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EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH — SUMMER 2024

In July 2024, 54.5 percent of young people (those ages 16 to 24) were employed, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. This measure was little changed from 55.0 percent in July 2023. (The month of July typically is the summertime peak in youth employment.) The youth unemployment rate was 9.8 percent in July 2024, higher than the rate in July 2023 (8.7 percent). (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. In 2024, the youth labor force grew by 2.1 million, or 9.9 percent, from April (21.4 million) to July (23.6 million). (See table 1.)

The labor force participation rate for all youth was 60.4 percent in July 2024, little different from a year earlier. (The labor force participation rate is the proportion of the civilian noninstitutional population that is employed or unemployed. To be classified as unemployed, a person must either be looking and available for work or on temporary layoff.) (See table 2.)

After adjusting for population controls, the July 2024 labor force participation rate for 16- to 24-year-old men (61.2 percent) increased over the year while the rate for young women (59.6 percent) was unchanged. Continuing a long-standing pattern, White youth had the highest labor force participation rate, and Asian youth had the lowest rate (63.5 percent versus 50.2 percent) in July 2024. After adjusting for population controls, the participation rates for White youth increased to 63.5 percent in July 2024. The participation rates for Black (52.5 percent), Asian (50.2 percent), and Hispanic (57.0 percent) youth showed little or no change over the year.

Employment

There were 21.3 million employed 16- to 24-year-olds in July 2024. Between April and July, the number of employed youth rose by 1.4 million, or 6.9 percent. The employment-population ratio for youth—the proportion of the 16- to 24-year-old civilian noninstitutional population with a job—was 54.5 percent in July 2024, little changed from the prior year. (See tables 1 and 2.)

In July 2024, the employment-population ratios for young men (55.2 percent), young women (53.8 percent), White youth (58.1 percent), Black youth (44.3 percent), Asian youth (44.8 percent), and Hispanic youth (50.9 percent) were little changed over the year after adjusting for population controls.

In July 2024, 26 percent (5.5 million) of employed 16- to 24-year-olds worked in the leisure and hospitality industry, the largest share of youth workers. An additional 17 percent of employed youth worked in the retail trade industry, and 13 percent worked in education and health services. (See table 3.)

Unemployment

Typically, the number of unemployed young people increases with the onset of summer, as people who were not in the labor force while attending school begin seeking employment. From April to July 2024, unemployment among youth rose by 752,000 to 2.3 million. About three-fourths of the unemployed youth were looking for full-time work in July 2024, in line with the share looking for full-time work in recent years. (See tables 1 and 2.)

The youth unemployment rate, at 9.8 percent in July 2024, was 1.1 percentage points higher than the rate in July 2023. The July 2024 unemployment rates were higher for young women (9.8 percent), White youth (8.4 percent), and Asian youth (10.8 percent) than in the prior summer, while the rates for young men (9.8 percent), Black youth (15.6 percent), and Hispanic youth (10.7 percent) showed little change.

Adjustments to Population Estimates for Youth

Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data. The January 2024 adjustments had a disproportionately large effect on the population ages 16 to 24. Consequently, data for 2024 are not strictly comparable to those for earlier years. For more information, see Adjustments to Household Survey Population Estimates in January 2024 on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#pop.

Technical Note

The estimates in this news 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 news 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.

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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 news release are described briefly below.

Employed. Employed people 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; or (c) worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in a family member's business. People 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. People 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 people classified as employed or unemployed.

Unemployment rate. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed people 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 people 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. People with two or more jobs are classified in the job at which they worked the greatest number of hours. Beginning with data for 2020, people are classified using the 2017 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 people 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 people whose businesses are incorporated are included with private wage and salary workers.

