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EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH—SUMMER 2003

The number of employed youth 16 to 24 years old increased by 2.1 million from April to July, the traditional summertime peak for youth employment, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. This year's summertime expansion in youth employment was somewhat smaller than last year's 2.4 million increase. Unemployment among youth increased by 628,000 between April and July, the largest seasonal increase since 1998. (Because this analysis focuses on the seasonal changes in youth employment and unemployment that occur every 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 as large numbers of high school and college students take or search for summer employment and many graduates enter the labor market to begin or seek permanent jobs. This summer, the youth labor force rose by 2.7 million to a total of 24.2 million in July. (See table 1.)

The July labor force participation rate for youth—the proportion of their population working or looking for work—in 2003 (67.3 percent) was lower than in 2002 (69.5 percent) and was the lowest rate for any July since 1966. The over-the-year decrease in the youth labor force participation rate may reflect, at least in part, the continuing weakness in the labor market in 2003. However, the participation rate for youth in July has been on the decline for a number of years, perhaps in response to increases in school enrollment during the summer. In July 2003, 25.5 percent of 16- to 24-year-olds were enrolled in school, up from 16.3 percent in July 1994, and participation rates for students are typically lower than for non-students. Only about half of the youth enrolled in school in July 2003 were in the labor force compared with almost three-fourths of those not in school.

Changes in Youth Employment and Unemployment Data

The estimates presented in this release incorporate the use of Census 2000-based population controls. Consequently, the estimates for the years 2000-02 appearing in this release may differ from those previously published, which were based on population controls derived from the 1990 census, and the estimates beginning in 2000 are not strictly comparable with those for earlier years. In addition, data for 2003 are not strictly comparable with data for 2002 and earlier years due to the introduction of revised population controls in January 2003. For further information, see the Technical Note.

In July 2003, the labor force participation rate for young men, which has declined steadily since 1995, was at its lowest July point on record, 70.0 percent. The July 2003 participation rate for young women was 64.5 percent, the lowest it has been since 1975. While the participation rates for young whites (70.4 percent) decreased from a year earlier, the rate for young blacks remained about the same (56.8 percent). For young Asians and young Hispanics, the labor force participation rates in July were 50.5 percent and 62.0 percent, respectively. (See table 2.)

Employment

There were 21.0 million 16- to 24-year-olds employed in July 2003. The employment-population ratio for youth—the proportion of the 16- to 24-year-old civilian noninstitutional population that were employed—was 58.3 percent, the lowest July ratio since 1964. The ratio decreased by 2.6 percentage points over the year and has fallen by 6.5 percentage points since July 2000. In July 2003, the employment-population ratios for young men (60.1 percent), young women (56.6 percent), young whites (62.6 percent), and young blacks (41.7 percent) were all lower than a year earlier.

In July 2003, 23 percent of employed youth worked in the leisure and hospitality industry (including fast-food restaurants) and 19 percent worked in retail trade. Also, large percentages of employed youth worked in education and health services, professional and business services, construction, and government. (See table 3.) (Industries reflect the introduction of the 2002 Census industry classification system derived from the 2002 North American Industry Classification System.)

Unemployment

There were 3.2 million youth unemployed in July 2003; these youth were not working but were available to take a job and were actively looking for work. The youth unemployment rate was 13.3 percent, up from 12.4 percent in July 2002 and 9.6 percent in July 2000. In July 2003, the unemployment rates for young men (14.2 percent), young whites (11.1 percent), and young blacks (26.6 percent) were higher than in July 2002. The July 2003 jobless rates for young women (12.2 percent) and Hispanic youth (14.0 percent) showed little or no change from a year earlier. The unemployment rate in July 2003 for Asian youth was 13.2 percent. (See table 2.)

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a national sample survey of 60,000 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.

The estimates presented in this release incorporate the use of Census 2000-based population controls. Sample results from the CPS are weighted up to independent estimates of the population by sex, age, race, and Hispanic/non-Hispanic origin. The weights, or population controls, are developed using counts of the civilian noninstitutional population derived from the decennial census and are updated using information from administrative records. Previously published estimates of employment and unemployment among youth for the years 2000-02 were based on population controls from the 1990 census. Consequently, the estimates for the years 2000-02 appearing in this release may differ from those previously published, and the estimates beginning in 2000 are not strictly comparable with estimates for earlier years. In addition, data for 2003 are not strictly comparable with data for 2002 and earlier years due to the introduction of revised population controls in January 2003. For a discussion of the introduction of the revised population controls and the impact their introduction had on CPS data, see "Revisions to the Current Population Survey Effective in January 2003" in the February 2003 issue of *Employment and Earnings* and available at <http://www.bls.gov/cps/rvcps03.pdf> on the BLS Web site.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone: 1-800-877-8339.

