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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 2012 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

In October 2012, 66.2 percent of 2012 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 2012 were more likely than enrolled graduates to be working or looking for work (69.6 percent compared with 38.2 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 3.2 million youth age 16 to 24 who graduated from high school between January and October 2012, about 2.1 million (66.2 percent) were enrolled in college in October. The college enrollment rate of recent high school graduates in October 2012 was little different from the rate in October 2011 (68.3 percent). For 2012 graduates, the college enrollment rate was 71.3 percent for young women and 61.3 percent for young men. The college enrollment rate of Asians (82.2 percent) was higher than for recent white (66.6 percent), black (58.2 percent), and Hispanic (70.3 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 38.2 percent. The participation rates for male and female graduates enrolled in college were 34.4 and 41.6 percent, respectively.

Among recent high school graduates enrolled in college in October 2012, 87.8 percent were full-time students. Recent graduates enrolled as full-time students were about half as likely to be in the labor force (33.9 percent) as were their peers enrolled part time (69.2 percent).

About 6 in 10 recent high school graduates enrolled in college attended 4-year institutions. Of these students, 30.8 percent participated in the labor force, compared with 47.9 percent of recent graduates enrolled in 2-year colleges.

Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college in the fall of 2012 were more likely than enrolled graduates to be in the labor force (69.6 percent compared with 38.2 percent). The unemployment rate for

recent high school graduates not enrolled in school was 34.4 percent, compared with 17.7 percent for recent graduates enrolled in college.

Between October 2011 and October 2012, 370,000 young people dropped out of high school. The labor force participation rate for recent dropouts (47.2 percent) was lower than for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college (69.6 percent). The jobless rate for recent high school dropouts was 49.6 percent, compared with 34.4 percent for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college.

### **All Youth Enrolled in High School or College**

In October 2012, 58.6 percent of the nation's 16- to -24 year olds, or 22.7 million young people, were enrolled in high school (10.0 million) or in college (12.7 million). The labor force participation rate (38.4 percent) and unemployment rate (13.7 percent) of youth enrolled in school in October 2012 were essentially unchanged from October 2011. (See table 2.)

In October 2012, college students continued to be more likely to participate in the labor force than high school students (50.9 percent compared with 22.5 percent). Those attending college full time had a much lower labor force participation rate than did part-time students (45.7 and 80.7 percent, respectively). For both high school and college students, Asians were less likely to participate in the labor force than blacks, whites, or Hispanics. Female college students were somewhat more likely to be in the labor force (52.0 percent) than their male counterparts (49.6 percent). Female high school students were also somewhat more likely to be in the labor force (24.2 percent) than were males (21.0 percent).

The unemployment rate for high school students, at 23.0 percent in October 2012, was more than twice the rate for college students (10.5 percent). Unemployment rates for black (39.1 percent) and Hispanic (32.7 percent) high school students continued to be higher than for white high school students (19.8 percent).

### **All Youth Not Enrolled in School**

In October 2012, 16.1 million persons age 16 to 24 were not enrolled in school. The labor force participation rate of youth not enrolled in school (79.3 percent) in October 2012 was little different from the rate a year earlier. Among youth not enrolled in school in October 2012, men continued to be more likely than women to participate in the labor force—83.6 percent compared with 74.5 percent. Labor force participation rates for not-enrolled men and women were highest for college graduates (94.1 and 93.8 percent, respectively) and lowest for men and women with less than a high school diploma (73.2 and 50.0 percent, respectively). (See table 2.)

The unemployment rate (16.5 percent) for youths age 16 to 24 not enrolled in school in October 2012 was essentially unchanged from October 2011. Among youth not in school in October 2012, unemployment rates for young men and young women without a high school diploma were similar (28.8 and 28.7 percent, respectively). Compared with youth without a high school diploma, the jobless rates of young men and women with at least a bachelor's degree were much lower—8.0 and 6.2 percent, respectively. Black youth not enrolled in school had an unemployment rate of 29.2 percent in October 2012, higher than the rates for their white (14.1 percent), Asian (13.9 percent), and Hispanic (17.8 percent) counterparts.

# Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from a supplement to the October 2012 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 Web site 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.

A full discussion of the reliability of data from the CPS and information on estimating standard errors is available at [www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#reliability](http://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 2012 high school graduates and 2011-12 high school dropouts 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, October 2012**

