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BLS Spotlight on Statistics: Thanksgiving

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BLS Spotlight on Statistics: Thanksgiving

Abstract

[Excerpt] What activities do you have planned for this Thanksgiving? Perhaps cooking and enjoying a meal with family or friends, playing sports or watching sports on television, doing volunteer work, or shopping? Here's a look at some BLS data behind those Thanksgiving scenes.

Comments

Suggested Citation

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2007). *BLS spotlight on statistics: Thanksgiving*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

Thanksgiving

November 2007

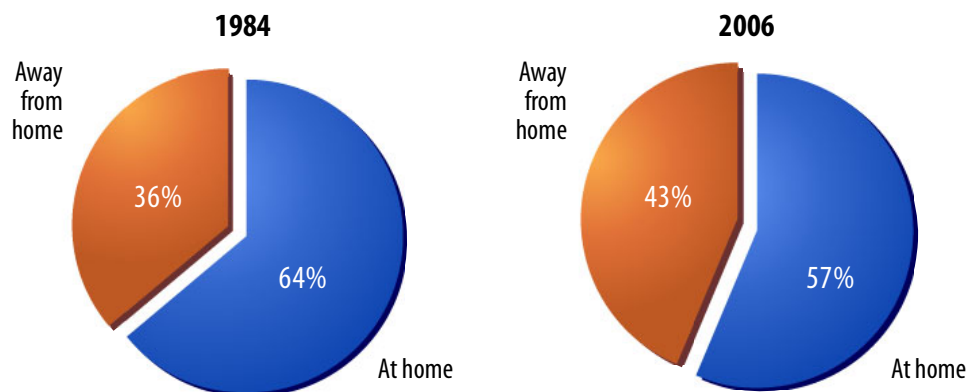
What activities do you have planned for this Thanksgiving? Perhaps cooking and enjoying a meal with family or friends, playing sports or watching sports on television, doing volunteer work, or shopping? Here's a look at some BLS data behind those Thanksgiving scenes.

The Feast

For most of us, this holiday still means a home-cooked Thanksgiving dinner. However, throughout the year Americans are spending a greater percentage of their food dollars on food away from home — that is, at restaurants instead of at the grocery store. The portion of the family-of-four food budget spent on food away from home increased from 36 to 43 percent from 1984 to 2006.

Eat In or Eat Out?

Percent of food budget for food at home and food away from home for a family of four, 1984 and 2006



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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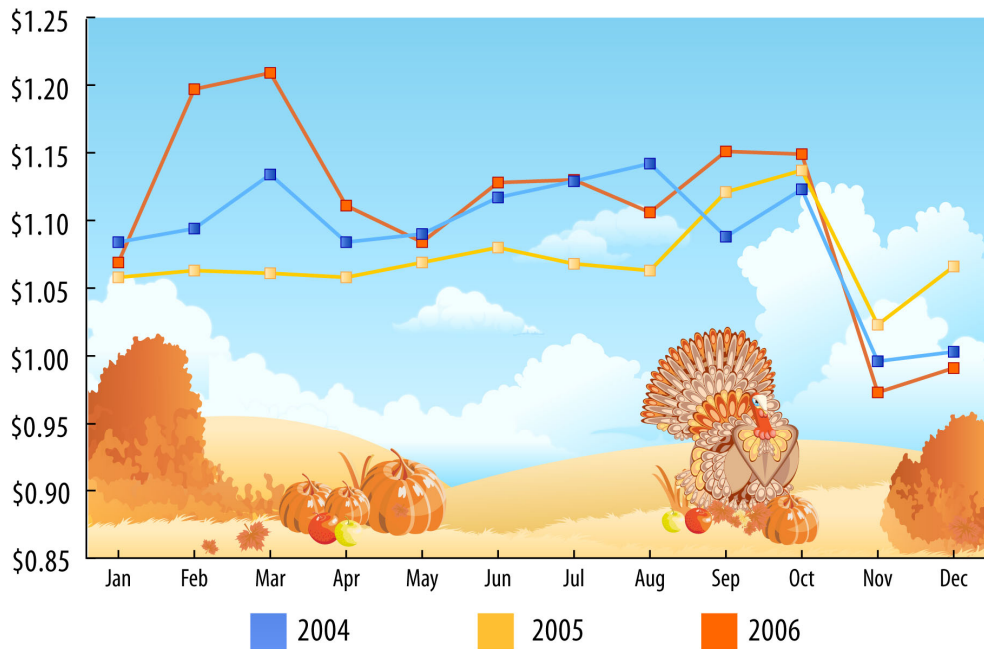
Source: Consumer Expenditure Survey

Bringing Home the Turkey

On many American tables the focal point of the Thanksgiving dinner is a roast turkey. In recent years, turkey — which stores often promote as a Thanksgiving sale item — has been less expensive during November than at any other time of the year.