Reliability

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 exact difference, or *sampling error*, varies depending upon the particular sample selected, and this 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.

For a full discussion of the reliability of data from the CPS and information on estimating standard errors, see the "Explanatory Notes and Estimates of Error" section of *Employment and Earnings*.

Definitions

The principal definitions used in this release are described briefly below.

Employed persons are (a) all those who, during the survey reference week, did any work at all as paid employees, worked in their own business, profession, or on their own farm, or who worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in a family-operated enterprise; and (b) all those who did not work but had jobs or businesses from which they were temporarily absent due to illness, bad weather, vacation, child-care problems, labor disputes or personal reasons, whether or not they were paid by their employers for the time off and whether or not they were seeking other jobs.

Unemployed persons are all persons who had no employment during the reference week, were available for work, except for temporary illness, and had made specific efforts to find employment sometime during the 4 weeks preceding the survey. 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.

Civilian labor force comprises all persons classified as employed or unemployed.

Unemployment rate represents the number of unemployed persons as a percent of the civilian labor force.

Not in the labor force includes all persons who are not classified as employed or unemployed.

Industry and class of worker for the employed relate to the job held in the survey reference week. Persons with two or more jobs are classified in the job at which they worked the greatest number of hours. In terms of class-of-worker categories, wage and salary workers are those who receive wages, salaries, commissions, tips, or pay-in-kind from a private employer or from a government unit; self-employed persons are those who work for profit or fees in their own business, profession, or trade, or operate a farm; and unpaid family workers are persons working without pay for 15 hours a week or more in an enterprise operated by a member of their family. Industries reflect the introduction of the 2002 Census Industry Classification System derived from the 2002 North American Industry Classification System into the Current Population Survey.

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 2003

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	April	May	June	July	April-July changes ¹	
					Number	Percent
TOTAL						
Civilian noninstitutional population	35,815	35,847	35,880	35,905	91	0.3
Civilian labor force	21,445	21,870	23,975	24,150	2,705	12.6
Participation rate	59.9	61.0	66.8	67.3	7.4	12.3
Employed	18,873	19,032	20,432	20,950	2,077	11.0
Employment-population ratio	52.7	53.1	56.9	58.3	5.7	10.7
Unemployed	2,572	2,838	3,542	3,200	628	24.4
Looking for full-time work	1,749	2,148	2,671	2,448	699	40.0
Looking for part-time work	824	690	871	753	-71	-8.6
Unemployment rate	12.0	13.0	14.8	13.3	1.3	10.5
Not in labor force	14,370	13,976	11,905	11,755	-2,615	-18.2
Men						
Civilian noninstitutional population	18,004	18,019	18,035	18,042	39	.2
Civilian labor force	11,124	11,384	12,487	12,635	1,511	13.6
Participation rate	61.8	63.2	69.2	70.0	8.2	13.3
Employed	9,668	9,813	10,594	10,838	1,170	12.1
Employment-population ratio	53.7	54.5	58.7	60.1	6.4	11.9
Unemployed	1,455	1,572	1,893	1,796	341	23.4
Looking for full-time work	1,017	1,236	1,473	1,416	398	39.2
Looking for part-time work	438	335	420	381	-57	-13.1
Unemployment rate	13.1	13.8	15.2	14.2	1.1	8.7
Not in labor force	6,880	6,634	5,548	5,407	-1,473	-21.4
Women						
Civilian noninstitutional population	17,811	17,828	17,845	17,863	52	.3
Civilian labor force	10,321	10,486	11,488	11,516	1,194	11.6
Participation rate	57.9	58.8	64.4	64.5	6.5	11.2
Employed	9,204	9,219	9,838	10,112	907	9.9
Employment-population ratio	51.7	51.7	55.1	56.6	4.9	9.5
Unemployed	1,117	1,267	1,650	1,404	287	25.7
Looking for full-time work	731	912	1,198	1,032	301	41.1
Looking for part-time work	386	355	451	372	-14	-3.5
Unemployment rate	10.8	12.1	14.4	12.2	1.4	12.7
Not in labor force	7,490	7,342	6,357	6,348	-1,142	-15.2
White ²						
Civilian noninstitutional population	28,008	28,029	28,051	28,066	58	.2
Civilian labor force	17,504	17,797	19,503	19,749	2,245	12.8
Participation rate	62.5	63.5	69.5	70.4	7.9	12.6
Employed	15,706	15,807	17,084	17,566	1,861	11.8
Employment-population ratio	56.1	56.4	60.9	62.6	6.5	11.6
Unemployed	1,798	1,990	2,418	2,182	384	21.4
Looking for full-time work	1,133	1,466	1,779	1,611	478	42.2
Looking for part-time work	665	524	639	571	-94	-14.1
Unemployment rate	10.3	11.2	12.4	11.1	.8	7.6
Not in labor force	10,504	10,232	8,548	8,317	-2,187	-20.8
Black or African American ²						
Civilian noninstitutional population	5,137	5,145	5,152	5,159	22	.4
Civilian labor force	2,612	2,679	2,921	2,930	318	12.2
Participation rate	50.8	52.1	56.7	56.8	5.9	11.7
Employed	2,018	2,029	2,086	2,150	131	6.5
Employment-population ratio	39.3	39.4	40.5	41.7	2.4	6.1
Unemployed	593	650	835	780	187	31.4
Looking for full-time work	491	535	683	655	164	33.5
Looking for part-time work	103	115	153	125	22	21.8
Unemployment rate	22.7	24.3	28.6	26.6	3.9	17.2
Not in labor force	2,525	2,466	2,231	2,229	-296	-11.7

