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## EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH — SUMMER 2015

From April to July 2015, the number of employed youth 16 to 24 years old increased by 2.1 million to 20.3 million, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. This year, 52.7 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.) Unemployment among youth rose by 654,000 from April to July 2015, compared with an increase of 913,000 for the same period in 2014. (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 2.7 million, or 13.5 percent, to a total of 23.2 million in July. (See table 1.)

The labor force participation rate for all youth was 60.0 percent in July, little changed 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.) The summer labor force participation rate of youth has held fairly steady since July 2010, after generally trending downward for many years. The summer youth labor force participation rate peaked at 77.5 percent in July 1989. (See table 2.)

The July 2015 labor force participation rate for 16- to 24-year-old men was 61.8 percent, higher than the rate for young women at 58.2 percent. The rate for men declined from last July, while the rate for women was little changed.

The youth labor force participation rate was highest for whites, at 62.3 percent in July 2015. The rate was 56.4 percent for blacks, 44.6 percent for Asians, and 56.2 percent for Hispanics. The rate for blacks rose by 3.5 percentage points from the previous July, while the rates for whites, Asians, and Hispanics showed little or no change.

### Employment

In July 2015, there were 20.3 million employed 16- to 24-year-olds, not much different from the summer before. Between April and July 2015, the number of employed youth rose by 2.1 million, in line

with the increase for the prior 3 summers. The employment-population ratio for youth in July 2015—the proportion of the 16- to 24-year-old civilian noninstitutional population with a job—was 52.7 percent, little changed from the year before. (See tables 1 and 2.)

The employment-population ratios for young women (51.4 percent), blacks (44.7 percent), and Hispanics (49.1 percent) were higher in July 2015 than a year earlier. The ratios for young men (53.9 percent), whites (55.8 percent), and Asians (39.8 percent) showed little change from last July.

In July 2015, 27 percent of employed youth worked in the leisure and hospitality industry (which includes food services), 20 percent worked in the retail trade industry, and another 11 percent worked in education and health services. (See table 3.)

## **Unemployment**

The number of unemployed youth was 2.8 million in July 2015, down from 3.4 million a year earlier. The youth unemployment rate was 12.2 percent in July 2015, 2.1 percentage points less than a year before. Among the major demographic groups, July unemployment rates were lower than the prior year for young men (12.7 percent), women (11.7 percent), whites (10.3 percent), blacks (20.7 percent), and Hispanics (12.7 percent). The youth jobless rate changed little for Asians (10.7 percent). (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](http://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](http://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 2015**  
 [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
<b>TOTAL</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	38,654	38,630	38,609	38,589	-65	-0.2
Civilian labor force.....	20,416	21,342	22,926	23,162	2,746	13.5
Participation rate.....	52.8	55.2	59.4	60.0	7.2	13.6
Employed.....	18,241	18,709	19,789	20,333	2,092	11.5
Employment-population ratio.....	47.2	48.4	51.3	52.7	5.5	11.7
Unemployed.....	2,175	2,633	3,138	2,829	654	30.1
Looking for full-time work.....	1,527	1,969	2,309	2,134	607	39.8
Looking for part-time work.....	648	664	829	695	47	7.3
Unemployment rate.....	10.7	12.3	13.7	12.2	1.5	14.0
Not in labor force.....	18,238	17,288	15,682	15,426	-2,812	-15.4
<b>Men</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,473	19,462	19,451	19,442	-31	-0.2
Civilian labor force.....	10,508	11,069	11,766	12,011	1,503	14.3
Participation rate.....	54.0	56.9	60.5	61.8	7.8	14.4
Employed.....	9,298	9,569	10,005	10,488	1,190	12.8
Employment-population ratio.....	47.7	49.2	51.4	53.9	6.2	13.0
Unemployed.....	1,210	1,501	1,761	1,523	313	25.9
Looking for full-time work.....	865	1,155	1,320	1,195	330	38.2
Looking for part-time work.....	346	345	441	328	-18	-5.2
Unemployment rate.....	11.5	13.6	15.0	12.7	1.2	10.4
Not in labor force.....	8,966	8,392	7,686	7,431	-1,535	-17.1
<b>Women</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,180	19,168	19,157	19,147	-33	-0.2
Civilian labor force.....	9,908	10,272	11,161	11,151	1,243	12.5
Participation rate.....	51.7	53.6	58.3	58.2	6.5	12.6
Employed.....	8,943	9,140	9,784	9,846	903	10.1
Employment-population ratio.....	46.6	47.7	51.1	51.4	4.8	10.3
Unemployed.....	965	1,132	1,377	1,306	341	35.3
Looking for full-time work.....	662	814	989	939	277	41.8
Looking for part-time work.....	303	318	388	367	64	21.1
Unemployment rate.....	9.7	11.0	12.3	11.7	2.0	20.6
Not in labor force.....	9,272	8,896	7,997	7,996	-1,276	-13.8
<b>White</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	28,551	28,529	28,508	28,488	-63	-0.2
Civilian labor force.....	15,591	16,291	17,605	17,735	2,144	13.8
Participation rate.....	54.6	57.1	61.8	62.3	7.7	14.1
Employed.....	14,110	14,576	15,542	15,903	1,793	12.7
Employment-population ratio.....	49.4	51.1	54.5	55.8	6.4	13.0
Unemployed.....	1,481	1,715	2,064	1,832	351	23.7
Looking for full-time work.....	1,024	1,238	1,447	1,308	284	27.7
Looking for part-time work.....	457	477	617	524	67	14.7
Unemployment rate.....	9.5	10.5	11.7	10.3	0.8	8.4
Not in labor force.....	12,961	12,238	10,903	10,754	-2,207	-17.0
<b>Black or African American</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	5,935	5,928	5,922	5,916	-19	-0.3
Civilian labor force.....	2,939	3,099	3,260	3,337	398	13.5
Participation rate.....	49.5	52.3	55.1	56.4	6.9	13.9
Employed.....	2,476	2,457	2,497	2,645	169	6.8
Employment-population ratio.....	41.7	41.4	42.2	44.7	3.0	7.2
Unemployed.....	463	642	763	691	228	49.2
Looking for full-time work.....	359	525	615	604	245	68.2
Looking for part-time work.....	105	117	148	87	-18	-17.1
Unemployment rate.....	15.8	20.7	23.4	20.7	4.9	31.0
Not in labor force.....	2,996	2,829	2,662	2,580	-416	-13.9