(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, 2012 high school graduates <sup>1</sup> .....	3,203	1,563	48.8	1,161	36.3	402	25.7	1,639
Men .....	1,622	783	48.2	547	33.7	235	30.0	840
Women .....	1,581	781	49.4	614	38.8	167	21.4	800
White .....	2,421	1,229	50.8	973	40.2	256	20.8	1,192
Black or African American .....	471	227	48.2	123	26.1	104	45.8	244
Asian .....	174	47	26.9	29	16.6	18	( <sup>2</sup> )	127
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity .....	697	296	42.4	224	32.1	71	24.2	402
Enrolled in college .....	2,121	811	38.2	667	31.5	143	17.7	1,310
Enrolled in 2-year college .....	921	441	47.9	367	39.9	74	16.7	480
Enrolled in 4-year college .....	1,200	370	30.8	300	25.0	70	18.8	830
Full-time students .....	1,863	632	33.9	523	28.1	109	17.2	1,231
Part-time students .....	258	179	69.2	144	55.9	35	19.3	79
Men .....	994	342	34.4	272	27.4	70	20.4	652
Women .....	1,127	469	41.6	395	35.1	74	15.7	658
White .....	1,613	657	40.7	559	34.7	97	14.8	956
Black or African American .....	274	88	32.0	63	22.9	25	28.7	186
Asian .....	143	29	20.0	19	13.1	10	( <sup>2</sup> )	114
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity .....	490	178	36.4	155	31.7	23	12.9	312
Not enrolled in college .....	1,082	753	69.6	494	45.7	259	34.4	329
Men .....	628	441	70.2	275	43.8	166	37.5	187
Women .....	454	312	68.7	219	48.2	93	29.9	142
White .....	808	572	70.8	414	51.2	159	27.7	236
Black or African American .....	197	139	70.8	60	30.8	79	56.6	57
Asian .....	31	18	( <sup>2</sup> )	10	( <sup>2</sup> )	8	( <sup>2</sup> )	13
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity .....	207	117	56.6	69	33.2	49	41.4	90
Total, 2011-12 high school dropouts <sup>3</sup> .....	370	174	47.2	88	23.8	86	49.6	195
Men .....	192	111	57.9	60	31.1	52	46.3	81
Women .....	178	63	35.5	28	15.9	35	( <sup>2</sup> )	115
White .....	197	93	47.6	62	31.5	31	33.7	103
Black or African American .....	124	59	47.6	13	10.3	46	( <sup>2</sup> )	65
Asian .....	19	18	( <sup>2</sup> )	10	( <sup>2</sup> )	8	( <sup>2</sup> )	1
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity .....	134	74	54.9	46	33.9	28	( <sup>2</sup> )	60

<sup>1</sup> Data refer to persons who graduated from high school in January through October 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Data not shown where base is less than 75,000.

<sup>3</sup> Data refer to persons who dropped out of school between October 2011 and October 2012.

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. Because of rounding, sums of individual items may not equal totals. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data. Dash represents or rounds to zero.

**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 2012**

(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 .....	38,800	21,466	55.3	18,167	46.8	3,299	15.4	17,334
Enrolled in school .....	22,718	8,717	38.4	7,520	33.1	1,196	13.7	14,002
Enrolled in high school <sup>1</sup> .....	10,033	2,262	22.5	1,742	17.4	520	23.0	7,771
Men .....	5,209	1,093	21.0	822	15.8	271	24.8	4,116
Women .....	4,824	1,169	24.2	920	19.1	249	21.3	3,656
White .....	7,327	1,777	24.2	1,424	19.4	353	19.8	5,550
Black or African American .....	1,652	338	20.4	206	12.4	132	39.1	1,314
Asian .....	502	39	7.7	35	6.9	4	( <sup>2</sup> )	463
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity .....	2,179	338	15.5	228	10.4	110	32.7	1,841
Enrolled in college .....	12,685	6,454	50.9	5,778	45.6	676	10.5	6,231
Enrolled in 2-year college .....	3,956	2,234	56.5	1,912	48.3	322	14.4	1,722
Enrolled in 4-year college .....	8,729	4,220	48.3	3,866	44.3	354	8.4	4,509
Full-time students .....	10,819	4,948	45.7	4,440	41.0	509	10.3	5,871
Part-time students .....	1,866	1,506	80.7	1,338	71.7	167	11.1	360
Men .....	5,842	2,897	49.6	2,579	44.2	318	11.0	2,945
Women .....	6,843	3,558	52.0	3,199	46.7	358	10.1	3,286
White .....	9,472	4,938	52.1	4,513	47.6	425	8.6	4,535
Black or African American .....	1,716	837	48.8	682	39.8	155	18.5	879
Asian .....	937	377	40.2	341	36.3	36	9.6	561
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity .....	2,459	1,240	50.4	1,114	45.3	126	10.2	1,218
Not enrolled in school .....	16,082	12,749	79.3	10,647	66.2	2,102	16.5	3,333
16 to 19 years .....	2,982	2,033	68.2	1,421	47.7	611	30.1	950
20 to 24 years .....	13,099	10,716	81.8	9,225	70.4	1,491	13.9	2,383
Men .....	8,506	7,108	83.6	5,896	69.3	1,212	17.0	1,398
Less than a high school diploma .....	1,427	1,045	73.2	744	52.1	301	28.8	382
High school graduates, no college <sup>3</sup> .....	4,089	3,344	81.8	2,709	66.2	635	19.0	746
Some college or associate degree .....	2,043	1,830	89.5	1,625	79.5	204	11.2	214
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>4</sup> .....	946	890	94.1	818	86.5	72	8.0	56
Women .....	7,575	5,641	74.5	4,750	62.7	891	15.8	1,934
Less than a high school diploma .....	1,135	568	50.0	405	35.6	163	28.7	568
High school graduates, no college <sup>3</sup> .....	3,025	2,135	70.6	1,674	55.3	462	21.6	889
Some college or associate degree .....	2,112	1,715	81.2	1,526	72.2	190	11.1	397
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>4</sup> .....	1,304	1,222	93.8	1,146	87.9	76	6.2	81
White .....	12,145	9,914	81.6	8,515	70.1	1,398	14.1	2,231
Black or African American .....	2,606	1,866	71.6	1,320	50.7	546	29.2	739
Asian .....	536	379	70.7	327	60.9	53	13.9	157
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity .....	3,563	2,659	74.6	2,187	61.4	472	17.8	904

<sup>1</sup> Includes a small number of persons enrolled in grades below high school.

<sup>2</sup> Data not shown where base is less than 75,000.

<sup>3</sup> Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent.

<sup>4</sup> 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. Because of rounding, sums of individual items may not equal totals. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.