Turkey for Dinner

Average price per pound of whole, frozen turkey in U.S. cities, 2004-2006



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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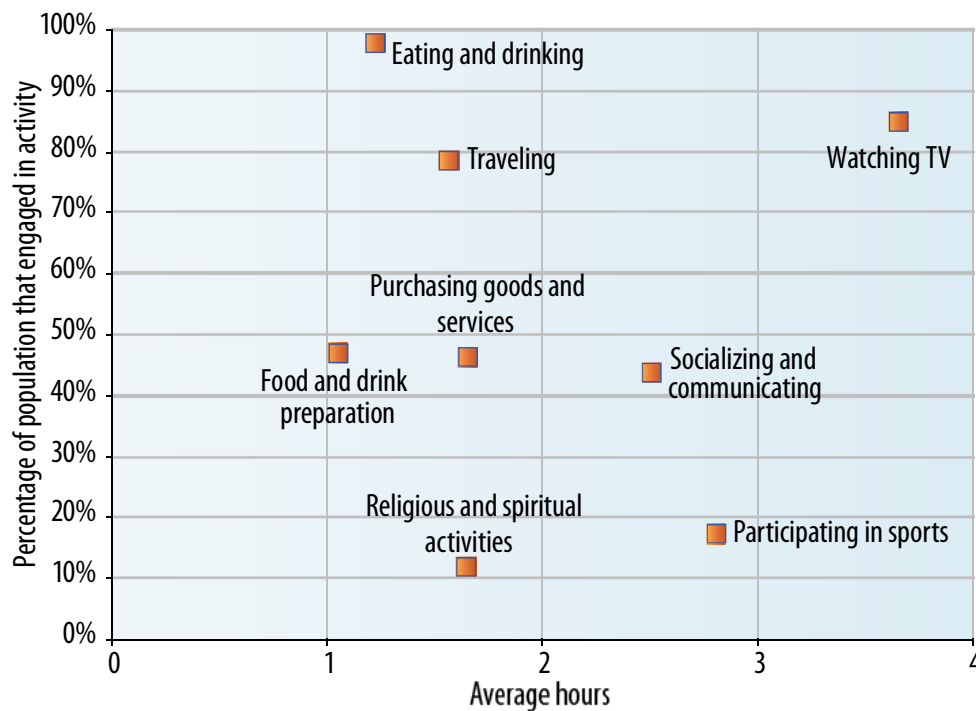
Source: Consumer Price Index

How We Will Spend Our Time

Preparing and eating food and watching television are common activities on Thanksgiving. On Thanksgiving holiday weekends between 2003 and 2006, Americans who prepared meals spent an average of 1.1 hours per day doing so, while eating and drinking occupied 1.2 hours per day. Those who watched television spent an average of 3.7 hours per day in front of the TV.

How Americans Spend Time During Thanksgiving Weekend

Average hours spent per day on selected activities by participants and percentage that engaged in that activity, Thanksgiving weekend 2003-2006



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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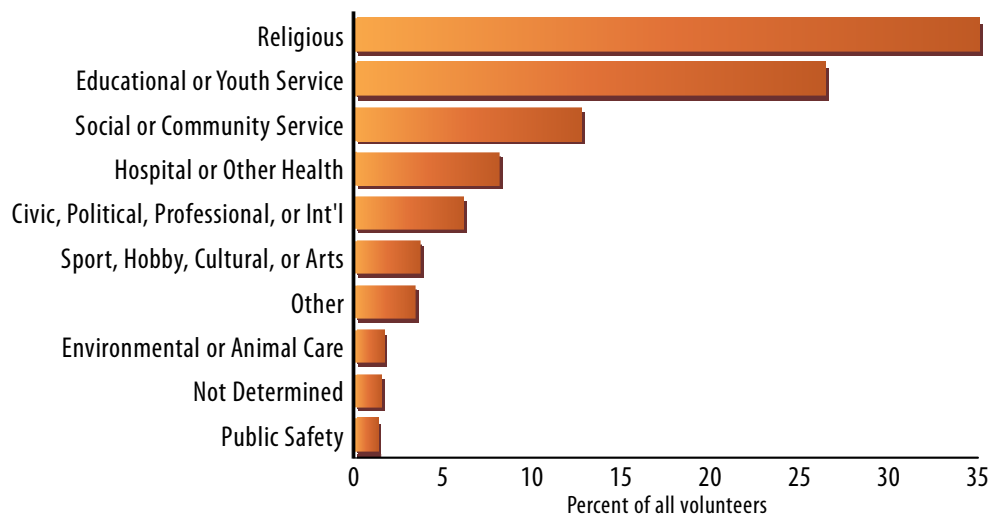
Source: American Time Use Survey

Volunteers

Some Americans volunteer on holidays such as Thanksgiving. Americans who did volunteer work in 2006 were most likely to be affiliated with a religious or educational or youth service organization.

