# U.S. Unemployment Insurance Program and Weekly UI Claims Data

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Office of Unemployment Insurance

Employment and Training Administration
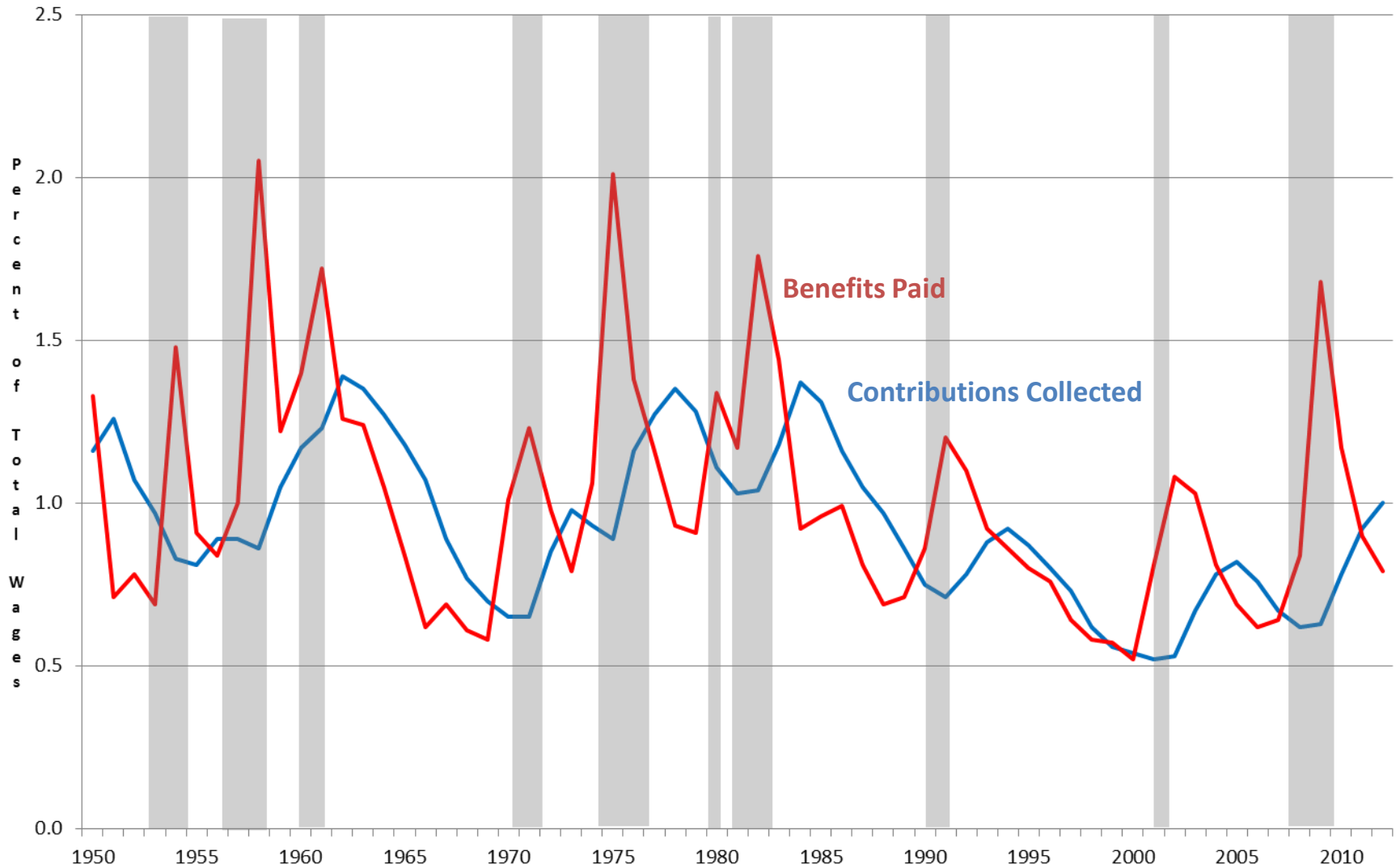
U.S. Department of Labor

# Unemployment Insurance Program

- Enacted as part of Social Security Act, 1935

Program Goals

- Provide temporary income support to workers unemployed through no fault of their own.

- Facilitate reemployment.

- Help stabilize the economy.

# Contributions Collected & Benefits Paid

US Totals

# UI Program Data

|                                 | FY2019 | FY2020 |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|
| Beneficiaries (M)               | 5.2    | 30.0   |
| Total Benefits ($Billions)      | $26.9  | $125.3 |
| $600 FPUC                       |        | $275.1 |
| PUA                             |        | $ 55.4 |
| PEUC                            |        | $  9.5 |
|                                 |        | $465.3 |
| Average Initial Claims (000)    | 222    | 1,255  |
| Average Weekly Claimants (M)    | 1.727  | 9.188  |

# Unemployment Insurance Weekly Claims

# Weekly UI Claims

- News Release typically published each Thursday
  - 5 days after close of period

- 100% Administrative data
  - States report claims from summary processing reports

- Initials Claims ~ eligibility determinations
  - Proxy for new spells of unemployment
  - Component of Index of Leading Indicators

