

For release 10:00 a.m. (EDT) Thursday, April 16, 2015

USDL-15-0608

Technical information: (202) 691-6378 • cpsinfo@bls.gov • www.bls.gov/cps
Media contact: (202) 691-5902 • PressOffice@bls.gov

COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND WORK ACTIVITY OF 2014 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

In October 2014, 68.4 percent of 2014 high school graduates were enrolled in colleges or universities, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college in October 2014 were almost twice as likely as enrolled graduates to be working or looking for work (72.7 percent compared with 37.9 percent).

Information on school enrollment and work activity is collected monthly in the Current Population Survey (CPS), a nationwide survey of about 60,000 households that provides information on employment and unemployment. Each October, a supplement to the CPS gathers more detailed information about school enrollment, such as full- and part-time enrollment status. Additional information about the October supplement is included in the Technical Note.

Recent High School Graduates and Dropouts

Of the 2.9 million youth age 16 to 24 who graduated from high school between January and October 2014, about 2.0 million (68.4 percent) were enrolled in college in October. The college enrollment rate of recent high school graduates in October 2014 was little different from the rate in October 2013 (65.9 percent). For 2014 graduates, the college enrollment rate was 72.7 percent for young women and 64.0 percent for young men. The college enrollment rate of Asians (86.1 percent) was higher than for recent black (70.9 percent), white (67.3 percent), and Hispanic (65.2 percent) graduates. (See table 1.)

The labor force participation rate (the proportion of the population working or looking for work) for recent high school graduates enrolled in college was 37.9 percent. The participation rates for male and female graduates enrolled in college were 36.1 percent and 39.5 percent, respectively.

Among recent high school graduates enrolled in college in October 2014, about 9 in 10 were full-time students. Recent graduates enrolled as full-time students were about half as likely to be in the labor force (34.8 percent) as were their peers enrolled part time (75.2 percent).

About 2 in 3 recent high school graduates enrolled in college attended 4-year colleges. Of these students, 31.6 percent participated in the labor force, compared with 49.1 percent of recent graduates enrolled in 2-year colleges.

Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college in the fall of 2014 were much more likely than enrolled graduates to be in the labor force (72.7 percent compared with 37.9 percent). The

unemployment rate for recent high school graduates not enrolled in school was 28.8 percent, almost twice the rate of recent graduates enrolled in college (14.5 percent).

Between October 2013 and October 2014, 575,000 young people dropped out of high school. The labor force participation rate for recent dropouts (41.2 percent) was much lower than for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college (72.7 percent). The jobless rate for recent high school dropouts was 30.3 percent, similar to the rate for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college (28.8 percent).

All Youth Enrolled in High School or College

In October 2014, 56.4 percent of the nation's 16- to -24 year olds, or 21.8 million young people, were enrolled in high school (9.4 million) or in college (12.3 million). The labor force participation rate (38.0 percent) of youth enrolled in school was essentially unchanged from October 2013 to October 2014. The unemployment rate for this group declined over the year from 11.7 percent to 10.1 percent. (See table 2.)

In October 2014, college students continued to be more likely to participate in the labor force than high school students (50.0 percent compared with 22.3 percent). Those attending college full time had a much lower labor force participation rate than did part-time students (44.7 percent versus 85.7 percent). For high school and college students, Asians were less likely to participate in the labor force than blacks, whites, or Hispanics. Female college students were more likely to be in the labor force (53.5 percent) than their male counterparts (46.0 percent). Labor force participation rates for female and male high school students were similar (23.7 percent and 21.0 percent, respectively).

The unemployment rate for high school students, at 18.4 percent in October 2014, was more than twice the rate for college students (7.3 percent). Unemployment rates for black (28.6 percent) and Hispanic (27.8 percent) high school students continued to be higher than for white high school students (15.5 percent).

All Youth Not Enrolled in School

In October 2014, 16.9 million persons age 16 to 24 were not enrolled in school. The labor force participation rate of youth not enrolled in school increased over the year from 77.7 percent to 78.9 percent. Among youth not enrolled in school in October 2014, young men continued to be more likely than young women to participate in the labor force—83.1 percent compared with 74.4 percent. Labor force participation rates for not-enrolled men and women were highest for those with a bachelor's degree or higher (93.5 percent and 91.8 percent, respectively) and lowest for men and women with less than a high school diploma (68.0 percent and 54.0 percent, respectively). (See table 2.)