Americans Volunteer

Volunteers by type of main organization, September 2006



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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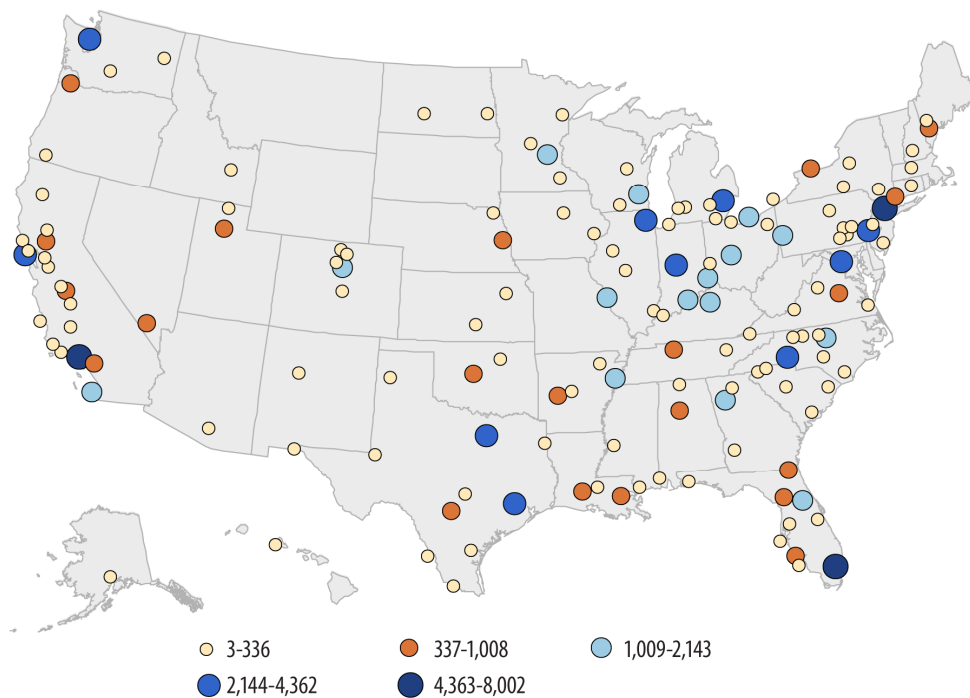
Source: *Current Population Survey*

Thanksgiving Means Football

For many, Thanksgiving is about watching sports on television. Considering the millions of people who watch spectator sports, it's interesting to note how few employees —athletes, coaches, referees, food preparers, cashiers, and others — work in the spectator sports industry. Nationwide, there were about 131,000 jobs in the spectator sports industry in 2006; this is about one-tenth of one percent of total private industry employment. The nation's largest metropolitan areas generally have the most employees in spectator sports.

Spectator Sports Employment

Spectator Sports Employment by Metropolitan Area, 2006 Annual Averages



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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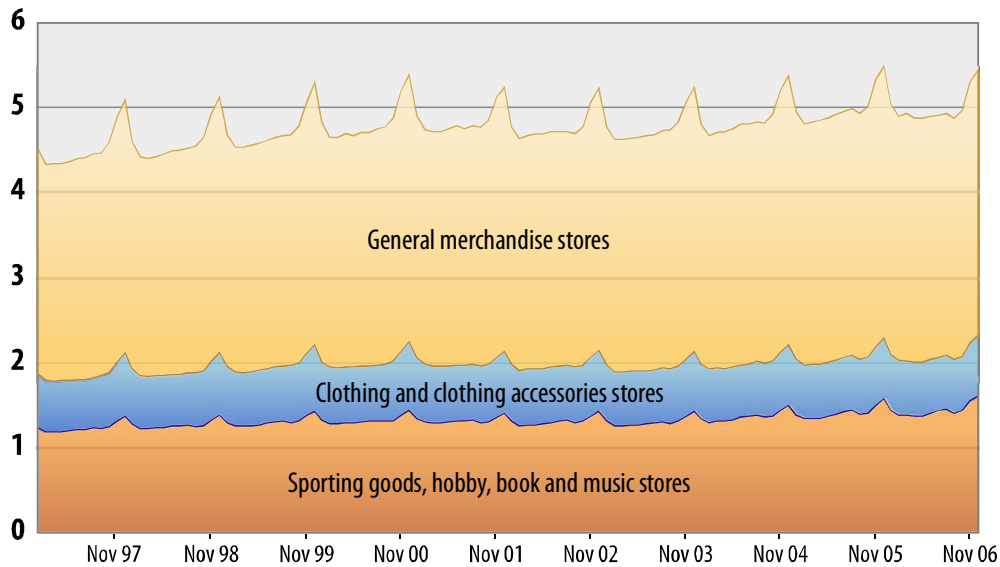
Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

Holiday Shopping Season = More Jobs

The day after Thanksgiving is the traditional start of the holiday shopping season and has been hailed as one of the busiest shopping days of the year. While many Americans shop, others work in temporary jobs during the holiday season. In a pattern that is seen year after year, many retail trade industries hire additional seasonal employees beginning in November.

Store Employment Jumps In November and December

Monthly employment in stores, 1997-2006, not seasonally adjusted, in millions



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

www.bls.gov

Source: Current Employment Statistics

More Info

General Information

For more information, please call (202) 691-5200.

Media Contact

The news media can contact the BLS Press Assistant at (202) 691-5902.

Note: Data in text, charts and tables are the latest available at the time of publication.