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NATION

Weak jobs report strengthens the case for rate cuts

Editor's note: Este artículo está traducido al español en la página 6.

By COLBY SMITH
The New York Times Company

A weaker-than-expected jobs report solidifies the case for the Federal Reserve to restart interest rate cuts after a long pause at its meeting later this month, quelling debate that had emerged this summer as inflation risks also intensified.

Officials have faced difficult decisions over the trajectory for interest rates amid mixed economic signals. Monthly jobs growth has slowed alongside business activity, but the unemployment rate has stayed relatively stable, and layoffs remain low. Meanwhile, price pressures tied to tariffs have raised inflation, although not as much as initially feared.

That has created a conundrum for the Fed. Policymakers do not want to wait too long to lower interest rates, for fear of causing undue harm to the labor market. But they also do not want to provide relief prematurely and risk allowing inflation to intensify. Rates are now set in a range of 4.25% to 4.5%.

Jerome Powell, the Fed chair, sought to find some middle ground in a speech late last month, sending his strongest signal yet that rate cuts were coming. Still, he made clear that officials would proceed slowly with those reductions.

"The balance of risks appears to be shifting," Powell said in his final speech as Fed chair at an annual conference in Jackson, Wyo., hosted by the Reserve Bank of Kansas City. With borrowing costs weighing on the economy, the labor market softening and inflationary pressures more contained than initially feared, "the shift-

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CAROLINE GUTMAN / THE NEW YORK TIMES

Jerome Powell, chairman of the Federal Reserve, speaks July 30 at a news conference at the Federal Reserve in Washington. A weaker-than-expected jobs report solidifies the case for the Fed to restart interest rate cuts after a long pause at its meeting later this month, quelling debate that had emerged this summer as inflation risks also intensified.



SUN PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

UNLV's Sports Innovation Institute will use data from athletes competing next year at the Enhanced Games to research the effects of performance enhancers typically banned from athletic competitions.

SPORTS

Enhanced Games sparks research collaboration involving UNLV institute

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By KYLE CHOUINARD
A version of this story was posted on lasvegassun.com.

UNLV's Sports Innovation Institute has signed a memorandum of understanding for a research partnership with the Enhanced Games, an Olympic-style sports competition coming to Las Vegas in May with a major twist: The athletes' use of many performance-enhancing drugs is legal.

Participants can use medically prescribed performance enhancers like testosterone, growth hormone and anabolic steroids, if they're legal in the United States.

Jay Vickers, the institute's chief operating officer, said the institute will use Enhanced Games' data to research the effects of performance enhancers typically banned from competition. What those studies could look like hasn't yet been decided, he said, but "all the research is on the table."

"We get to work around what they're doing, see behind the scenes. Obviously, this event is going to be in 2026, so there's a lot of work they need to do before we are even going on that road," Vickers said. "We want to make sure that, regardless of whoever we work with, that we're doing it in the name of research."

The competition at Resorts World will feature swimming, track events and weightlifting.

But its lax rules on PEDs worry organizations such as the World Anti-Doping Agency, which condemned the event in

May for being "dangerous and irresponsible." Enhanced Games sued the organization over supporting a ban on swimmers who participate in the competition or similar ones, The Associated Press reported.

Aron D'Souza, president and founder of Enhanced Games, can quickly rattle off the safety measures Enhanced Games is putting in place.

The organization's focus is on "pre-competition clinical assessments," he said. That means every athlete gets a cardiogram, MRI and blood work prior to competing, regardless of whether the person is "enhanced" or not.

"Let's be very clear: The drug testing system invented by the International Olympic Committee is for fairness in competition," D'Souza said. "It's not for

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Vegas pick'em: NFL Week 1 winners against the spread

CASE KEEFER

TALKING POINTS

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A version of this story was posted on lasvegassun.com.

Divisional future conversations this offseason have largely commenced with the absence of two sets of teams, the AFC East and AFC West.

No one wants to bet against the Buffalo Bills or Kansas Chiefs, respectively. Odds say the Chiefs have the clearest path to a home playoff game, as their price to win the AFC East sits as high as -400 (i.e. risking \$400 to win \$100).

The Chiefs are a far more modest -120 to win the AFC West, but they've claimed the crown nine consecutive seasons and left too much scar tissue on those who have dared bet against them before.

But don't be scared.

Kansas City might be the NFL's current dynastic force, with five Super Bowl appearances and three wins in the past six years, but runs like that historically tail off. This is the season to bet on that happening for the Chiefs.

They've been near flawless in close games throughout most of the run, and much of that credit goes to the coach-quarterback combination of Andy Reid and Patrick Mahomes. But even that all-time duo can't fully explain last year's 15-2 regular-season record that made for the largest

discrepancy between actual wins and Pythagorean expectation in NFL history.

The Chiefs, with a +59 point differential, were more like a 10-7 team in terms of quality by any and every metric. Some regression is all but guaranteed, and it could make for a toxic mix with the long-running trend of the defending Super Bowl runner-up underperforming the next season.

Meanwhile, the AFC West presents a gauntlet. The Los Angeles Chargers go into year two with coach Jim Harbaugh, the Denver Broncos have one of the best rosters in the league, and the Las Vegas Raiders are inching toward respectability.

Betting the Chiefs not to win the AFC West at Even money

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DAVID ZALUBOWSKI / ASSOCIATED PRESS

Denver Broncos quarterback Bo Nix (10) throws while pursued by Kansas City Chiefs defenders during their game Jan. 5 in Denver. As the 2025 season kicks off, the Broncos just might be the team to knock off the Chiefs as the top team in the AFC West.