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

Media contact: (202) 691-5902 • PressOffice@bls.gov

## **EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH — SUMMER 2019**

From April to July 2019, the number of employed youth 16 to 24 years old increased by 2.4 million to 21.2 million, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. In July 2019, 56.2 percent of young people were employed, up from 55.0 percent in July 2018. (The month of July typically is the summertime peak in youth employment.) The unemployment rate for youth was 9.1 percent in July, the lowest rate since July 1966, and little changed from the prior year. (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 3.0 million, or 14.9 percent, to a total of 23.3 million in July. (See table 1.)

The labor force participation rate for all youth was 61.8 percent in July, an increase of 1.2 percentage points 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.) (See table 2.) This year, the July labor force participation rate was notably higher than the July rates for the prior 9 years. The summer youth labor force participation rate peaked at 77.5 percent in July 1989.

The July 2019 labor force participation rate for 16- to 24-year-old men, at 63.2 percent, was up 2.1 percentage points over the year. The rate for young women, at 60.4 percent, changed little during the same period. Continuing a long-standing pattern, Whites had the highest youth labor force participation rate in July 2019, at 64.1 percent. The rate for Blacks was 58.3 percent, for Asians 44.6 percent, and for Hispanics 57.8 percent. Over the year, the labor force participation rate rose for Whites (+1.3 percentage points), Blacks (+1.8 points), and Asians (+1.3 points), but was little changed for Hispanics.

## **Employment**

In July 2019, there were 21.2 million employed 16- to 24-year-olds. Between April and July 2019, the number of employed youth rose by 2.4 million, or 12.8 percent. This was somewhat larger than the increase between April and July 2018, when employment rose by 2.0 million, or 10.7 percent. The employment-population ratio for youth—the proportion of the 16- to 24-year-old civilian noninstitutional population with a job—was 56.2 percent in July 2019, an increase of 1.2 percentage points from the prior year. (See tables 1 and 2.)

Employment-population ratios in July 2019 were higher than a year earlier for young men (57.3 percent), Whites (58.9 percent), Blacks (49.8 percent), and Asians (41.0 percent). The employment-population ratios for young women (55.1 percent) and Hispanics (51.3 percent) were little different from the prior summer.

In July 2019, the largest percentage of employed youth worked in the leisure and hospitality industry (25 percent), which includes food services. An additional 17 percent of employed youth worked in the retail trade industry, and 13 percent worked in education and health services. (See table 3.)

## **Unemployment**

Unemployment among youth rose by 615,000 from April to July 2019, similar to the increase for the same period in 2018.

The youth unemployment rate, at 9.1 percent in July 2019, was little changed from July 2018. This represents the lowest summer youth unemployment rate since July 1966. The number of unemployed youth was 2.1 million in July 2019, little different from a year earlier. Of the 2.1 million unemployed 16- to 24-year-olds, 1.4 million were looking for full-time work in July 2019, also little changed from July 2018. (See tables 1 and 2.)

The July 2019 unemployment rates for young men (9.4 percent), women (8.8 percent), Whites (8.0 percent), Asians (8.2 percent), and Hispanics (11.3 percent) were little changed from the summer before. The rate for young Blacks (14.6 percent) declined over the year. (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 2019**

