



For release 10:00 a.m. (EDT) Thursday, August 16, 2018

USDL-18-1316

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EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH — SUMMER 2018

From April to July 2018, the number of employed youth 16 to 24 years old increased by 2.0 million to 20.9 million, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. This year, 55.0 percent of young people were employed in July, little changed from a year earlier. (The month of July typically is the summertime peak in youth employment.) The unemployment rate for youth was 9.2 percent in July, also little changed from July 2017. (Because this analysis focuses on the seasonal changes in youth employment and unemployment that occur each spring and summer, the data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Labor Force

The youth labor force—16- to 24-year-olds working or actively looking for work—grows sharply between April and July each year. During these months, large numbers of high school and college students search for or take summer jobs, and many graduates enter the labor market to look for or begin permanent employment. This summer, the youth labor force grew by 2.6 million, or 12.7 percent, to a total of 23.0 million in July. (See table 1.)

The labor force participation rate for all youth was 60.6 percent in July, unchanged from a year earlier. (The labor force participation rate is the proportion of the civilian noninstitutional population that is working or looking and available for work.) (See table 2.) The summer labor force participation rate of youth has held fairly steady since July 2010, after trending downward for the prior two decades. The summer youth labor force participation rate peaked at 77.5 percent in July 1989.

The July 2018 labor force participation rate for 16- to 24-year-old men, at 61.1 percent, was down 1.2 percentage points over the year. The rate for young women, at 60.0 percent, rose 1.2 percentage points during the same period, reducing the gap in labor force participation between young men and women. Whites had the highest youth labor force participation rate in July 2018, at 62.8 percent. The rate was 56.5 percent for Blacks, 43.3 percent for Asians, and 58.0 percent for Hispanics. Over the year, the labor force participation rate rose for Hispanics (+1.4 percentage points) and declined for Asians (-4.1 points). The decline among Asians offset a similar increase (+4.3 percentage points) between July 2016 and 2017. Labor force participation rates in July 2018 for Whites and Blacks were essentially unchanged from a year earlier.

Employment

In July 2018, there were 20.9 million employed 16- to 24-year-olds, about the same number as the summer before. Between April and July 2018, the number of employed youth rose by 2.0 million, in line with the change between April and July 2017. The employment-population ratio for youth—the proportion of the 16- to 24-year-old civilian noninstitutional population with a job—was 55.0 percent in July 2018, little changed from the prior year. (See tables 1 and 2.)

Employment-population ratios in July 2018 were higher than a year earlier for young women (54.8 percent), Whites (58.0 percent), and Hispanics (51.7 percent). The ratios declined for young men (55.2 percent) and Asians (39.7 percent). The ratio for Blacks, at 47.2 percent in July, was about unchanged from the summer before.

In July 2018, the largest percentage of employed youth worked in the leisure and hospitality industry (26 percent), which includes food services. An additional 18 percent of employed youth worked in the retail trade industry, and 11 percent worked in education and health services. (See table 3.)

Unemployment

Unemployment among youth rose by 567,000 from April to July 2018, compared with an increase of 458,000 for the same period in 2017.

The youth unemployment rate, at 9.2 percent in July 2018, was little changed from July 2017. This represents the lowest summer youth unemployment rate since July 1966. The number of unemployed youth was 2.1 million in July 2018, little different from a year earlier. Of the 2.1 million unemployed 16- to 24-year-olds, 1.5 million were looking for full-time work in July 2018, also little changed from July 2017. (See tables 1 and 2.)

In July 2018, the unemployment rates for both young men (9.8 percent) and women (8.6 percent) were little changed from the summer before. The July 2018 rate for young Asians (8.4 percent) declined over the year, while the rates for young Whites (7.6 percent), Blacks (16.5 percent), and Hispanics (10.8 percent) showed little change over the year. (See table 2.)

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a national sample survey of about 60,000 eligible households conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the U.S. Census Bureau. The data in this release relate to the employment status of youth (16- to 24-year-olds) during the months of April-July. This period was selected as being the most representative time frame in which to measure the full summertime transition from school to work. July is the peak summer month of youth employment.

Beginning in January of each year, data reflect revised population controls used in the CPS. Additional information about population controls is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#pop.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Reliability of the estimates

Statistics based on the CPS are subject to both sampling and nonsampling error. When a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed, there is a chance that the sample estimates may differ from the true population values they represent. The component of this difference that occurs because samples differ by chance is known as *sampling error*, and its variability is measured by the standard error of the estimate. There is about a 90-percent chance, or level of confidence, that an estimate based on a sample will differ by no more than 1.6 standard errors from the true population value because of sampling error. BLS analyses are generally conducted at the 90-percent level of confidence.

