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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 2013 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

In October 2013, 65.9 percent of 2013 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 2013 were over twice as likely as enrolled graduates to be working or looking for work—74.2 percent compared with 34.1 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 nearly 3.0 million youth age 16 to 24 who graduated from high school between January and October 2013, about 2.0 million (65.9 percent) were enrolled in college in October. The college enrollment rate of recent high school graduates in October 2013 was little different from the rate in October 2012 (66.2 percent). For 2013 graduates, the college enrollment rate was 68.4 percent for young women and 63.5 percent for young men. The college enrollment rate of Asians (79.1 percent) was higher than the rates for recent white (67.1 percent), black (59.3 percent), and Hispanic (59.9 percent) graduates. (See table 1.)

In October 2013, 34.1 percent of recent high school graduates who were enrolled in college participated in the labor force—that is, they were working or looking for work. The participation rates for male and female graduates enrolled in college were 33.7 percent and 34.5 percent, respectively.

Among recent high school graduates enrolled in college in October 2013, 92.8 percent were full-time students. The labor force participation rate was 31.0 percent for full-time students, much lower than the rate of 73.8 percent for part-time students.

About 6 in 10 recent high school graduates enrolled in college attended 4-year institutions. Of these students, 27.8 percent participated in the labor force, compared with 45.2 percent of recent graduates enrolled in 2-year colleges.

Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college in the fall of 2013 were more likely than enrolled graduates to be in the labor force (74.2 percent compared with 34.1 percent). The unemployment rate for high school graduates not enrolled in college was 30.9 percent, compared with 20.2 percent for graduates enrolled in college.

Between October 2012 and October 2013, 529,000 young people dropped out of high school. The labor force participation rate for recent dropouts (42.9 percent) was much lower than the rate for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college (74.2 percent). The jobless rate for recent high school dropouts was 27.9 percent, compared with 30.9 percent for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college.

All Youth Enrolled in High School or College

In October 2013, 56.6 percent of the nation's 16- to 24-year-olds, or 22.0 million young people, were enrolled in high school (9.5 million) or in college (12.5 million). Both the labor force participation rate (37.2 percent) and unemployment rate (11.7 percent) of youth enrolled in school in October 2013 were down from October 2012. (See table 2.)

In October 2013, college students continued to be more likely to participate in the labor force than high school students (49.3 percent compared with 21.1 percent). Among those attending college, the labor force participation rate was lower for full-time students (43.4 percent) than for part-time students (82.1 percent). 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 more likely to be in the labor force (52.2 percent) than their male counterparts (45.9 percent). Labor force participation rates for male and female high school students were about the same (20.4 percent and 21.9 percent, respectively).

The unemployment rate for high school students, at 21.3 percent in October 2013, was more than twice the rate for college students (8.6 percent). For both high school and college students, jobless rates for blacks and Hispanics were higher than for whites.

All Youth Not Enrolled in School

In October 2013, 16.8 million persons age 16 to 24 were not enrolled in school. The labor force participation rate of youth not enrolled in school (77.7 percent) in October 2013 was down from the rate a year earlier. Among youth not enrolled in school in October 2013, young men continued to be more likely than young women to participate in the labor force—81.8 percent compared with 73.1 percent. Labor force participation rates for not-enrolled young men and women were highest for college graduates (96.4 percent and 91.5 percent, respectively) and lowest for young men and women with less than a high school diploma (64.6 percent and 50.2 percent, respectively). (See table 2.)

The unemployment rate (16.1 percent) for youths age 16 to 24 not enrolled in school in October 2013 was essentially unchanged from October 2012. Among not-enrolled youth who did not have a high school diploma, unemployment rates in October 2013 were 26.4 percent for young men and 32.9 percent for young women. In contrast, the jobless rates for young men and women with at least a bachelor's degree were 7.9 percent and 6.5 percent, respectively. Black youth not enrolled in school had an unemployment rate of 25.6 percent in October 2013, higher than the rates for their white (13.6 percent), Asian (11.8 percent), and Hispanic (16.8 percent) counterparts.

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from a supplement to the October 2013 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.

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.

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 2013 high school graduates and 2012-13 high school dropouts 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, October 2013