[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.....	37,762	37,750	37,738	37,729	-33	-0.1
Civilian labor force.....	20,286	20,968	22,751	23,311	3,025	14.9
Participation rate.....	53.7	55.5	60.3	61.8	8.1	15.1
Employed.....	18,786	19,177	20,639	21,196	2,410	12.8
Employment-population ratio.....	49.7	50.8	54.7	56.2	6.5	13.1
Unemployed.....	1,500	1,792	2,111	2,115	615	41.0
Looking for full-time work.....	936	1,280	1,502	1,447	511	54.6
Looking for part-time work.....	564	511	609	668	104	18.4
Unemployment rate.....	7.4	8.5	9.3	9.1	1.7	23.0
Not in labor force.....	17,476	16,781	14,988	14,417	-3,059	-17.5
<b>Men</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	18,986	18,978	18,971	18,964	-22	-0.1
Civilian labor force.....	10,311	10,714	11,749	11,977	1,666	16.2
Participation rate.....	54.3	56.5	61.9	63.2	8.9	16.4
Employed.....	9,413	9,682	10,549	10,857	1,444	15.3
Employment-population ratio.....	49.6	51.0	55.6	57.3	7.7	15.5
Unemployed.....	899	1,032	1,200	1,120	221	24.6
Looking for full-time work.....	598	760	906	803	205	34.3
Looking for part-time work.....	301	272	295	317	16	5.3
Unemployment rate.....	8.7	9.6	10.2	9.4	0.7	8.0
Not in labor force.....	8,675	8,264	7,221	6,987	-1,688	-19.5
<b>Women</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	18,776	18,772	18,768	18,765	-11	-0.1
Civilian labor force.....	9,974	10,254	11,001	11,334	1,360	13.6
Participation rate.....	53.1	54.6	58.6	60.4	7.3	13.7
Employed.....	9,374	9,494	10,090	10,339	965	10.3
Employment-population ratio.....	49.9	50.6	53.8	55.1	5.2	10.4
Unemployed.....	601	760	911	995	394	65.6
Looking for full-time work.....	338	520	597	645	307	90.8
Looking for part-time work.....	263	240	314	350	87	33.1
Unemployment rate.....	6.0	7.4	8.3	8.8	2.8	46.7
Not in labor force.....	8,801	8,517	7,766	7,430	-1,371	-15.6
<b>White</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	27,694	27,681	27,669	27,658	-36	-0.1
Civilian labor force.....	15,385	15,882	17,308	17,716	2,331	15.2
Participation rate.....	55.6	57.4	62.6	64.1	8.5	15.3
Employed.....	14,416	14,686	15,889	16,295	1,879	13.0
Employment-population ratio.....	52.1	53.1	57.4	58.9	6.8	13.1
Unemployed.....	969	1,196	1,419	1,421	452	46.6
Looking for full-time work.....	606	804	942	938	332	54.8
Looking for part-time work.....	363	392	478	483	120	33.1
Unemployment rate.....	6.3	7.5	8.2	8.0	1.7	27.0
Not in labor force.....	12,309	11,799	10,361	9,942	-2,367	-19.2
<b>Black or African American</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	5,579	5,573	5,567	5,561	-18	-0.3
Civilian labor force.....	2,838	2,888	3,093	3,243	405	14.3
Participation rate.....	50.9	51.8	55.6	58.3	7.4	14.5
Employed.....	2,460	2,466	2,633	2,771	311	12.6
Employment-population ratio.....	44.1	44.3	47.3	49.8	5.7	12.9
Unemployed.....	377	422	460	472	95	25.2
Looking for full-time work.....	228	353	383	374	146	64.0
Looking for part-time work.....	149	69	78	98	-51	-34.2
Unemployment rate.....	13.3	14.6	14.9	14.6	1.3	9.8
Not in labor force.....	2,741	2,685	2,474	2,318	-423	-15.4

**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 2019 — 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.....	2,331	2,353	2,389	2,387	56	2.4
Civilian labor force.....	866	893	1,017	1,065	199	23.0
Participation rate.....	37.1	38.0	42.6	44.6	7.5	20.2
Employed.....	834	845	967	978	144	17.3
Employment-population ratio.....	35.8	35.9	40.5	41.0	5.2	14.5
Unemployed.....	31	48	50	87	56	180.6
Looking for full-time work.....	17	25	25	37	20	117.6
Looking for part-time work.....	15	23	25	50	35	233.3
Unemployment rate.....	3.6	5.4	4.9	8.2	4.6	127.8
Not in labor force.....	1,465	1,460	1,371	1,322	-143	-9.8
<b>Hispanic or Latino ethnicity</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	8,722	8,731	8,740	8,750	28	0.3
Civilian labor force.....	4,472	4,606	4,914	5,059	587	13.1
Participation rate.....	51.3	52.8	56.2	57.8	6.5	12.7
Employed.....	4,162	4,247	4,435	4,485	323	7.8
Employment-population ratio.....	47.7	48.6	50.7	51.3	3.6	7.5
Unemployed.....	310	358	479	574	264	85.2
Looking for full-time work.....	211	239	328	384	173	82.0
Looking for part-time work.....	99	119	151	190	91	91.9
Unemployment rate.....	6.9	7.8	9.7	11.3	4.4	63.8
Not in labor force.....	4,249	4,125	3,826	3,691	-558	-13.1

