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Measuring self-employment in the United States

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About 1 of 11 workers in the United States was self-employed in 1994; the Current Population Survey has been the lone source of data on self-employment over the past 55 years. This article describes the measurement of self-employment over the course of the post-World War II era; the changes that have occurred over time in the measurement, including those modifications associated with the revamping of the entire labor force questionnaire beginning in 1994; and some additional questions that elicit information on the extent to which the self-employed hire wage and salary workers, added in January 1995. The article also includes a short analysis of trends in self-employment, covering the entire period from 1948 to the present.

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