The unemployment rate for youth age 16 to 24 not enrolled in school declined over the year from 16.1 percent to 13.7 percent. Among not-enrolled youth who did not have a high school diploma, unemployment rates in October 2014 were 24.6 percent for young men and 32.1 percent for young women. In contrast, the jobless rates of young men and women with at least a bachelor's degree were 8.0 percent and 7.8 percent, respectively. Black youth not enrolled in school had an unemployment rate of 23.7 percent in October 2014, higher than the rates for their white (11.4 percent), Asian (12.8 percent), and Hispanic (12.8 percent) counterparts.

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from a supplement to the October 2014 Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly survey of about 60,000 eligible households that provides information on the labor force, employment, and unemployment for the nation. The survey is conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau. Data in this release relate to the school enrollment status of persons 16 to 24 years of age in the civilian noninstitutional population in the calendar week that includes the 12th of October. Updated population controls for the Current Population Survey are introduced annually with the release of January data. 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 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.

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

Concepts

The principal concepts used in connection with the school enrollment series are described briefly below.

School enrollment. Respondents were asked whether they were currently enrolled in a regular school, including day or night school in any type of public, parochial, or other private school. Regular schooling is that which may advance a person toward a high school diploma or a college, university, or professional degree. Such schools include elementary schools, junior or senior high schools, and colleges and universities.

Other schooling, including trade schools; on-the-job training; and courses that do not require physical presence in school, such as correspondence courses or other courses of independent study, is included only if the credits granted count towards promotion in regular school.

Full-time and part-time enrollment in college. College students are classified as attending full time if they were taking 12 hours of classes or more (or 9 hours of graduate classes) during an average school week and as part time if they were taking fewer hours.

High school graduation status. Persons who were not enrolled in school at the time of the survey were asked whether they had graduated from high school. Those who had graduated were asked when they completed their high school education. Persons who had not graduated, that is, school dropouts, were asked when they last attended a regular school. Those who were enrolled in college at the time of the survey also were asked when they graduated from high school.

Recent high school graduates. Persons who completed high school in the calendar year of the survey (January through October) are recent high school graduates.

Recent high school dropouts. Persons who were not enrolled in school at the time of the survey, attended school a year earlier, and did not have a high school diploma are recent dropouts.

Table 1. Labor force status of 2014 high school graduates and 2013-14 high school dropouts 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, October 2014

[Numbers in thousands]

Characteristic	Civilian noninstitutional population	Civilian labor force						Not in labor force
		Total	Percent of population	Employed		Unemployed		
				Total	Percent of population	Number	Rate	
RECENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES								
Total, 2014 high school graduates ¹	2,868	1,403	48.9	1,105	38.5	298	21.2	1,465
Men	1,423	719	50.5	568	39.9	152	21.1	704
Women	1,445	684	47.3	538	37.2	146	21.4	761
White	2,167	1,101	50.8	866	40.0	234	21.3	1,066
Black or African American	371	171	46.0	131	35.3	40	23.3	200
Asian	137	43	31.2	40	29.3	3	—	94
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	566	306	54.0	231	40.8	75	24.5	260
Enrolled in college								
Total, enrolled in college	1,961	744	37.9	636	32.4	108	14.5	1,217
Enrolled in 2-year college	706	347	49.1	291	41.2	56	16.1	359
Enrolled in 4-year college	1,254	397	31.6	345	27.5	52	13.0	858
Full-time students	1,810	630	34.8	537	29.7	93	14.8	1,180
Part-time students	151	113	75.2	99	65.6	14	12.8	37
Men	911	329	36.1	300	32.9	29	8.9	582
Women	1,050	415	39.5	336	32.0	78	18.9	635
White	1,459	586	40.1	517	35.5	68	11.7	873
Black or African American	263	96	36.3	67	25.4	29	30.1	168
Asian	118	25	21.6	25	21.6	—	—	92
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	369	181	49.2	153	41.3	29	15.9	188
Not enrolled in college								
Total, not enrolled in college	907	659	72.7	469	51.7	190	28.8	248
Men	512	390	76.2	268	52.3	122	31.4	122
Women	395	269	68.0	201	50.9	68	25.1	126
White	708	515	72.7	349	49.3	166	32.2	193
Black or African American	107	75	69.9	64	59.7	11	14.7	32
Asian	19	17	—	15	—	3	—	2
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	197	124	63.1	79	39.8	46	36.9	73
RECENT HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS								
Total, 2013-14 high school dropouts ²	575	237	41.2	165	28.7	72	30.3	338
Men	309	125	40.6	79	25.5	47	37.2	183
Women	266	111	41.9	86	32.5	25	22.4	154
White	436	179	41.0	135	31.0	44	24.5	257
Black or African American	86	38	44.6	15	17.5	23	—	47
Asian	5	2	—	2	—	—	—	3
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	182	81	44.5	62	34.2	19	23.2	101

¹ Data refer to persons who graduated from high school in January through October 2014.