See footnotes at end of table.

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 2003 — 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 ¹	
					Number	Percent
Asian ²						
Civilian noninstitutional population	1,441	1,456	1,460	1,464	23	1.6
Civilian labor force	640	704	787	740	99	15.5
Participation rate	44.4	48.3	53.9	50.5	6.1	13.7
Employed	580	620	648	642	61	10.6
Employment-population ratio	40.3	42.6	44.4	43.8	3.5	8.8
Unemployed	60	84	139	98	38	63.6
Looking for full-time work	39	52	104	63	24	61.1
Looking for part-time work	20	32	35	34	14	68.5
Unemployment rate	9.3	11.9	17.7	13.2	3.9	41.7
Not in labor force	801	752	673	724	-76	-9.5
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
Civilian noninstitutional population	6,055	6,063	6,071	6,079	24	.4
Civilian labor force	3,623	3,627	3,792	3,772	149	4.1
Participation rate	59.8	59.8	62.5	62.0	2.2	3.7
Employed	3,197	3,168	3,203	3,244	47	1.5
Employment-population ratio	52.8	52.2	52.8	53.4	.6	1.1
Unemployed	425	459	589	528	102	24.1
Looking for full-time work	314	397	429	406	92	29.4
Looking for part-time work	111	62	160	121	10	9.0
Unemployment rate	11.7	12.7	15.5	14.0	2.2	19.2
Not in labor force	2,432	2,436	2,279	2,307	-125	-5.2

¹ Changes are calculated using unrounded data.

² Beginning in 2003, persons who selected this race group only; persons who selected more than one race group are not included. Prior to 2003, persons who reported more than one race group were included in the group they identified as the main race.

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. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Data reflect Census 2000-based population controls. Data also reflect revised population controls introduced in January 2003.

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2000-03

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	2000	2001	2002	2003
TOTAL				
Civilian noninstitutional population	34,214	34,846	35,322	35,905
Civilian labor force	24,514	24,627	24,536	24,150
Participation rate	71.6	70.7	69.5	67.3
Employed	22,156	22,042	21,501	20,950
Employment-population ratio	64.8	63.3	60.9	58.3
Unemployed	2,358	2,585	3,034	3,200
Looking for full-time work	1,732	1,898	2,250	2,448
Looking for part-time work	626	687	785	753
Unemployment rate	9.6	10.5	12.4	13.3
Not in labor force	9,700	10,219	10,786	11,755
Men				
Civilian noninstitutional population	17,175	17,468	17,758	18,042
Civilian labor force	12,910	12,950	12,837	12,635
Participation rate	75.2	74.1	72.3	70.0
Employed	11,657	11,576	11,231	10,838
Employment-population ratio	67.9	66.3	63.2	60.1
Unemployed	1,253	1,374	1,606	1,796
Looking for full-time work	986	1,051	1,172	1,416
Looking for part-time work	267	322	434	381
Unemployment rate	9.7	10.6	12.5	14.2
Not in labor force	4,265	4,518	4,921	5,407
Women				
Civilian noninstitutional population	17,039	17,378	17,563	17,863
Civilian labor force	11,604	11,677	11,699	11,516
Participation rate	68.1	67.2	66.6	64.5
Employed	10,498	10,466	10,271	10,112
Employment-population ratio	61.6	60.2	58.5	56.6
Unemployed	1,105	1,211	1,428	1,404
Looking for full-time work	746	846	1,077	1,032
Looking for part-time work	359	364	351	372
Unemployment rate	9.5	10.4	12.2	12.2
Not in labor force	5,436	5,701	5,865	6,348
White ¹				
Civilian noninstitutional population	27,146	27,570	27,959	28,066
Civilian labor force	20,248	20,324	20,262	19,749
Participation rate	74.6	73.7	72.5	70.4
Employed	18,648	18,508	18,092	17,566
Employment-population ratio	68.7	67.1	64.7	62.6
Unemployed	1,600	1,816	2,169	2,182
Looking for full-time work	1,145	1,323	1,566	1,611
Looking for part-time work	455	494	604	571
Unemployment rate	7.9	8.9	10.7	11.1
Not in labor force	6,897	7,246	7,697	8,317
Black or African American ¹				
Civilian noninstitutional population	4,960	5,078	5,199	5,159
Civilian labor force	3,080	3,074	2,989	2,930
Participation rate	62.1	60.5	57.5	56.8
Employed	2,462	2,464	2,319	2,150
Employment-population ratio	49.6	48.5	44.6	41.7
Unemployed	618	610	670	780
Looking for full-time work	494	460	549	655
Looking for part-time work	123	150	121	125
Unemployment rate	20.1	19.8	22.4	26.6
Not in labor force	1,880	2,004	2,211	2,229

