



LGBTQ+ migrants sent into hostile terrain

NEWS, 6A

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Many voters don't see a robust job market



A recent survey showed a smaller share of people saying jobs were plentiful while the share saying jobs were hard to get rose to the highest level since January 2021. BRIAN SNYDER/REUTERS FILE

Headwinds hurting GOP despite low jobless rate

Howard Schneider
REUTERS

WASHINGTON – President Donald Trump and the Republican Party will carry a 4.2% unemployment rate into the congressional elections in early November, a low number by historical standards and in line with what most economists would regard as full employment.

In other words, a hallmark of a solid U.S. job market.

Yet many voters don't see it that way, with polls giving poor marks to Trump and Republicans on the handling of the economy.

For starters, this job market is not like the boom after the COVID-19 pandemic, and the leverage workers once had to job-hop for higher pay has disappeared. Inflation is offsetting wage gains, and tougher immigration rules and deportations mean the size of the workforce – the foundation of economic growth – has stagnated.

The economy is still adding jobs, but at a much slower pace.

Here's a look at some of the latest U.S. job market dynamics in the wake of the Labor Department's release on Oct. 2 of the employment report for September, the last such scorecard to be released before Americans vote in the midterm elections on Nov. 3.

Low unemployment

The low jobless rate has been a mainstay of U.S. economic resilience. Ex-



Tougher immigration rules and deportations under the Trump administration mean the size of the U.S. workforce – the foundation of economic growth – has stagnated. LEAH MILLIS/REUTERS FILE

The bottom line for working households is that jobs are available, but the payoff, for many, amounts to treading water.

cluding the quick spike and rapid recovery during the pandemic, the unemployment rate has been at or below 4.5%, a level at least near what might be considered full employment, since around 2017. By that measure, this era rivals the post-World War II rebound of the 1950s and the tight labor markets of the 1960s.

One reason household spending is holding up despite persistently elevated inflation is simple: People are working.

From the early 1960s, between immigration, population growth and the movement of women into the workforce, the United States enjoyed a steady, decadeslong expansion in the number of people wanting a job, a key pillar of economic growth. The streak was broken by the 2007-2009 financial crisis and recession, when unemployed immigrants returned home and

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Participate in Tommy Car Wash's Tunnel of Terror

Makayla Coffee
Holland Sentinel
USA TODAY NETWORK

Thrill seekers can enjoy a scare while getting their car washed across Michigan in October.

According to a community announcement, Tommy's Express (based in Holland) will transform numerous locations into the company's signature Tunnel of Terror – a haunted experience with masked employees, jump scares and music.

The business warns the event “may not be suitable for young children or those who scare easily.”

The Tunnel of Terror is available at location-dependent times and costs Oct. 9-31. Michigan's participating washes include:

- 12800 Telegraph Road in Taylor
- 1795 W. Columbia Ave. in Battle Creek
- 15041 Dix Toledo Road in Southgate
- 5707 State St. in Saginaw
- 5458 Carpenter Road in Ypsilanti
- 4247 24th Ave. in Fort Gratiot
- 4095 Plainfield Ave. NE in Grand Rapids
- 1303 S. Saginaw Road in Midland
- 31800 Woodward Ave. in Royal Oak
- 5340 Clyde Park Ave. SW in Wyoming
- 1920 N. Mitchell St. in Cadillac
- 5661 S. Saginaw Road in Grand

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