Unpaid family workers. Included in this group are people 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 2024
 [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.....	38,918	38,941	38,966	38,993	75	0.2
Civilian labor force.....	21,436	21,606	23,382	23,566	2,130	9.9
Participation rate.....	55.1	55.5	60.0	60.4	5.3	9.6
Employed.....	19,881	19,611	20,989	21,259	1,378	6.9
Employment-population ratio.....	51.1	50.4	53.9	54.5	3.4	6.7
Unemployed.....	1,555	1,995	2,393	2,307	752	48.4
Looking for full-time work.....	1,021	1,477	1,726	1,689	668	65.4
Looking for part-time work.....	534	518	667	618	84	15.7
Unemployment rate.....	7.3	9.2	10.2	9.8	2.5	34.2
Not in labor force.....	17,482	17,335	15,584	15,427	-2,055	-11.8
Men						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,621	19,634	19,648	19,662	41	0.2
Civilian labor force.....	10,907	11,050	12,053	12,040	1,133	10.4
Participation rate.....	55.6	56.3	61.3	61.2	5.6	10.1
Employed.....	10,078	9,939	10,778	10,859	781	7.7
Employment-population ratio.....	51.4	50.6	54.9	55.2	3.8	7.4
Unemployed.....	829	1,111	1,275	1,181	352	42.5
Looking for full-time work.....	551	843	968	943	392	71.1
Looking for part-time work.....	278	268	307	238	-40	-14.4
Unemployment rate.....	7.6	10.1	10.6	9.8	2.2	28.9
Not in labor force.....	8,714	8,584	7,595	7,623	-1,091	-12.5
Women						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,296	19,307	19,319	19,331	35	0.2
Civilian labor force.....	10,529	10,556	11,330	11,526	997	9.5
Participation rate.....	54.6	54.7	58.6	59.6	5.0	9.2
Employed.....	9,803	9,672	10,212	10,400	597	6.1
Employment-population ratio.....	50.8	50.1	52.9	53.8	3.0	5.9
Unemployed.....	725	884	1,118	1,126	401	55.3
Looking for full-time work.....	470	634	758	746	276	58.7
Looking for part-time work.....	255	250	360	380	125	49.0
Unemployment rate.....	6.9	8.4	9.9	9.8	2.9	42.0
Not in labor force.....	8,768	8,751	7,989	7,805	-963	-11.0
White						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	28,273	28,281	28,290	28,301	28	0.1
Civilian labor force.....	16,227	16,320	17,804	17,958	1,731	10.7
Participation rate.....	57.4	57.7	62.9	63.5	6.1	10.6
Employed.....	15,240	15,071	16,253	16,457	1,217	8.0
Employment-population ratio.....	53.9	53.3	57.5	58.1	4.2	7.8
Unemployed.....	988	1,249	1,551	1,501	513	51.9
Looking for full-time work.....	623	912	1,093	1,056	433	69.5
Looking for part-time work.....	365	338	458	444	79	21.6
Unemployment rate.....	6.1	7.7	8.7	8.4	2.3	37.7
Not in labor force.....	12,045	11,961	10,486	10,344	-1,701	-14.1
Black or African American						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	5,700	5,704	5,708	5,713	13	0.2
Civilian labor force.....	2,929	2,866	2,974	2,999	70	2.4
Participation rate.....	51.4	50.2	52.1	52.5	1.1	2.1
Employed.....	2,560	2,419	2,517	2,531	-29	-1.1
Employment-population ratio.....	44.9	42.4	44.1	44.3	-0.6	-1.3
Unemployed.....	369	447	457	468	99	26.8
Looking for full-time work.....	258	327	339	405	147	57.0
Looking for part-time work.....	111	120	118	62	-49	-44.1
Unemployment rate.....	12.6	15.6	15.4	15.6	3.0	23.8
Not in labor force.....	2,771	2,838	2,735	2,714	-57	-2.1

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 2024 — 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.....	2,327	2,391	2,454	2,394	67	2.9
Civilian labor force.....	952	1,069	1,181	1,201	249	26.2
Participation rate.....	40.9	44.7	48.1	50.2	9.3	22.7
Employed.....	892	978	1,017	1,072	180	20.2
Employment-population ratio.....	38.3	40.9	41.4	44.8	6.5	17.0
Unemployed.....	59	91	164	130	71	120.3
Looking for full-time work.....	50	72	131	73	23	46.0
Looking for part-time work.....	9	19	33	57	48	533.3
Unemployment rate.....	6.2	8.5	13.9	10.8	4.6	74.2
Not in labor force.....	1,376	1,322	1,272	1,193	-183	-13.3
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	9,786	9,806	9,827	9,848	62	0.6
Civilian labor force.....	5,411	5,290	5,625	5,617	206	3.8
Participation rate.....	55.3	54.0	57.2	57.0	1.7	3.1
Employed.....	5,048	4,749	5,027	5,017	-31	-0.6
Employment-population ratio.....	51.6	48.4	51.2	50.9	-0.7	-1.4
Unemployed.....	363	541	598	600	237	65.3
Looking for full-time work.....	261	421	458	449	188	72.0
Looking for part-time work.....	102	120	141	152	50	49.0
Unemployment rate.....	6.7	10.2	10.6	10.7	4.0	59.7
Not in labor force.....	4,375	4,516	4,202	4,231	-144	-3.3