The CPS data also are affected by *nonsampling error*. Nonsampling error can occur for many reasons, including the failure to sample a segment of the population, inability to obtain information for all respondents in the sample, inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information, and errors made in the collection or processing of the data.

More information on the reliability of data from the CPS and estimating standard errors is available online at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#reliability.

Definitions

The principal definitions used in this release are described briefly below.

Employed. Employed persons are all those who, during the survey reference week (which is generally the week including the 12th day of the month), (a) did any work at all as paid employees; (b) worked in their own business, profession, or on their own farm; (c) worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in a family member's business. Persons who were temporarily absent from their jobs because of illness, bad weather, vacation, labor dispute, or another reason also are counted as employed.

Unemployed. The unemployed are those who had no employment during the reference week, were available for work at that time, and had made specific efforts to find employment sometime during the 4-week period ending with the reference week. Persons who were waiting to be recalled to a job from which they had been laid off need not have been looking for work to be classified as unemployed. Looking for full-time work refers to 35 hours or more per week; part-time work refers to fewer than 35 hours per week.

Civilian labor force. This group comprises all persons classified as employed or unemployed.

Unemployment rate. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed persons as a percent of the civilian labor force.

Labor force participation rate. The labor force participation rate is the labor force as a percent of the population.

Employment-population ratio. The employment-population ratio is the employed as a percent of the population.

Not in the labor force. Included in this group are all persons in the civilian noninstitutional population who are neither employed nor unemployed.

Industry and class of worker. This information applies to the job held during the reference week. Persons with two or more jobs are classified in the job at which they worked the greatest number of hours. Persons are classified using the 2012 Census industry classification system. The class-of-worker breakdown assigns workers to the following categories: Private and government wage and salary workers, unincorporated self-employed workers, and unpaid family workers.

Wage and salary workers. Included in this group are persons who receive wages, salary, commissions, tips, or pay in kind from a private employer or from a government entity.

Self-employed workers. Included in this group are those who work for profit or fees in their own unincorporated business, profession, trade, or farm. Only unincorporated self-employed are included in the self-employed category. Self-employed persons whose businesses are incorporated are included with private wage and salary workers.

Unpaid family workers. Included in this group are persons working without pay for 15 hours a week or more on a farm or in a business operated by a family member in their household.

Table 1. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, April-July 2018
 [Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	April	May	June	July	April-July changes	
					Number	Percent
TOTAL						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	38,039	38,023	38,009	37,997	-42	-0.1
Civilian labor force.....	20,425	20,779	22,640	23,016	2,591	12.7
Participation rate.....	53.7	54.6	59.6	60.6	6.9	12.8
Employed.....	18,873	18,984	20,332	20,897	2,024	10.7
Employment-population ratio.....	49.6	49.9	53.5	55.0	5.4	10.9
Unemployed.....	1,552	1,795	2,309	2,119	567	36.5
Looking for full-time work.....	1,028	1,285	1,695	1,458	430	41.8
Looking for part-time work.....	523	510	614	660	137	26.2
Unemployment rate.....	7.6	8.6	10.2	9.2	1.6	21.1
Not in labor force.....	17,614	17,245	15,369	14,981	-2,633	-14.9
Men						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,153	19,144	19,135	19,128	-25	-0.1
Civilian labor force.....	10,489	10,659	11,639	11,695	1,206	11.5
Participation rate.....	54.8	55.7	60.8	61.1	6.3	11.5
Employed.....	9,572	9,613	10,328	10,550	978	10.2
Employment-population ratio.....	50.0	50.2	54.0	55.2	5.2	10.4
Unemployed.....	916	1,045	1,312	1,145	229	25.0
Looking for full-time work.....	631	764	1,008	828	197	31.2
Looking for part-time work.....	285	281	303	317	32	11.2
Unemployment rate.....	8.7	9.8	11.3	9.8	1.1	12.6
Not in labor force.....	8,664	8,485	7,496	7,433	-1,231	-14.2
Women						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	18,886	18,880	18,874	18,869	-17	-0.1
Civilian labor force.....	9,936	10,120	11,001	11,321	1,385	13.9
Participation rate.....	52.6	53.6	58.3	60.0	7.4	14.1
Employed.....	9,301	9,371	10,004	10,347	1,046	11.2
Employment-population ratio.....	49.2	49.6	53.0	54.8	5.6	11.4
Unemployed.....	635	749	997	974	339	53.4
Looking for full-time work.....	397	520	686	630	233	58.7
Looking for part-time work.....	238	229	311	344	106	44.5
Unemployment rate.....	6.4	7.4	9.1	8.6	2.2	34.4
Not in labor force.....	8,950	8,759	7,873	7,548	-1,402	-15.7
White						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	27,910	27,894	27,879	27,866	-44	-0.2
Civilian labor force.....	15,574	15,876	17,227	17,509	1,935	12.4
Participation rate.....	55.8	56.9	61.8	62.8	7.0	12.5
Employed.....	14,535	14,680	15,692	16,174	1,639	11.3
Employment-population ratio.....	52.1	52.6	56.3	58.0	5.9	11.3
Unemployed.....	1,039	1,195	1,535	1,335	296	28.5
Looking for full-time work.....	656	818	1,106	863	207	31.6
Looking for part-time work.....	383	378	429	471	88	23.0
Unemployment rate.....	6.7	7.5	8.9	7.6	0.9	13.4
Not in labor force.....	12,336	12,019	10,652	10,357	-1,979	-16.0
Black or African American						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	5,688	5,681	5,674	5,668	-20	-0.4
Civilian labor force.....	2,795	2,866	3,152	3,203	408	14.6
Participation rate.....	49.1	50.5	55.5	56.5	7.4	15.1
Employed.....	2,441	2,494	2,651	2,675	234	9.6
Employment-population ratio.....	42.9	43.9	46.7	47.2	4.3	10.0
Unemployed.....	354	372	501	528	174	49.2
Looking for full-time work.....	267	301	406	438	171	64.0
Looking for part-time work.....	86	71	95	90	4	4.7
Unemployment rate.....	12.7	13.0	15.9	16.5	3.8	29.9
Not in labor force.....	2,893	2,815	2,523	2,465	-428	-14.8

