



EBRI News

1100 13th St. NW • Suite 878 • Washington, DC 20005
(202) 659-0670 • www.ebri.org • Fax: (202) 775-6312

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
CONTACTS:

Oct. 4, 2007

Paul Fronstin, EBRI, 202-775-6352, fronstin@ebri.org

John MacDonald, EBRI, 202-775-6349, macdonald@ebri.org

New Research from EBRI:

What Are the Key Determinants of Having Health Insurance?

WASHINGTON—What kind of work do you do? What is your income? Are you a man or woman? How many are employed at the firm where you work? Do you work full time or part time?

Answers to these questions are key determinants of an individual's likelihood of having health insurance, according to the October 2007 *EBRI Issue Brief*, published today by the nonpartisan Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) and available at www.ebri.org.

The *Issue Brief* contains EBRI's annual report on the sources and characteristics of the insured and uninsured populations under age 65 in the United States. Included is a detailed breakdown of the most important factors that point to whether an individual is likely to have health insurance from an employer, the dominant source of insurance in this country. It also lists health coverage and uninsured statistics by state.

The *Issue Brief* also notes that the percentage without health insurance increased in 2006 to 17.9 percent of the U.S. population under age 65, up from 17.2 percent in 2006. That means that 46.4 million individuals under age 65 did not have health insurance last year. The numbers are based on an EBRI analysis of Census Bureau data and showed a decline in employer-based coverage.

Full-time, full-year, public-sector employees; workers employed in manufacturing, managerial and professional occupations; and individuals living in high-income families were more likely to have employment-based health benefits than others, the *Issue Brief* reports. Individuals who did not fit this profile were more likely to be uninsured.

Here are some key factors that indicate an individual is likely to be *uninsured*:

- **Occupation:** Workers employed in agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, and construction were disproportionately more likely to be uninsured (36.3 percent). This compares with 15.1 percent uninsured among workers in the manufacturing sector, 18.0 percent in wholesale, and 22.5 percent in the service sector.
- **Income:** The uninsured tended to be members of low-income families. In 2006, one-third of the uninsured were in families with annual incomes of less than \$20,000. Nearly 36 percent of individuals in families with incomes of less than \$10,000 were uninsured, compared with 7.1 percent of those in families with annual incomes of \$75,000 or more.
- **Firm size:** Nearly 63 percent of all uninsured workers were either self-employed or working in private-sector firms with fewer than 100 employees in 2006. Nearly 27 percent of self-employed workers were uninsured, compared with 18.8 percent of all workers. More than 35 percent of workers in private-sector

firms with fewer than 10 employees were uninsured, compared with 13.0 percent of workers in private-sector firms with 1,000 or more employees.

- **Gender:** Men are generally more likely than women to be uninsured. More than 22 percent of men were uninsured in 2006 compared with 18.1 percent of women. This difference between men and women appeared in all age groups except for 55–64 year olds, a group in which women (13 percent) were more likely to be uninsured than men (12.4 percent)
- **Hours worked:** Part-time and part-year workers are less likely to have employment-based benefits than full-time and full-workers. Part-time or part-year workers accounted for 29.3 percent of the employed population, but accounted for 39.6 of uninsured workers. Nearly 29 percent of full-time, part-year workers were uninsured. Sixteen percent of full-time, full-year workers were uninsured.
- **Race, ethnic origin:** Individuals of Hispanic origin were more likely to be uninsured than other groups (35.7 percent). This may be due in part to the fact that 51 percent of the Hispanic population reported incomes of less than 200 percent of the federal poverty level. Also, a higher proportion of Hispanics are immigrants and may work for small firms or be employed on a part-time or part-year basis. Among blacks, 21.8 percent were uninsured, and among whites the portion was 12.8 percent.

EBRI is a private, nonprofit research institute based in Washington, DC, that focuses on health, savings, retirement, and economic security issues. EBRI does not lobby and does not take policy positions. www.ebri.org

PR #778