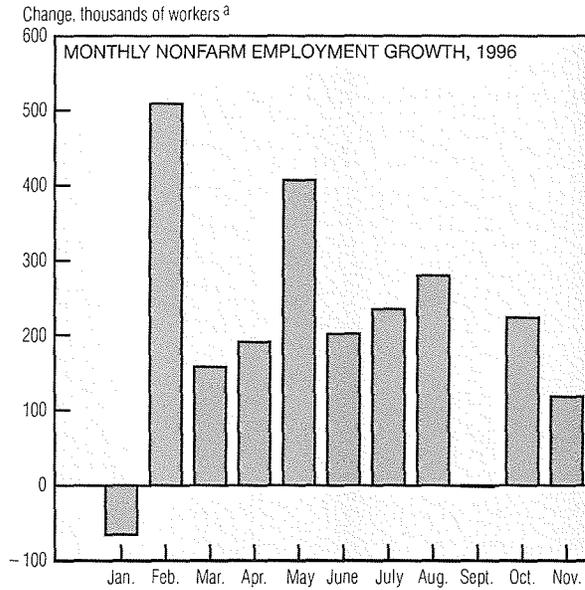
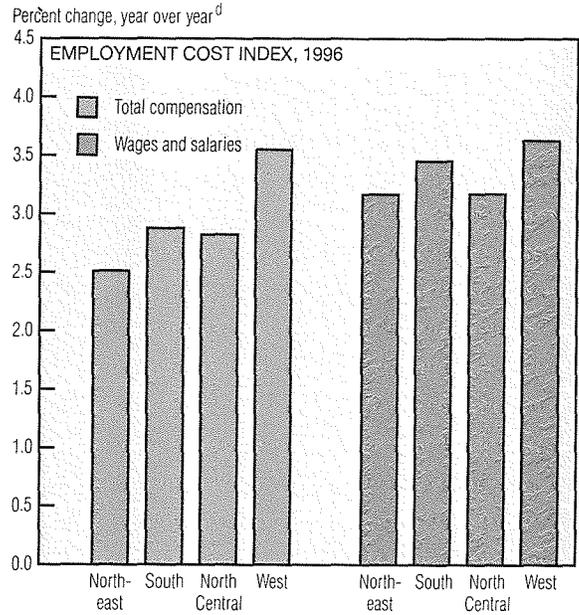
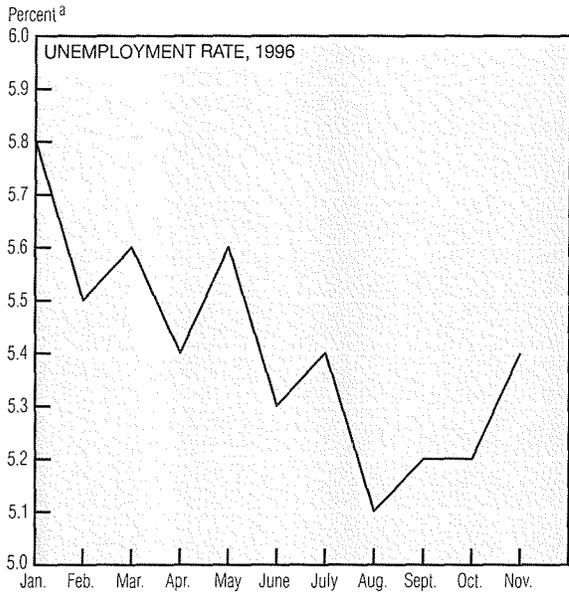


Labor Markets



Employment Growth by Industry, 1996
 (Thousands of employees^a)

	IQ	IIQ	IIIQ	IVQ ^b	Total
Total nonfarm	601	800	513	342	2,256
Goods-producing	36	78	-17	42	139
Manufacturing	-85	16	-57	18	-108
Nondurables	-41	-57	-36	1	-133
Durables	-44	73	-21	17	25
Construction	117	61	48	26	252
Service-producing	565	722	530	300	2,117
Wholesale and retail trade	59	252	178	128	617
FIRE ^c	45	35	42	32	154
Transportation, public utilities	40	40	8	12	100
Services	374	343	229	158	1,104
Computer	18	40	31	27	116
Health	87	66	56	46	255
Government	47	52	73	-30	142



a. Seasonally adjusted.
 b. December data are not available.
 c. Finance, insurance, and real estate.
 d. Through 1996:IIIQ.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Labor markets remained solid in 1996, with 2.3 million jobs being added to the nation's payrolls. Through November (December data are not yet available), the number of net jobs created was slightly higher than the 2.2 million created in 1995.

The goods-producing sector added 139,000 workers over the first 11 months of the year, with strength in the construction industry more

than offsetting a contraction in manufacturing. Most service-producing categories saw about the same increase in 1996 as in 1995. One dramatic exception was the finance, insurance, and real estate industry, which more than tripled its 1995 growth. This translated into 154,000 new jobs.

Despite fluctuations in the monthly data, unemployment followed a downward trend in 1996. November's jobless rate, at 5.4%,

stood 0.4 percentage point below the January figure. Additionally, average unemployment for the year (5.4%) was below the 1995 average (5.6%).

Wages and total compensation (which includes benefits) grew a moderate 3.4% and 3.0%, respectively, close to the rate of inflation. Tighter labor markets in the western states were evident in the region's more rapid wage and salary growth.