Table 1. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, April-July 2018 — Continued
 [Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	April	May	June	July	April-July changes	
					Number	Percent
Asian						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	2,294	2,264	2,308	2,302	8	0.3
Civilian labor force.....	895	811	950	997	102	11.4
Participation rate.....	39.0	35.8	41.1	43.3	4.3	11.0
Employed.....	845	755	847	913	68	8.0
Employment-population ratio.....	36.9	33.3	36.7	39.7	2.8	7.6
Unemployed.....	49	56	102	84	35	71.4
Looking for full-time work.....	32	42	73	59	27	84.4
Looking for part-time work.....	17	14	29	25	8	47.1
Unemployment rate.....	5.5	6.9	10.7	8.4	2.9	52.7
Not in labor force.....	1,399	1,453	1,358	1,305	-94	-6.7
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	8,659	8,668	8,677	8,687	28	0.3
Civilian labor force.....	4,592	4,676	4,784	5,035	443	9.6
Participation rate.....	53.0	53.9	55.1	58.0	5.0	9.4
Employed.....	4,227	4,259	4,302	4,492	265	6.3
Employment-population ratio.....	48.8	49.1	49.6	51.7	2.9	5.9
Unemployed.....	365	417	482	543	178	48.8
Looking for full-time work.....	242	279	359	362	120	49.6
Looking for part-time work.....	123	137	123	181	58	47.2
Unemployment rate.....	7.9	8.9	10.1	10.8	2.9	36.7
Not in labor force.....	4,067	3,992	3,894	3,652	-415	-10.2

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (White, Black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2015-2018
 [Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	July 2015	July 2016	July 2017	July 2018
TOTAL				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	38,589	38,450	38,152	37,997
Civilian labor force.....	23,162	23,104	23,107	23,016
Participation rate.....	60.0	60.1	60.6	60.6
Employed.....	20,333	20,456	20,890	20,897
Employment-population ratio.....	52.7	53.2	54.8	55.0
Unemployed.....	2,829	2,648	2,217	2,119
Looking for full-time work.....	2,134	1,912	1,607	1,458
Looking for part-time work.....	695	736	610	660
Unemployment rate.....	12.2	11.5	9.6	9.2
Not in labor force.....	15,426	15,346	15,045	14,981
Men				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,442	19,380	19,219	19,128
Civilian labor force.....	12,011	12,094	11,983	11,695
Participation rate.....	61.8	62.4	62.3	61.1
Employed.....	10,488	10,638	10,773	10,550
Employment-population ratio.....	53.9	54.9	56.1	55.2
Unemployed.....	1,523	1,455	1,210	1,145
Looking for full-time work.....	1,195	1,169	944	828
Looking for part-time work.....	328	286	266	317
Unemployment rate.....	12.7	12.0	10.1	9.8
Not in labor force.....	7,431	7,287	7,236	7,433
Women				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,147	19,069	18,932	18,869
Civilian labor force.....	11,151	11,010	11,124	11,321
Participation rate.....	58.2	57.7	58.8	60.0
Employed.....	9,846	9,818	10,117	10,347
Employment-population ratio.....	51.4	51.5	53.4	54.8
Unemployed.....	1,306	1,193	1,007	974
Looking for full-time work.....	939	743	663	630
Looking for part-time work.....	367	450	344	344
Unemployment rate.....	11.7	10.8	9.1	8.6
Not in labor force.....	7,996	8,059	7,808	7,548
White				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	28,488	28,297	28,038	27,866
Civilian labor force.....	17,735	17,734	17,423	17,509
Participation rate.....	62.3	62.7	62.1	62.8
Employed.....	15,903	15,981	16,031	16,174
Employment-population ratio.....	55.8	56.5	57.2	58.0
Unemployed.....	1,832	1,754	1,392	1,335
Looking for full-time work.....	1,308	1,222	974	863
Looking for part-time work.....	524	532	418	471
Unemployment rate.....	10.3	9.9	8.0	7.6
Not in labor force.....	10,754	10,562	10,615	10,357
Black or African American				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	5,916	5,850	5,749	5,668
Civilian labor force.....	3,337	3,149	3,214	3,203
Participation rate.....	56.4	53.8	55.9	56.5
Employed.....	2,645	2,499	2,694	2,675
Employment-population ratio.....	44.7	42.7	46.9	47.2
Unemployed.....	691	650	520	528
Looking for full-time work.....	604	533	412	438
Looking for part-time work.....	87	117	108	90
Unemployment rate.....	20.7	20.6	16.2	16.5
Not in labor force.....	2,580	2,701	2,535	2,465

