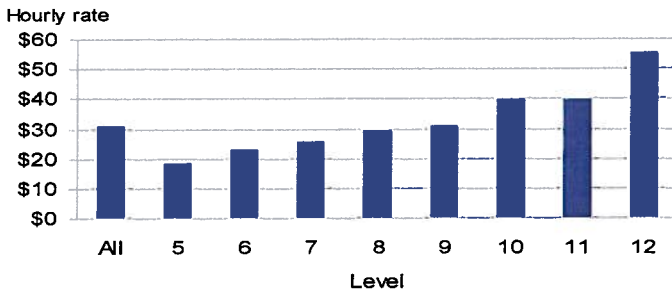


Postal Square Building, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20212-0001 • 202-691-5200 • [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)

## National Compensation Survey

NCS data include occupational wages by the nation, census divisions, and metropolitan areas; benefit incidence and provisions; and employment cost trends (Employment Cost Index and Employer Compensation for Employee Compensation).

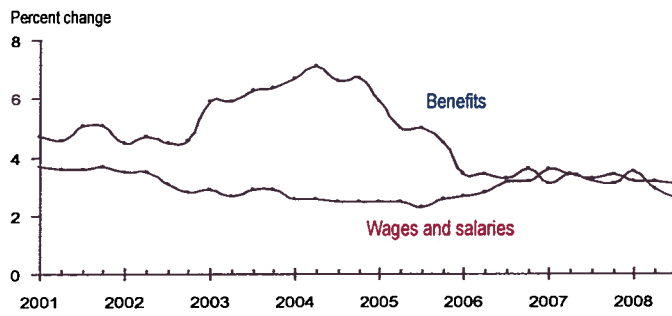
Mean hourly earnings for Registered Nurses, Civilian workers, United States, July 2007, by work level



Employer cost per hour worked for employee compensation and costs as a percent of total compensation, civilian workers, September 2008

Component	Cost per hour worked	Percent of Total Compensation
Total Compensation	\$28.87	100.0%
Wages and salaries	20.13	69.7
Benefits	8.74	30.3
Paid leave	2.03	7.0
Supplemental pay	0.75	2.6
Insurance	2.42	8.4
Health	2.27	7.9
Retirement and savings	1.28	4.4
Defined benefit plans	0.77	2.7
Defined contribution plans	0.51	1.8
Legally required	2.27	7.9

Employment Cost Index, 12-month percent change, Not seasonally adjusted, Wages and salaries and Benefits, Civilian workers, 2001-2008



Access, Participation, and take-up rates, Civilian workers, by benefit, March 2008

	Access	Participation	Take-up rate
All retirement	66%	56%	86%
Defined benefit	31	29	96
Defined contribution	52	39	76
Medical care	74	56	76
Life insurance	62	60	96

Employment Cost Index, private industry, 12-month percent change, Total benefits and health benefits, 1982-2008