- Continued Claims ~ requests for payment
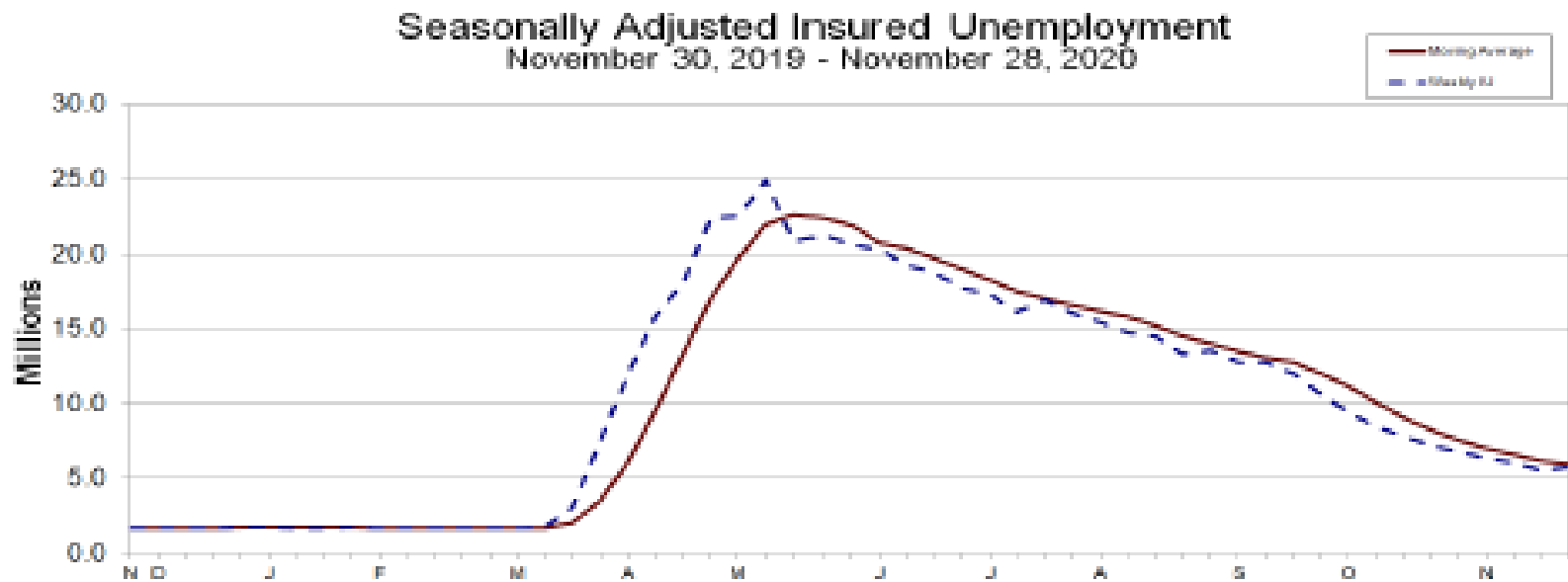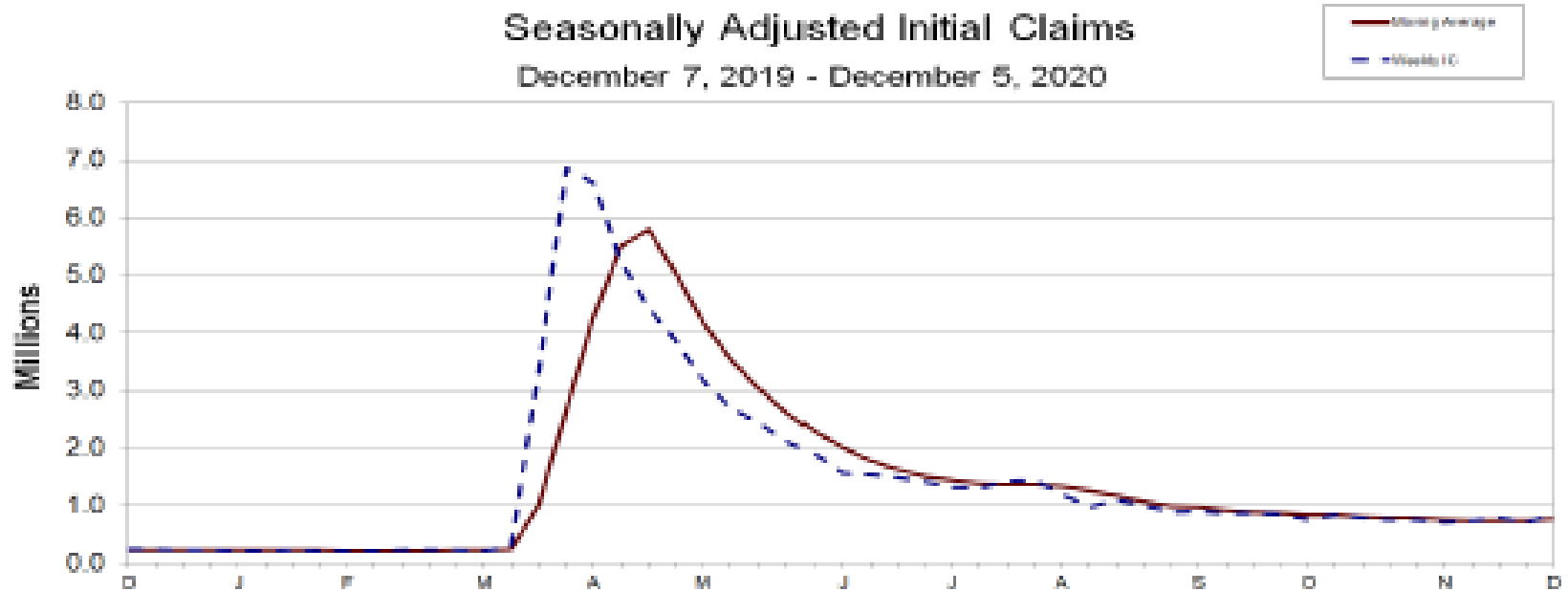  - Proxy for the size of the UI population
  - aka "Insured Unemployment"

# Weekly UI Claims

- National Claims Series
  - Not Seasonally Adjusted; Seasonally Adjusted
  - 1967 forward


- State-Level Claims Series
  - Not Seasonally Adjusted
  - 1987 forward

- http://workforcesecurity.doleta.gov/unemploy/claims_arch.asp

# Factors Affecting UI Claims

- ## Economic
  - Changes in volume or timing of layoffs

- ## Non-Economic
  - Natural disasters: flooding/wildfires/hurricanes

- ## Administrative
  - Holidays
  - State reporting issues
  - Unusual circumstances