**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 2015 — 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
<b>Asian</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	2,140	2,170	2,170	2,148	8	0.4
Civilian labor force.....	841	883	951	957	116	13.8
Participation rate.....	39.3	40.7	43.8	44.6	5.3	13.5
Employed.....	758	772	832	855	97	12.8
Employment-population ratio.....	35.4	35.6	38.4	39.8	4.4	12.4
Unemployed.....	83	111	119	102	19	22.9
Looking for full-time work.....	54	70	97	68	14	25.9
Looking for part-time work.....	30	41	22	34	4	13.3
Unemployment rate.....	9.9	12.5	12.5	10.7	0.8	8.1
Not in labor force.....	1,300	1,287	1,219	1,191	-109	-8.4
<b>Hispanic or Latino ethnicity</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	8,386	8,392	8,399	8,406	20	0.2
Civilian labor force.....	4,397	4,448	4,710	4,728	331	7.5
Participation rate.....	52.4	53.0	56.1	56.2	3.8	7.3
Employed.....	3,921	3,910	4,003	4,127	206	5.3
Employment-population ratio.....	46.8	46.6	47.7	49.1	2.3	4.9
Unemployed.....	475	538	707	601	126	26.5
Looking for full-time work.....	370	425	533	458	88	23.8
Looking for part-time work.....	105	112	174	143	38	36.2
Unemployment rate.....	10.8	12.1	15.0	12.7	1.9	17.6
Not in labor force.....	3,989	3,944	3,690	3,679	-310	-7.8

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 2012-2015**  
 [Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	July 2012	July 2013	July 2014	July 2015
<b>TOTAL</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	38,799	38,861	38,735	38,589
Civilian labor force.....	23,472	23,506	23,437	23,162
Participation rate.....	60.5	60.5	60.5	60.0
Employed.....	19,461	19,684	20,085	20,333
Employment-population ratio.....	50.2	50.7	51.9	52.7
Unemployed.....	4,011	3,821	3,353	2,829
Looking for full-time work.....	3,074	2,819	2,460	2,134
Looking for part-time work.....	937	1,002	893	695
Unemployment rate.....	17.1	16.3	14.3	12.2
Not in labor force.....	15,327	15,355	15,298	15,426
<b>Men</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,554	19,587	19,527	19,442
Civilian labor force.....	12,355	12,283	12,335	12,011
Participation rate.....	63.2	62.7	63.2	61.8
Employed.....	10,140	10,127	10,470	10,488
Employment-population ratio.....	51.9	51.7	53.6	53.9
Unemployed.....	2,215	2,156	1,865	1,523
Looking for full-time work.....	1,785	1,665	1,437	1,195
Looking for part-time work.....	430	491	428	328
Unemployment rate.....	17.9	17.6	15.1	12.7
Not in labor force.....	7,199	7,303	7,191	7,431
<b>Women</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,245	19,274	19,208	19,147
Civilian labor force.....	11,117	11,223	11,102	11,151
Participation rate.....	57.8	58.2	57.8	58.2
Employed.....	9,321	9,557	9,614	9,846
Employment-population ratio.....	48.4	49.6	50.1	51.4
Unemployed.....	1,796	1,665	1,488	1,306
Looking for full-time work.....	1,289	1,154	1,023	939
Looking for part-time work.....	507	511	465	367
Unemployment rate.....	16.2	14.8	13.4	11.7
Not in labor force.....	8,128	8,052	8,106	7,996
<b>White</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	28,956	28,866	28,718	28,488
Civilian labor force.....	18,213	18,205	18,137	17,735
Participation rate.....	62.9	63.1	63.2	62.3
Employed.....	15,498	15,679	15,917	15,903
Employment-population ratio.....	53.5	54.3	55.4	55.8
Unemployed.....	2,715	2,525	2,220	1,832
Looking for full-time work.....	2,019	1,814	1,612	1,308
Looking for part-time work.....	696	711	607	524
Unemployment rate.....	14.9	13.9	12.2	10.3
Not in labor force.....	10,743	10,661	10,581	10,754
<b>Black or African American</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	5,971	5,997	5,973	5,916
Civilian labor force.....	3,256	3,225	3,160	3,337
Participation rate.....	54.5	53.8	52.9	56.4
Employed.....	2,323	2,315	2,376	2,645
Employment-population ratio.....	38.9	38.6	39.8	44.7
Unemployed.....	933	910	784	691
Looking for full-time work.....	783	771	591	604
Looking for part-time work.....	150	139	192	87
Unemployment rate.....	28.6	28.2	24.8	20.7
Not in labor force.....	2,715	2,772	2,813	2,580

**Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2012-2015 — Continued**  
 [Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	July 2012	July 2013	July 2014	July 2015
<b>Asian</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	1,922	2,028	2,044	2,148
Civilian labor force.....	839	934	936	957
Participation rate.....	43.7	46.1	45.8	44.6
Employed.....	718	794	834	855
Employment-population ratio.....	37.4	39.2	40.8	39.8
Unemployed.....	121	140	102	102
Looking for full-time work.....	83	81	70	68
Looking for part-time work.....	38	59	32	34
Unemployment rate.....	14.4	15.0	10.9	10.7
Not in labor force.....	1,083	1,094	1,109	1,191
<b>Hispanic or Latino ethnicity</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	8,164	8,229	8,313	8,406
Civilian labor force.....	4,658	4,756	4,675	4,728
Participation rate.....	57.1	57.8	56.2	56.2
Employed.....	3,799	3,897	3,903	4,127
Employment-population ratio.....	46.5	47.4	47.0	49.1
Unemployed.....	860	859	772	601
Looking for full-time work.....	698	622	560	458
Looking for part-time work.....	162	238	212	143
Unemployment rate.....	18.5	18.1	16.5	12.7
Not in labor force.....	3,506	3,473	3,637	3,679

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 2014-2015**

[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 2014	July 2015	July 2014	July 2015	July 2014	July 2015	July 2014	July 2015	July 2014	July 2015
Total employed.....	20,085	20,333	15,917	15,903	2,376	2,645	834	855	3,903	4,127
Agriculture and related industries.....	353	309	340	294	7	7	0	1	86	47
Nonagricultural industries.....	19,732	20,024	15,577	15,609	2,369	2,638	834	853	3,817	4,079
Private wage and salary workers <sup>1</sup> .....	18,052	18,223	14,207	14,169	2,175	2,418	774	791	3,551	3,790
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction.....	126	75	118	68	4	0	4	3	28	9
Construction.....	879	883	768	799	39	36	19	1	269	267
Manufacturing.....	1,328	1,385	1,094	1,133	120	162	69	46	277	322
Durable goods.....	813	882	692	726	51	104	42	33	140	173
Nondurable goods.....	516	504	402	406	69	58	27	14	137	149
Wholesale trade.....	338	277	287	228	22	24	20	12	82	94
Retail trade.....	3,843	4,005	2,872	2,902	577	680	175	206	763	785
Transportation and utilities.....	516	447	376	337	100	73	11	13	120	133
Information.....	341	288	278	221	25	30	16	30	74	52
Financial activities.....	760	725	617	571	73	93	35	39	134	180
Professional and business services...	1,632	1,547	1,329	1,228	151	158	97	75	347	332
Education and health services.....	2,142	2,236	1,611	1,664	312	331	142	137	383	368
Leisure and hospitality.....	5,078	5,437	3,976	4,234	635	762	161	196	902	1,098
Other services.....	1,068	918	883	784	116	68	26	33	174	150
Government wage and salary workers.....	1,310	1,403	1,056	1,091	165	195	42	47	185	189
Federal.....	131	114	78	82	43	14	6	9	21	3
State.....	535	541	447	414	42	77	23	19	76	80
Local.....	644	748	532	595	80	103	13	18	88	106
Self-employed, unincorporated, and unpaid family workers.....	369	398	314	349	30	26	18	16	81	100

<sup>1</sup> 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.