

November Jobs Report: What to Watch

On Friday the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) will release the jobs report for November. Last month, it reported the [economy added 638,000 jobs](#) in October. Several recent data points suggest that the surge in virus cases is causing the economy to slow. That may or may not be reflected in the jobs report.

The payroll firm ADP releases data on payrolls before the BLS report each month. [ADP's data](#) shows payrolls increasing more than 307,000 in November, a slightly slower rate than the 404,000 jobs gain ADP found for October.



What this means: ADP frequently undershoots the BLS number. For instance, its figure for October was under by 200,000. Hopefully this points to a stronger-than-expected jobs report for November.

Where BLS and ADP agree is that there remains a sizeable gap in employment compared to pre-pandemic levels. BLS shows a gap of over 10 million jobs. ADP shows a similarly large gap. It will take a while before we reach the levels of employment we had in February.

Jobs added: ADP found that most jobs gained in November were in services (276,000 of the 307,000 new jobs). About one-third of those jobs were in leisure and hospitality. Small businesses added 110,000 jobs, midsized added 139,000, and large employers added 58,000.

What to watch: While the number may come in above ADP's, given the surge in virus cases and resultant reduction in economic activity, it is likely that the figure will be less than the 638,000 job gain in October. Although the end of the pandemic is in sight with vaccines coming soon, the economy remains in the grips of the virus.

—Curtis Dubay, Senior Economist, U.S. Chamber of Commerce