

## **Handout for November 2024 Newsletter Payroll Employment in FRED®**

### **Purpose.**

1. Create a plot of private and government payroll employment.
2. Modify the data's units and date range.
3. Describe and discuss highlights and patterns in the evolution of payroll employment over time.

**Pedagogical Rationale.** This assignment requires that you first search for data online, select a specific series, and plot it into a graph. Next, you will change the date range in the graph and add a second line to it. Lastly, you will describe and discuss highlights and patterns in the evolution of the data series. These tasks will develop your proficiency in searching for, transforming, and interpreting data.

**Grading.** Your grade will be determined by (a) how precisely you complete the search and manipulation data tasks and (b) how accurately you interpret the data.

### **Steps to Search for and Manipulate the Data.**

1. Access <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/> and search for "All Employees, Total Private."
2. Select "Thousands of Persons, Monthly, Seasonally Adjusted" by clicking on the series name.
3. Click on the "EDIT GRAPH" button and select the "ADD LINE" tab.
4. Search for "All Employees, Government."
5. Select "Thousands of Persons, Monthly, Seasonally Adjusted" by clicking on the series name and click on "Add data series."
6. Click on the "EDIT LINE 2" tab, select "Units: Change" from the dropdown menu, and click on the "Copy to all" button.
7. Click on the "FORMAT" tab to select "Graph type: Bar" from the dropdown menu.
8. Type "2023-09-01" as the start date and "2024-09-01" as the end date in the boxes above the graph to limit the data range to the last 12 months.

**Writing Prompts.** Answer the following questions:

1. Between September 2023 and September 2024, when did private payroll employment change by the largest number of persons? Was the U.S. economy in recession or in expansion?
2. Between September 2023 and September 2024, when did government payroll employment remain unchanged? Was the U.S. economy in recession or in expansion?
3. Between September 2023 and September 2024, was there a month when payroll employment decreased?