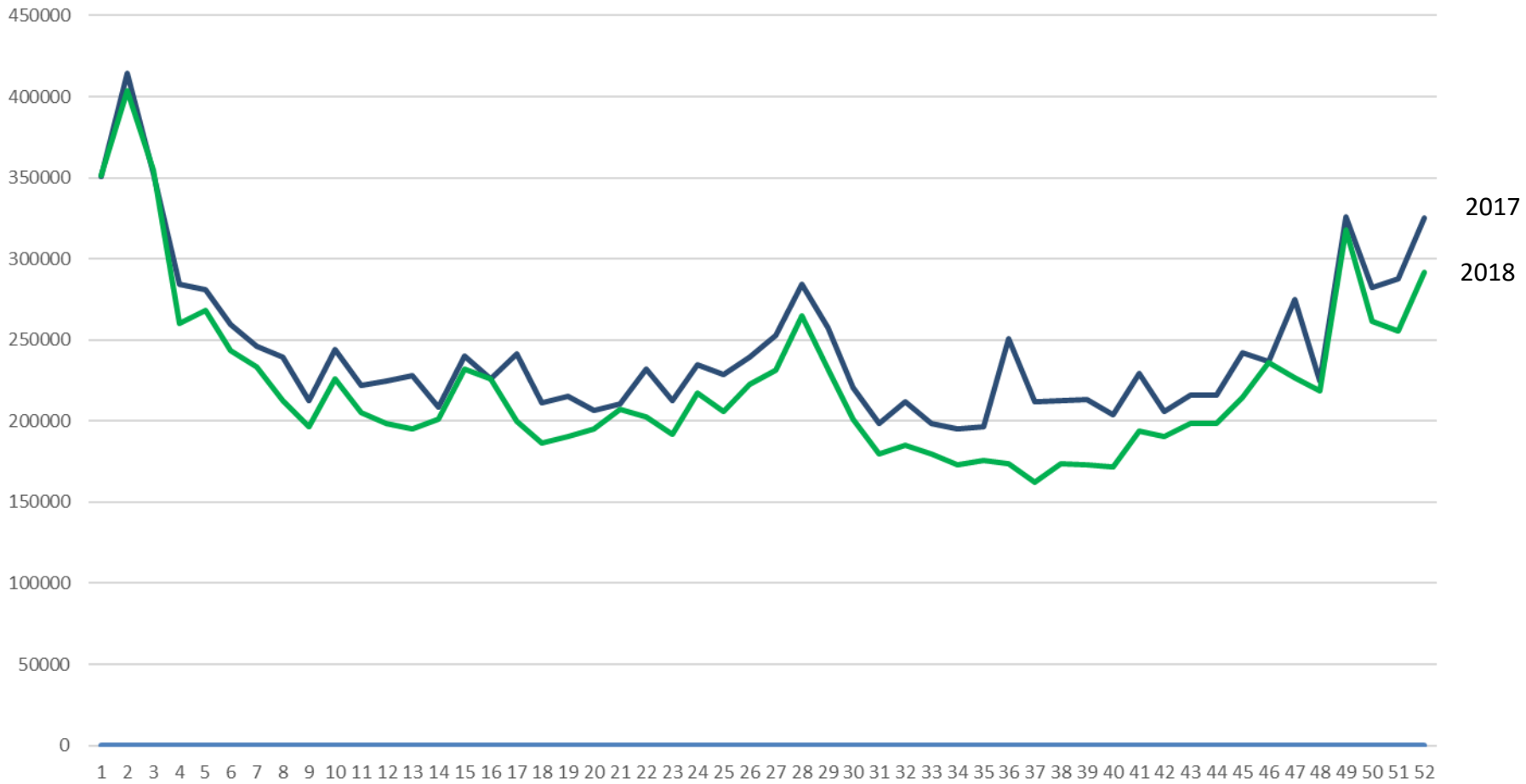- ## Seasonal Adjustment

# Weekly UI Claims – Charts



Seasonally Adjusted Initial Claims
December 7, 2019 - December 5, 2020



Seasonally Adjusted Insured Unemployment
November 30, 2019 - November 28, 2020

# Seasonal Adjustment

- Methodology adapted from Federal Reserve Board process used to adjust the weekly money supply