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 2021-2024

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

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	July 2021	July 2022	July 2023	July 2024
TOTAL				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	37,250	37,954	39,342	38,993
Civilian labor force.....	22,522	22,943	23,681	23,566
Participation rate.....	60.5	60.4	60.2	60.4
Employed.....	20,268	20,992	21,623	21,259
Employment-population ratio.....	54.4	55.3	55.0	54.5
Unemployed.....	2,254	1,951	2,059	2,307
Looking for full-time work.....	1,697	1,415	1,437	1,689
Looking for part-time work.....	557	536	621	618
Unemployment rate.....	10.0	8.5	8.7	9.8
Not in labor force.....	14,728	15,011	15,660	15,427
Men				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	18,692	19,065	19,842	19,662
Civilian labor force.....	11,547	11,763	11,987	12,040
Participation rate.....	61.8	61.7	60.4	61.2
Employed.....	10,294	10,733	10,886	10,859
Employment-population ratio.....	55.1	56.3	54.9	55.2
Unemployed.....	1,253	1,031	1,101	1,181
Looking for full-time work.....	976	798	799	943
Looking for part-time work.....	277	232	302	238
Unemployment rate.....	10.9	8.8	9.2	9.8
Not in labor force.....	7,145	7,302	7,855	7,623
Women				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	18,559	18,890	19,500	19,331
Civilian labor force.....	10,976	11,180	11,694	11,526
Participation rate.....	59.1	59.2	60.0	59.6
Employed.....	9,975	10,259	10,736	10,400
Employment-population ratio.....	53.7	54.3	55.1	53.8
Unemployed.....	1,001	921	958	1,126
Looking for full-time work.....	721	617	638	746
Looking for part-time work.....	280	304	319	380
Unemployment rate.....	9.1	8.2	8.2	9.8
Not in labor force.....	7,583	7,710	7,806	7,805
White				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	27,333	27,798	28,661	28,301
Civilian labor force.....	17,168	17,411	17,938	17,958
Participation rate.....	62.8	62.6	62.6	63.5
Employed.....	15,635	16,197	16,681	16,457
Employment-population ratio.....	57.2	58.3	58.2	58.1
Unemployed.....	1,533	1,213	1,257	1,501
Looking for full-time work.....	1,170	837	876	1,056
Looking for part-time work.....	363	376	381	444
Unemployment rate.....	8.9	7.0	7.0	8.4
Not in labor force.....	10,165	10,388	10,723	10,344
Black or African American				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	5,452	5,551	5,771	5,713
Civilian labor force.....	3,004	3,060	3,086	2,999
Participation rate.....	55.1	55.1	53.5	52.5
Employed.....	2,594	2,574	2,530	2,531
Employment-population ratio.....	47.6	46.4	43.8	44.3
Unemployed.....	410	486	556	468
Looking for full-time work.....	325	380	420	405
Looking for part-time work.....	85	106	136	62
Unemployment rate.....	13.6	15.9	18.0	15.6
Not in labor force.....	2,448	2,490	2,685	2,714

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2021-2024 — Continued
 [Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	July 2021	July 2022	July 2023	July 2024
Asian				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	2,186	2,203	2,422	2,394
Civilian labor force.....	976	1,089	1,205	1,201
Participation rate.....	44.6	49.4	49.8	50.2
Employed.....	856	971	1,137	1,072
Employment-population ratio.....	39.1	44.1	47.0	44.8
Unemployed.....	120	117	68	130
Looking for full-time work.....	70	103	37	73
Looking for part-time work.....	50	15	31	57
Unemployment rate.....	12.3	10.8	5.6	10.8
Not in labor force.....	1,210	1,114	1,217	1,193
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	8,880	9,193	9,704	9,848
Civilian labor force.....	5,044	5,099	5,578	5,617
Participation rate.....	56.8	55.5	57.5	57.0
Employed.....	4,456	4,607	4,993	5,017
Employment-population ratio.....	50.2	50.1	51.5	50.9
Unemployed.....	588	493	585	600
Looking for full-time work.....	472	330	423	449
Looking for part-time work.....	116	163	162	152
Unemployment rate.....	11.7	9.7	10.5	10.7
Not in labor force.....	3,836	4,093	4,125	4,231

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 2023-2024

[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 2023	July 2024	July 2023	July 2024	July 2023	July 2024	July 2023	July 2024	July 2023	July 2024
Total employed.....	21,623	21,259	16,681	16,457	2,530	2,531	1,137	1,072	4,993	5,017
Agriculture and related industries.....	345	316	308	269	11	10	0	7	83	88
Nonagricultural industries.....	21,278	20,943	16,374	16,188	2,518	2,521	1,137	1,065	4,910	4,929
Private wage and salary workers ¹	19,507	18,952	15,043	14,668	2,297	2,293	1,016	957	4,556	4,453
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction.....	47	47	32	44	14	2	0	0	4	22
Construction.....	1,329	1,222	1,203	1,102	48	39	11	21	440	466
Manufacturing.....	1,465	1,215	1,141	938	163	115	86	73	315	307
Durable goods.....	915	684	706	542	107	56	70	63	173	118
Nondurable goods.....	550	531	436	396	56	60	16	10	142	189
Wholesale trade.....	250	199	197	184	22	8	12	8	38	18
Retail trade.....	3,800	3,686	2,883	2,768	540	515	183	153	941	925
Transportation and utilities.....	840	789	527	495	185	224	75	19	190	202
Information.....	189	226	156	182	23	13	7	19	27	29
Financial activities.....	649	613	505	473	72	58	46	54	123	126
Professional and business services...	1,835	1,710	1,395	1,316	200	199	161	121	445	348
Education and health services.....	2,712	2,713	2,083	2,012	319	385	171	211	497	555
Leisure and hospitality.....	5,344	5,519	4,108	4,299	575	654	243	240	1,248	1,219
Other services.....	1,047	1,014	811	854	135	79	22	38	289	236
Government wage and salary workers.....	1,343	1,509	985	1,149	182	197	104	83	237	355
Federal.....	205	146	108	86	74	12	10	25	10	17
State.....	441	588	323	442	46	87	57	30	76	152
Local.....	697	775	554	621	63	98	37	28	151	186
Self-employed, unincorporated, and unpaid family workers.....	428	483	346	371	38	32	17	25	117	120

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.