[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, 2013 high school graduates ¹	2,977	1,422	47.8	1,054	35.4	367	25.8	1,556
Men	1,524	763	50.0	542	35.5	221	29.0	762
Women	1,453	659	45.4	513	35.3	146	22.2	794
White	2,224	1,107	49.8	850	38.2	257	23.2	1,117
Black or African American	415	187	45.0	127	30.6	60	32.0	228
Asian	177	47	26.5	27	15.3	20	–	130
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	571	260	45.4	178	31.1	82	31.5	312
Enrolled in college								
Total, enrolled in college	1,962	669	34.1	534	27.2	135	20.2	1,293
Enrolled in 2-year college	709	320	45.2	240	33.8	81	25.2	389
Enrolled in 4-year college	1,253	348	27.8	294	23.5	54	15.6	904
Full-time students	1,820	564	31.0	458	25.1	107	18.9	1,256
Part-time students	141	104	73.8	76	53.7	28	27.2	37
Men	968	326	33.7	236	24.4	90	27.5	642
Women	994	343	34.5	297	29.9	45	13.2	651
White	1,493	546	36.6	445	29.8	101	18.5	947
Black or African American	246	73	29.8	53	21.4	21	–	173
Asian	140	29	20.8	16	11.7	13	–	111
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	342	114	33.3	76	22.3	38	33.2	228
Not enrolled in college								
Total, not enrolled in college	1,016	753	74.2	521	51.3	232	30.9	262
Men	556	437	78.5	305	54.9	131	30.1	119
Women	459	316	68.8	215	46.9	101	31.9	143
White	731	561	76.7	405	55.3	156	27.9	171
Black or African American	169	114	67.1	74	44.0	39	34.5	56
Asian	37	18	–	11	–	7	–	19
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	229	146	63.5	102	44.3	44	30.2	84
RECENT HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS								
Total, 2012-13 high school dropouts ²	529	227	42.9	164	31.0	63	27.9	302
Men	285	116	40.8	95	33.2	22	18.6	168
Women	244	111	45.4	69	28.3	42	37.6	133
White	406	180	44.4	131	32.3	49	27.3	226
Black or African American	84	20	23.5	14	16.6	6	–	64
Asian	15	11	–	11	–	–	–	4
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	135	63	46.6	42	31.0	21	–	72

¹ Data refer to persons who graduated from high school in January through October 2013.

² Data refer to persons who dropped out of school between October 2012 and October 2013.

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 2013

[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	38,804	21,252	54.8	18,184	46.9	3,068	14.4	17,552
Enrolled in school								
Total, enrolled in school	21,958	8,160	37.2	7,206	32.8	954	11.7	13,798
Enrolled in high school ¹	9,458	1,995	21.1	1,569	16.6	425	21.3	7,463
Men	4,908	1,000	20.4	781	15.9	218	21.8	3,908
Women	4,550	995	21.9	788	17.3	207	20.8	3,555
White	6,933	1,644	23.7	1,356	19.6	288	17.5	5,289
Black or African American	1,583	264	16.7	145	9.1	119	45.2	1,319
Asian	430	16	3.6	16	3.6	-	-	415
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	2,104	350	16.6	258	12.2	92	26.4	1,754
Enrolled in college	12,500	6,166	49.3	5,637	45.1	528	8.6	6,334
Enrolled in 2-year college	3,654	2,111	57.8	1,824	49.9	287	13.6	1,544
Enrolled in 4-year college	8,846	4,055	45.8	3,813	43.1	242	6.0	4,791
Full-time students	10,574	4,585	43.4	4,179	39.5	406	8.9	5,989
Part-time students	1,926	1,581	82.1	1,458	75.7	122	7.7	345
Men	5,771	2,652	45.9	2,363	40.9	289	10.9	3,119
Women	6,729	3,514	52.2	3,274	48.7	240	6.8	3,215
White	9,277	4,813	51.9	4,446	47.9	368	7.6	4,464
Black or African American	1,631	755	46.3	654	40.1	101	13.3	876
Asian	1,030	350	33.9	300	29.1	50	14.2	681
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	2,235	1,187	53.1	1,050	47.0	138	11.6	1,048
Not enrolled in school								
Total, not enrolled in school	16,846	13,092	77.7	10,978	65.2	2,114	16.1	3,754
16 to 19 years	3,302	2,168	65.7	1,580	47.9	588	27.1	1,134
20 to 24 years	13,544	10,924	80.7	9,398	69.4	1,526	14.0	2,620
Men	8,883	7,268	81.8	6,015	67.7	1,253	17.2	1,615
Less than a high school diploma	1,406	909	64.6	669	47.6	240	26.4	497
High school graduates, no college ²	4,370	3,573	81.8	2,858	65.4	715	20.0	797
Some college or associate degree	2,122	1,836	86.5	1,613	76.0	223	12.2	285
Bachelor's degree and higher ³	985	950	96.4	875	88.8	75	7.9	35
Women	7,963	5,824	73.1	4,963	62.3	861	14.8	2,140
Less than a high school diploma	1,216	610	50.2	409	33.7	201	32.9	606
High school graduates, no college ²	3,160	2,140	67.7	1,751	55.4	389	18.2	1,019
Some college or associate degree	2,257	1,856	82.2	1,664	73.7	192	10.3	401
Bachelor's degree and higher ³	1,331	1,217	91.5	1,138	85.5	79	6.5	114
White	12,604	9,963	79.0	8,606	68.3	1,357	13.6	2,641
Black or African American	2,768	1,988	71.8	1,479	53.4	509	25.6	780
Asian	568	439	77.3	387	68.2	52	11.8	129
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	3,923	2,910	74.2	2,422	61.7	488	16.8	1,013

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.

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