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2000-03 — Continued

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	2000	2001	2002	2003
Asian ¹				
Civilian noninstitutional population	1,734	1,767	1,724	1,464
Civilian labor force	938	949	966	740
Participation rate	54.1	53.7	56.0	50.5
Employed	832	842	815	642
Employment-population ratio	48.0	47.7	47.3	43.8
Unemployed	106	107	151	98
Looking for full-time work	66	75	97	63
Looking for part-time work	40	32	54	34
Unemployment rate	11.3	11.2	15.6	13.2
Not in labor force	795	818	758	724
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity				
Civilian noninstitutional population	5,838	5,957	6,004	6,079
Civilian labor force	3,839	3,908	3,900	3,772
Participation rate	65.8	65.6	65.0	62.0
Employed	3,389	3,434	3,390	3,244
Employment-population ratio	58.1	57.7	56.5	53.4
Unemployed	450	474	510	528
Looking for full-time work	342	381	419	406
Looking for part-time work	108	93	91	121
Unemployment rate	11.7	12.1	13.1	14.0
Not in labor force	1,999	2,049	2,104	2,307

¹ Beginning in 2003, persons who selected this race group only; persons who selected more than one race group are not included. Prior to 2003, persons who reported more than one race group were included in the group they identified as the main race.

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. In addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Data for 2000-02 have been revised to reflect Census 2000-based population controls. Data for 2003 also reflect an additional upward adjustment to the population controls used in the household survey.

Table 3. Employed persons 16 to 24 years of age by industry, class of worker, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2002-03

(In thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Industry and class of worker	Total		White ¹		Black or African American ¹		Asian ¹		Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	
	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003
Total employed	21,501	20,950	18,092	17,566	2,319	2,150	815	642	3,390	3,244
Agriculture and related industries	387	352	356	341	4	4	4	1	133	87
Nonagricultural industries	21,115	20,599	17,736	17,225	2,315	2,146	811	640	3,257	3,157
Private wage and salary workers	19,019	18,773	16,077	15,771	2,024	1,893	711	585	3,003	2,958
Mining	24	45	24	43	—	—	—	—	—	3
Construction	1,322	1,442	1,217	1,343	85	55	11	8	317	370
Manufacturing	1,476	1,318	1,269	1,119	146	132	44	26	381	288
Durable goods	869	762	758	674	89	57	13	12	170	111
Nondurable goods	608	557	511	444	57	75	32	14	211	177
Wholesale trade	482	476	419	402	48	46	13	15	105	74
Retail trade	4,220	3,944	3,561	3,210	441	448	173	171	561	494
Transportation and utilities	528	465	403	354	99	100	20	3	77	56
Information	491	438	405	352	51	51	27	15	61	63
Financial activities	1,103	1,130	916	909	117	109	60	79	125	153
Professional and business services	1,800	1,653	1,473	1,389	214	178	82	44	317	310
Education and health services	1,928	2,127	1,545	1,722	282	268	91	67	246	275
Leisure and hospitality	4,662	4,727	3,998	4,053	462	418	153	132	669	745
Other services	983	1,009	848	874	79	89	36	26	144	128
Government	1,617	1,439	1,237	1,134	252	218	91	39	192	148
Federal	219	159	146	93	59	53	10	10	32	16
State	444	412	325	306	62	65	39	20	63	46
Local	953	867	766	735	130	99	42	9	97	86
Self-employed and unpaid family workers	479	386	422	321	40	35	9	16	63	51

¹ Beginning in 2003, persons who selected this race group only; persons who selected more than one race group are not included. Prior to 2003, persons who reported more than one race group were included in the group they identified as the main race.

— Dash represents zero.

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. In

addition, persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race and, therefore, are classified by ethnicity as well as by race. Industries reflect the introduction of the 2002 Census industry classification system derived from the 2002 North American Industry Classification System into the Current Population Survey. Data reflect Census 2000-based population controls. Data for 2003 also reflect an additional upward adjustment to the population controls used in the household survey.