- Historic Volume of claims caused Issues

  - Prior to September 2020

    - Multiplicative factors estimates seasonal effect

  - Post September 2020

    - Addititive factors estimate seasonal effect

# US Initial Claims - NSA
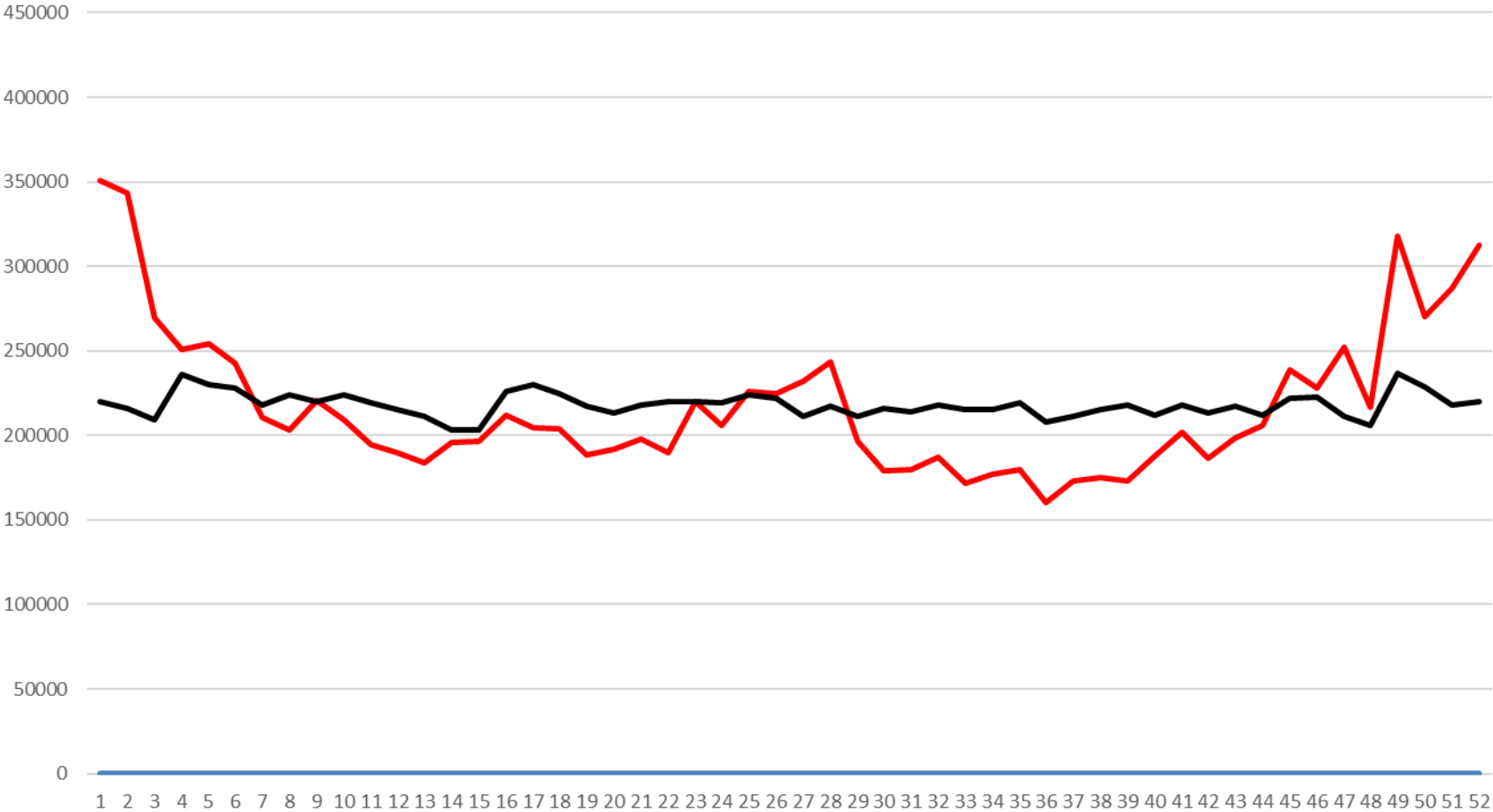


2017
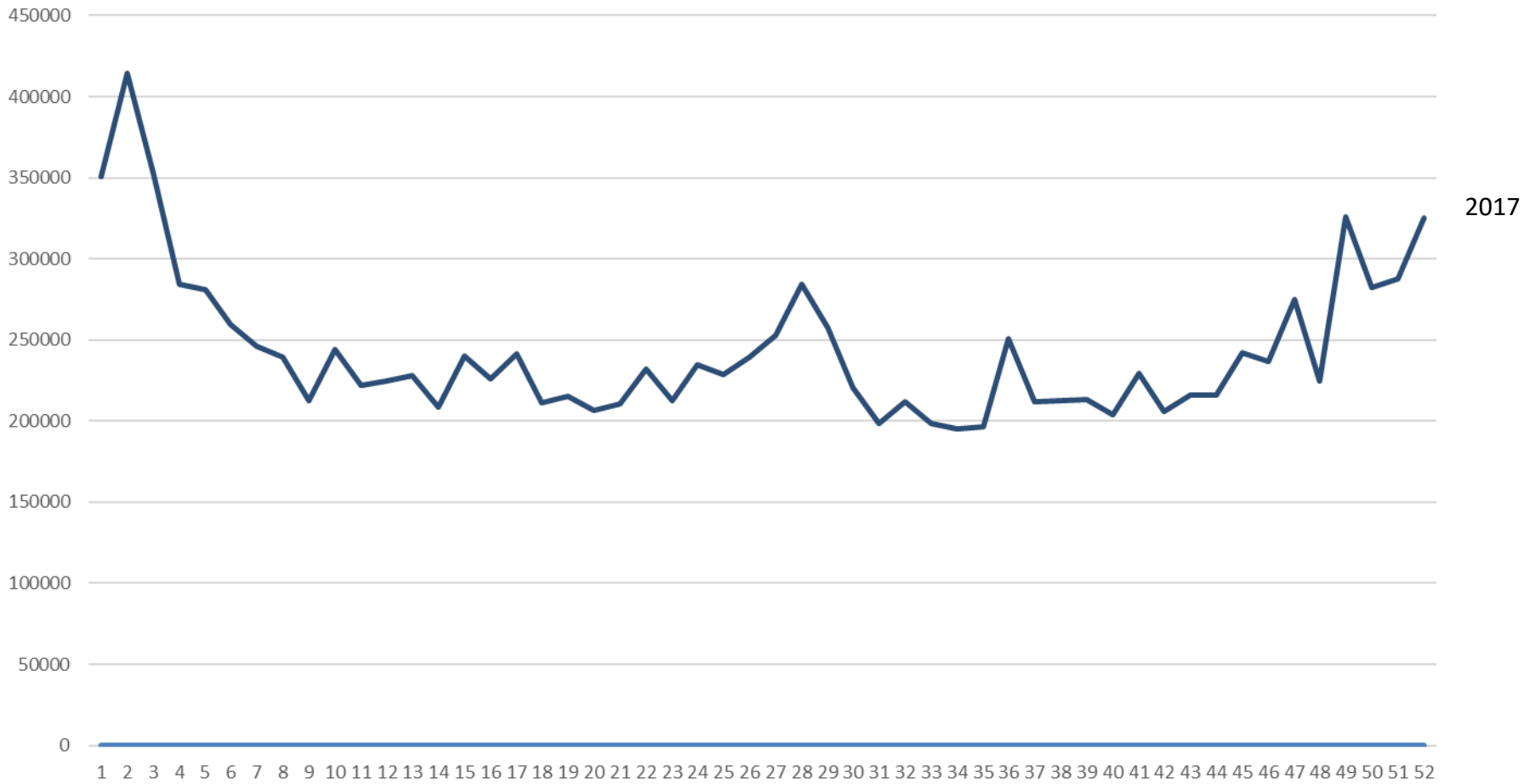
# US Initial Claims - NSA
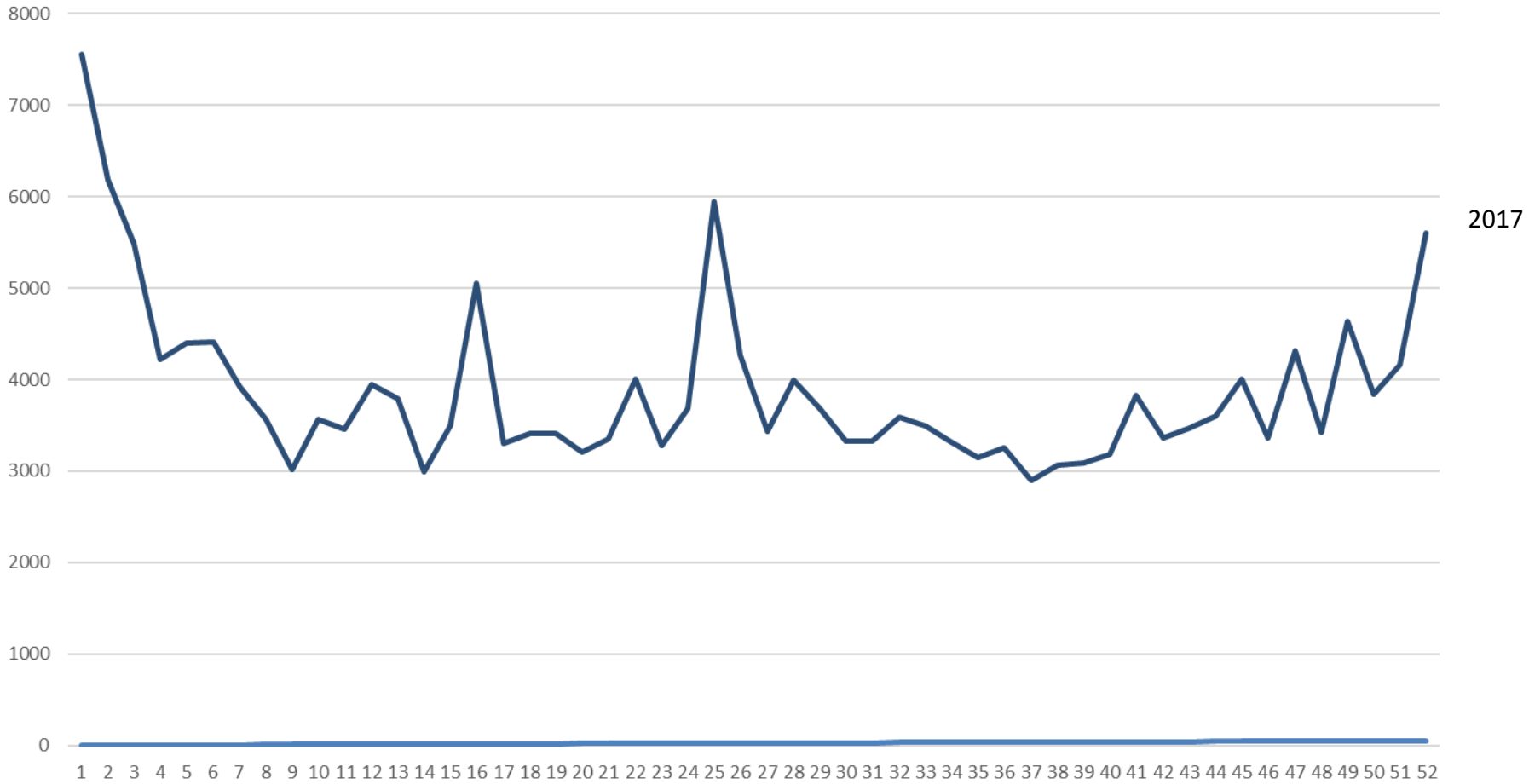
# US Initial Claims - NSA



