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ABSTRACT

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Understanding the employment measures from the CPS and CES survey

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The monthly BLS *Employment Situation* news release includes two distinct employment measures from two different surveys. Although these measures track well over the long term, occasional differences in trend have confounded labor market analysts. This article discusses the various differences and posits reasons that those differences may or may not affect the divergences between the two employment series. The first portion of the article offers a general background on the two surveys and a summary of past research into earlier divergences in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. The second portion examines the latest BLS research into the divergences in the mid- to late 1990s through 2004.

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