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2015-2018 — Continued
 [Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	July 2015	July 2016	July 2017	July 2018
Asian				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	2,148	2,212	2,208	2,302
Civilian labor force.....	957	954	1,047	997
Participation rate.....	44.6	43.1	47.4	43.3
Employed.....	855	859	944	913
Employment-population ratio.....	39.8	38.8	42.7	39.7
Unemployed.....	102	95	103	84
Looking for full-time work.....	68	65	70	59
Looking for part-time work.....	34	30	33	25
Unemployment rate.....	10.7	10.0	9.9	8.4
Not in labor force.....	1,191	1,258	1,162	1,305
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	8,406	8,497	8,535	8,687
Civilian labor force.....	4,728	4,776	4,835	5,035
Participation rate.....	56.2	56.2	56.6	58.0
Employed.....	4,127	4,235	4,347	4,492
Employment-population ratio.....	49.1	49.8	50.9	51.7
Unemployed.....	601	540	488	543
Looking for full-time work.....	458	385	353	362
Looking for part-time work.....	143	155	135	181
Unemployment rate.....	12.7	11.3	10.1	10.8
Not in labor force.....	3,679	3,721	3,700	3,652

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (White, Black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.

Table 3. Employed persons 16 to 24 years of age by industry, class of worker, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2017-2018

[Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Industry and class of worker	Total		White		Black or African American		Asian		Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	
	July 2017	July 2018	July 2017	July 2018	July 2017	July 2018	July 2017	July 2018	July 2017	July 2018
Total employed.....	20,890	20,897	16,031	16,174	2,694	2,675	944	913	4,347	4,492
Agriculture and related industries.....	336	391	306	360	14	8	3	0	105	103
Nonagricultural industries.....	20,555	20,506	15,724	15,814	2,680	2,667	940	913	4,242	4,389
Private wage and salary workers ¹	18,794	18,720	14,395	14,468	2,449	2,414	862	833	3,992	4,125
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction.....	32	77	26	75	0	0	0	0	3	23
Construction.....	1,061	1,000	965	888	44	44	9	13	368	283
Manufacturing.....	1,361	1,409	1,062	1,124	161	141	72	72	273	306
Durable goods.....	820	815	683	684	83	66	37	35	140	147
Nondurable goods.....	540	595	380	439	79	74	35	37	134	159
Wholesale trade.....	290	304	236	234	28	52	15	13	70	77
Retail trade.....	3,978	3,682	2,996	2,800	570	574	190	164	907	840
Transportation and utilities.....	595	577	380	447	157	73	17	16	144	184
Information.....	305	276	199	212	46	25	31	23	57	49
Financial activities.....	721	797	556	621	89	99	36	30	115	176
Professional and business services...	1,724	1,738	1,328	1,322	217	232	96	108	317	389
Education and health services.....	2,466	2,383	1,848	1,778	379	404	108	83	442	469
Leisure and hospitality.....	5,403	5,463	4,107	4,158	680	666	242	270	1,141	1,125
Other services.....	858	1,014	691	812	78	104	46	41	155	204
Government wage and salary workers.....	1,491	1,398	1,096	1,064	210	190	72	66	213	176
Federal.....	194	177	107	100	45	48	20	9	24	18
State.....	541	465	392	375	67	47	31	30	71	44
Local.....	756	757	597	589	98	96	20	28	118	114
Self-employed, unincorporated, and unpaid family workers.....	270	388	233	282	21	62	6	14	37	88

¹ Includes self-employed workers whose businesses are incorporated.

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (White, Black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.