2017
2019
2018

# US Initial Claims - NSA
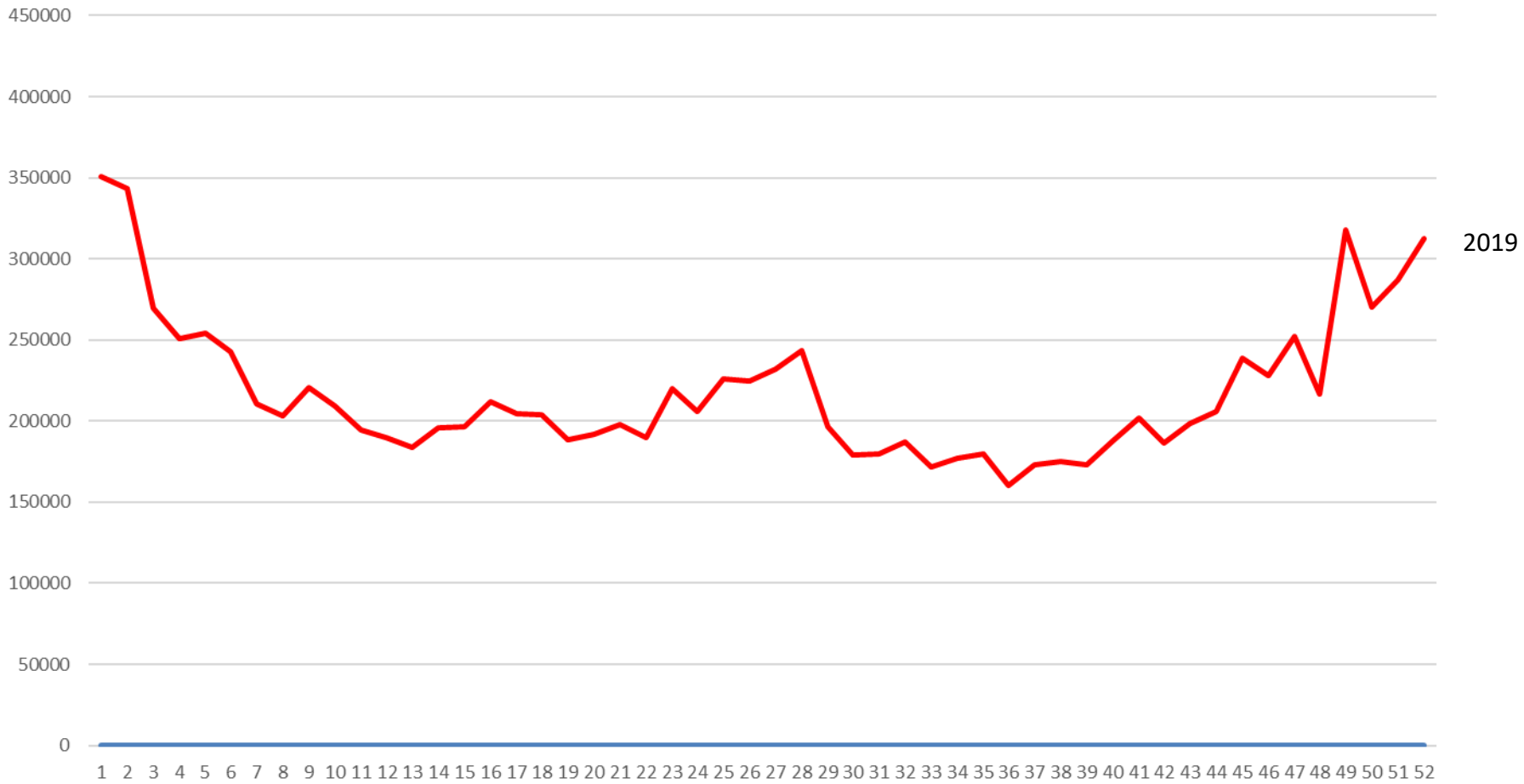


2019

# US Initial Claims – CY 2019

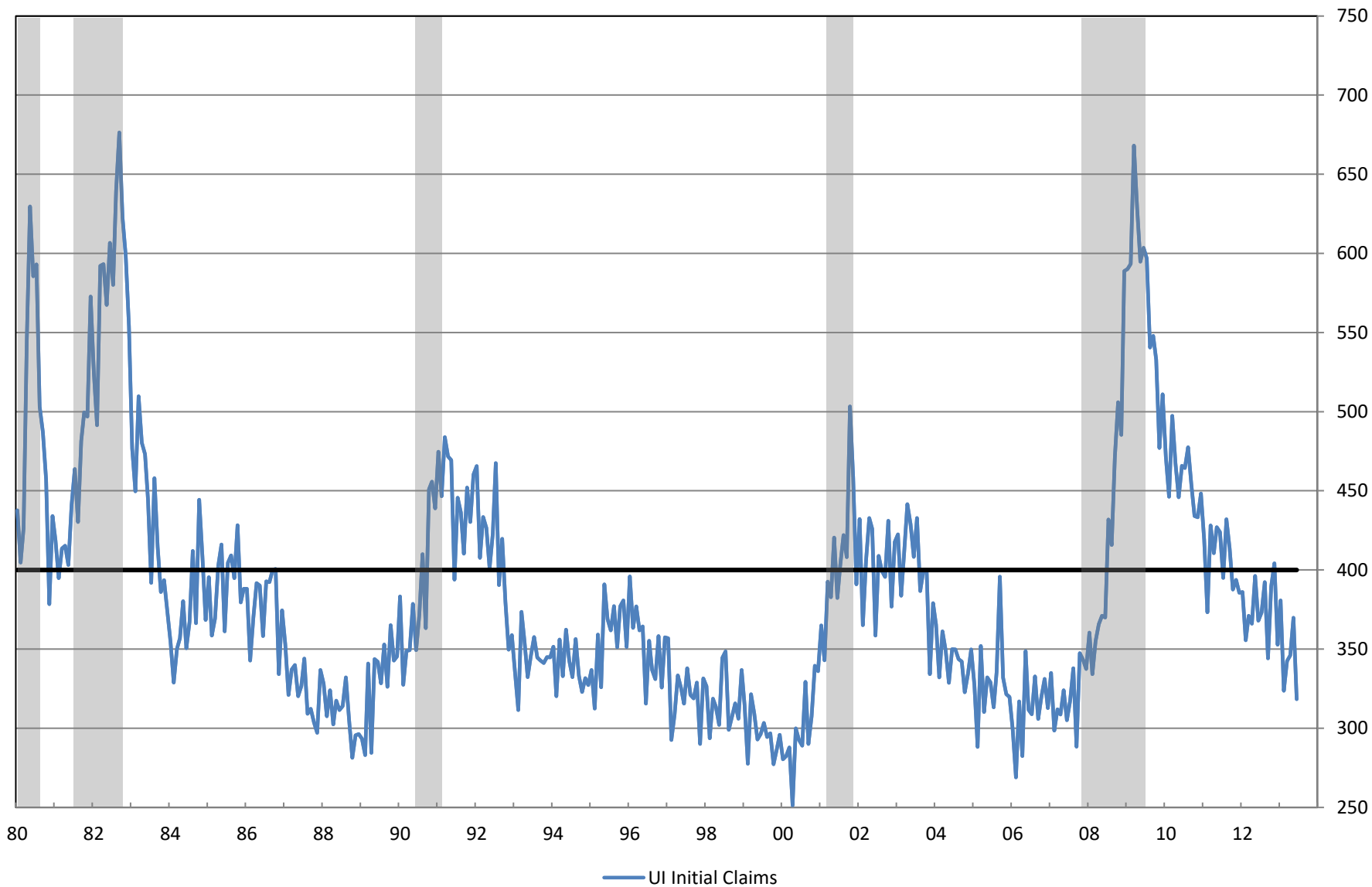# Maryland – NSA



2017
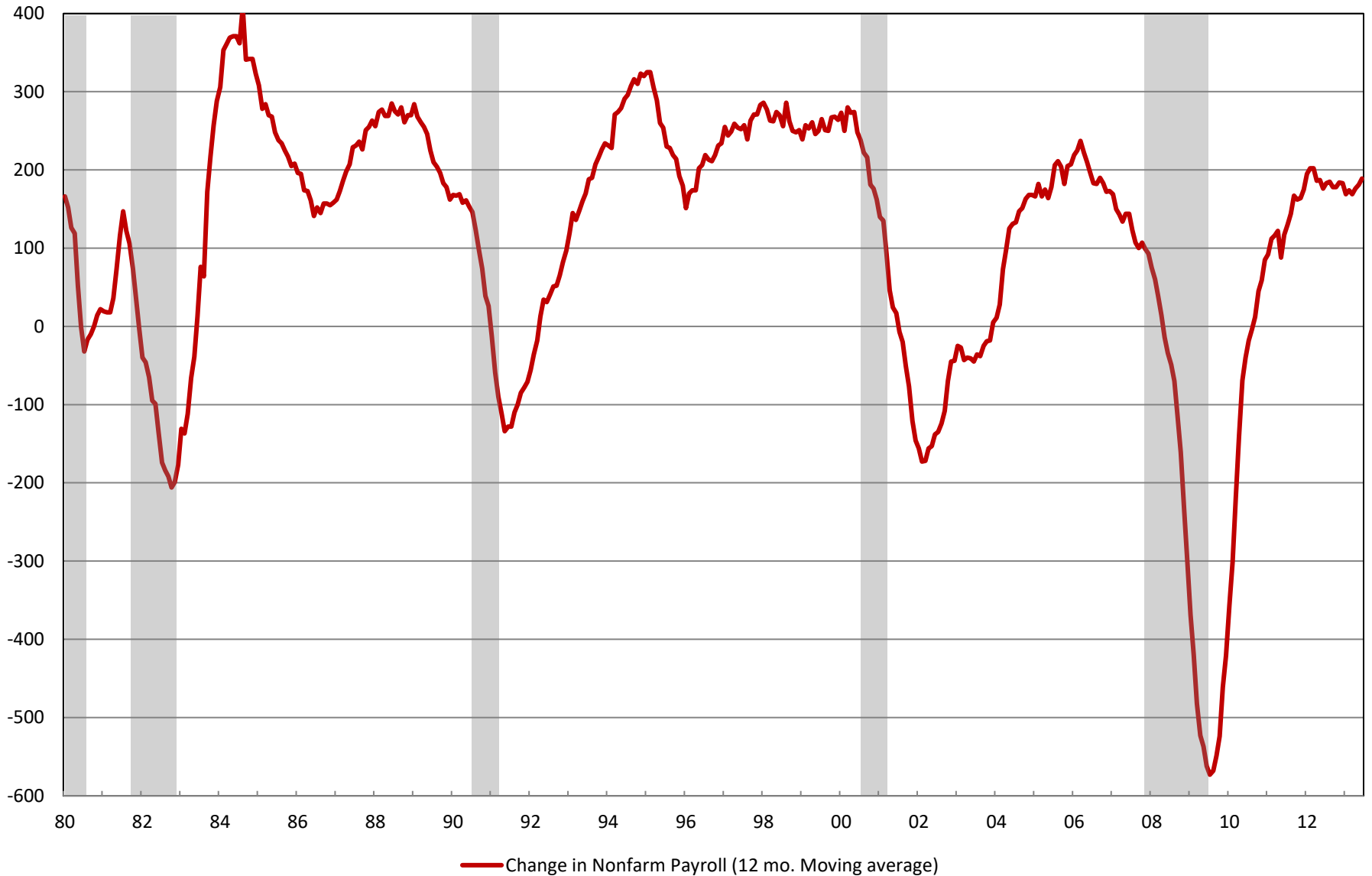