² Data refer to persons who dropped out of school between October 2013 and October 2014.

NOTE: Detail 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. Dash indicates no data or data that do not meet publication criteria (values not shown where base is less than 75,000).

Table 2. Labor force status of persons 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, October 2014

[Numbers in thousands]

Characteristic	Civilian noninstitutional population	Civilian labor force						Not in labor force
		Total	Percent of population	Employed		Unemployed		
				Total	Percent of population	Number	Rate	
Total, 16 to 24 years	38,650	21,589	55.9	18,924	49.0	2,666	12.3	17,061
Enrolled in school								
Total, enrolled in school	21,790	8,279	38.0	7,441	34.2	837	10.1	13,511
Enrolled in high school ¹	9,445	2,109	22.3	1,722	18.2	387	18.4	7,335
Men	4,883	1,027	21.0	830	17.0	197	19.1	3,856
Women	4,562	1,083	23.7	892	19.6	191	17.6	3,479
White	6,974	1,630	23.4	1,377	19.7	253	15.5	5,343
Black or African American	1,459	292	20.0	208	14.3	84	28.6	1,167
Asian	466	43	9.3	41	8.9	2	-	422
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	2,056	358	17.4	258	12.6	100	27.8	1,698
Enrolled in college	12,345	6,169	50.0	5,719	46.3	450	7.3	6,176
Enrolled in 2-year college	3,288	1,936	58.9	1,752	53.3	184	9.5	1,351
Enrolled in 4-year college	9,057	4,233	46.7	3,967	43.8	266	6.3	4,824
Full-time students	10,752	4,804	44.7	4,439	41.3	364	7.6	5,948
Part-time students	1,594	1,365	85.7	1,280	80.3	86	6.3	228
Men	5,790	2,665	46.0	2,469	42.6	196	7.4	3,125
Women	6,556	3,505	53.5	3,251	49.6	254	7.2	3,051
White	9,212	4,918	53.4	4,599	49.9	319	6.5	4,295
Black or African American	1,577	709	45.0	608	38.6	101	14.3	868
Asian	1,039	337	32.5	323	31.1	14	4.1	701
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	2,331	1,255	53.8	1,146	49.2	109	8.7	1,076
Not enrolled in school								
Total, not enrolled in school	16,861	13,311	78.9	11,482	68.1	1,828	13.7	3,550
16 to 19 years	3,198	2,140	66.9	1,675	52.4	465	21.7	1,058
20 to 24 years	13,663	11,171	81.8	9,807	71.8	1,364	12.2	2,492
Men	8,812	7,320	83.1	6,363	72.2	956	13.1	1,492
Less than a high school diploma	1,389	944	68.0	711	51.2	233	24.6	445
High school graduates, no college ²	4,269	3,511	82.2	3,025	70.9	486	13.8	758
Some college or associate degree	2,142	1,919	89.6	1,757	82.0	162	8.5	223
Bachelor's degree and higher ³	1,012	946	93.5	871	86.0	75	8.0	66
Women	8,049	5,991	74.4	5,119	63.6	872	14.6	2,058
Less than a high school diploma	1,138	615	54.0	418	36.7	197	32.1	523
High school graduates, no college ²	3,198	2,196	68.7	1,803	56.4	393	17.9	1,002
Some college or associate degree	2,242	1,830	81.6	1,654	73.8	176	9.6	412
Bachelor's degree and higher ³	1,470	1,349	91.8	1,244	84.6	106	7.8	121
White	12,463	10,007	80.3	8,868	71.2	1,138	11.4	2,457
Black or African American	2,912	2,153	73.9	1,642	56.4	511	23.7	760
Asian	523	415	79.5	362	69.3	53	12.8	107
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	3,958	2,961	74.8	2,582	65.2	378	12.8	997

¹ Includes a small number of persons enrolled in grades below high school.

² Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent.

³ Includes persons with bachelor's, master's, professional, and doctoral degrees.

NOTE: Detail 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. Dash indicates no data or data that do not meet publication criteria (values not shown where base is less than 75,000).