# Maryland – NSA

# Maryland – NSA



2018
2019
2017
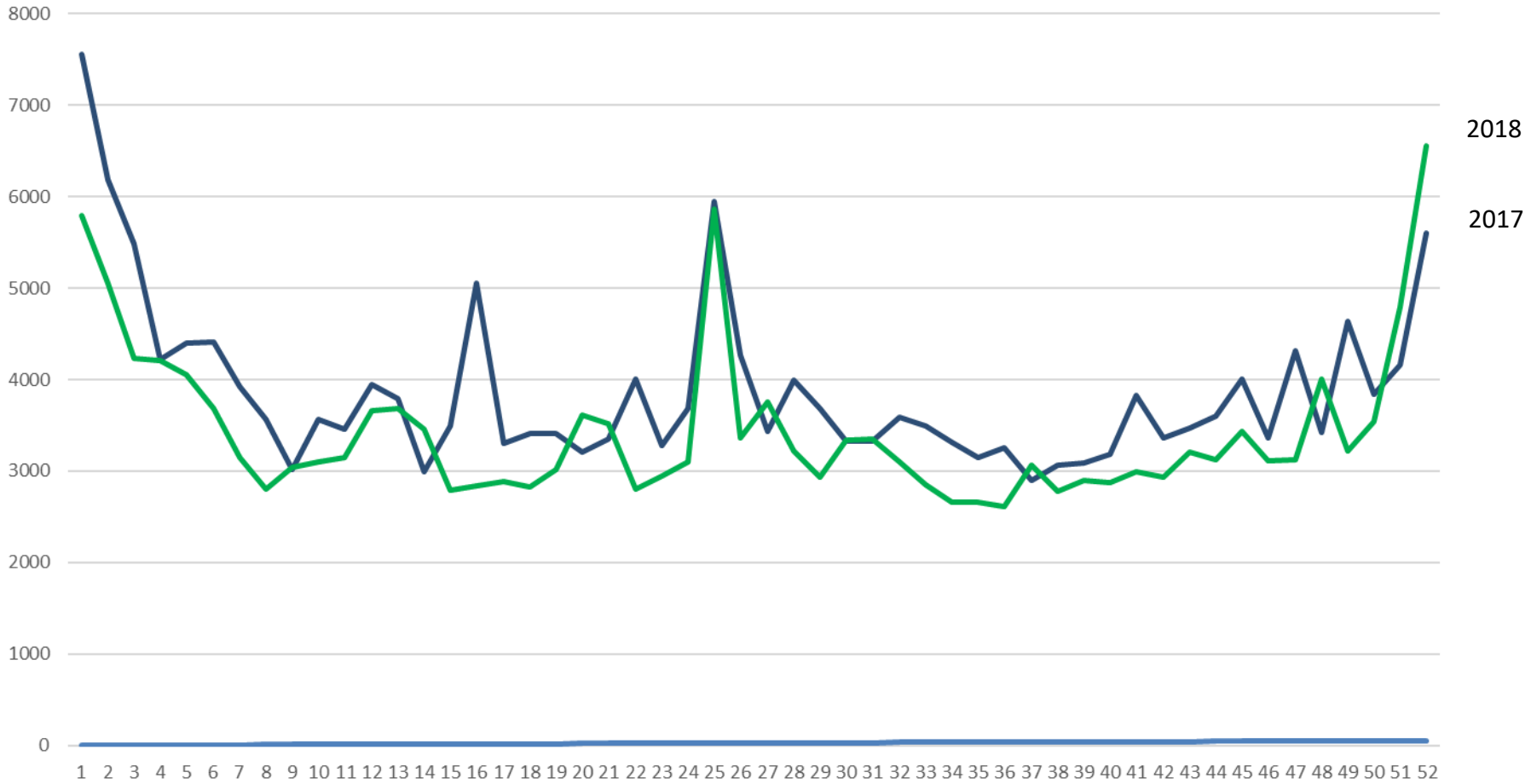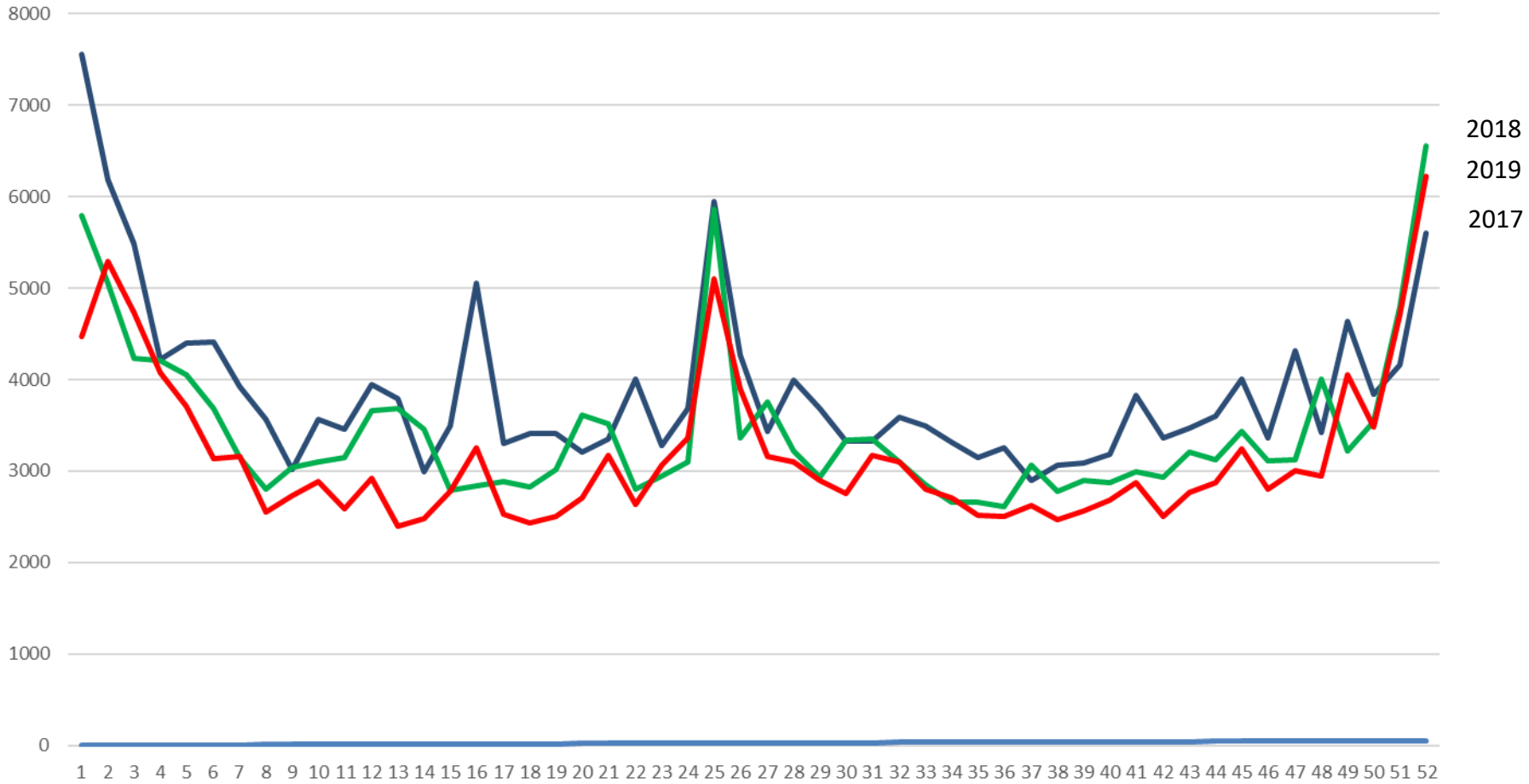
# UI Initial Claims
## Seasonally Adjusted



UI Initial Claims

# Change in BLS Nonfarm Payroll



Change in Nonfarm Payroll (12 mo. Moving average)

# UI Initial Claims and BLS Nonfarm Payroll



Change in Nonfarm Payroll (12 mo. Moving average) — UI Initial Claims

# Questions ???