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 2016-2019**  
 [Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	July 2016	July 2017	July 2018	July 2019
<b>TOTAL</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	38,450	38,152	37,997	37,729
Civilian labor force.....	23,104	23,107	23,016	23,311
Participation rate.....	60.1	60.6	60.6	61.8
Employed.....	20,456	20,890	20,897	21,196
Employment-population ratio.....	53.2	54.8	55.0	56.2
Unemployed.....	2,648	2,217	2,119	2,115
Looking for full-time work.....	1,912	1,607	1,458	1,447
Looking for part-time work.....	736	610	660	668
Unemployment rate.....	11.5	9.6	9.2	9.1
Not in labor force.....	15,346	15,045	14,981	14,417
<b>Men</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,380	19,219	19,128	18,964
Civilian labor force.....	12,094	11,983	11,695	11,977
Participation rate.....	62.4	62.3	61.1	63.2
Employed.....	10,638	10,773	10,550	10,857
Employment-population ratio.....	54.9	56.1	55.2	57.3
Unemployed.....	1,455	1,210	1,145	1,120
Looking for full-time work.....	1,169	944	828	803
Looking for part-time work.....	286	266	317	317
Unemployment rate.....	12.0	10.1	9.8	9.4
Not in labor force.....	7,287	7,236	7,433	6,987
<b>Women</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,069	18,932	18,869	18,765
Civilian labor force.....	11,010	11,124	11,321	11,334
Participation rate.....	57.7	58.8	60.0	60.4
Employed.....	9,818	10,117	10,347	10,339
Employment-population ratio.....	51.5	53.4	54.8	55.1
Unemployed.....	1,193	1,007	974	995
Looking for full-time work.....	743	663	630	645
Looking for part-time work.....	450	344	344	350
Unemployment rate.....	10.8	9.1	8.6	8.8
Not in labor force.....	8,059	7,808	7,548	7,430
<b>White</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	28,297	28,038	27,866	27,658
Civilian labor force.....	17,734	17,423	17,509	17,716
Participation rate.....	62.7	62.1	62.8	64.1
Employed.....	15,981	16,031	16,174	16,295
Employment-population ratio.....	56.5	57.2	58.0	58.9
Unemployed.....	1,754	1,392	1,335	1,421
Looking for full-time work.....	1,222	974	863	938
Looking for part-time work.....	532	418	471	483
Unemployment rate.....	9.9	8.0	7.6	8.0
Not in labor force.....	10,562	10,615	10,357	9,942
<b>Black or African American</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	5,850	5,749	5,668	5,561
Civilian labor force.....	3,149	3,214	3,203	3,243
Participation rate.....	53.8	55.9	56.5	58.3
Employed.....	2,499	2,694	2,675	2,771
Employment-population ratio.....	42.7	46.9	47.2	49.8
Unemployed.....	650	520	528	472
Looking for full-time work.....	533	412	438	374
Looking for part-time work.....	117	108	90	98
Unemployment rate.....	20.6	16.2	16.5	14.6
Not in labor force.....	2,701	2,535	2,465	2,318

**Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2016-2019 — Continued**  
 [Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	July 2016	July 2017	July 2018	July 2019
<b>Asian</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	2,212	2,208	2,302	2,387
Civilian labor force.....	954	1,047	997	1,065
Participation rate.....	43.1	47.4	43.3	44.6
Employed.....	859	944	913	978
Employment-population ratio.....	38.8	42.7	39.7	41.0
Unemployed.....	95	103	84	87
Looking for full-time work.....	65	70	59	37
Looking for part-time work.....	30	33	25	50
Unemployment rate.....	10.0	9.9	8.4	8.2
Not in labor force.....	1,258	1,162	1,305	1,322
<b>Hispanic or Latino ethnicity</b>				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	8,497	8,535	8,687	8,750
Civilian labor force.....	4,776	4,835	5,035	5,059
Participation rate.....	56.2	56.6	58.0	57.8
Employed.....	4,235	4,347	4,492	4,485
Employment-population ratio.....	49.8	50.9	51.7	51.3
Unemployed.....	540	488	543	574
Looking for full-time work.....	385	353	362	384
Looking for part-time work.....	155	135	181	190
Unemployment rate.....	11.3	10.1	10.8	11.3
Not in labor force.....	3,721	3,700	3,652	3,691

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 2018-2019**

[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 2018	July 2019	July 2018	July 2019	July 2018	July 2019	July 2018	July 2019	July 2018	July 2019
Total employed.....	20,897	21,196	16,174	16,295	2,675	2,771	913	978	4,492	4,485
Agriculture and related industries.....	391	322	360	290	8	3	0	9	103	66
Nonagricultural industries.....	20,506	20,874	15,814	16,005	2,667	2,768	913	969	4,389	4,419
Private wage and salary workers <sup>1</sup> .....	18,720	19,008	14,468	14,568	2,414	2,542	833	897	4,125	4,104
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction.....	77	66	75	52	0	7	0	0	23	15
Construction.....	1,000	1,135	888	955	44	83	13	13	283	308
Manufacturing.....	1,409	1,451	1,124	1,159	141	157	72	53	306	298
Durable goods.....	815	972	684	770	66	113	35	41	147	183
Nondurable goods.....	595	480	439	389	74	44	37	12	159	115
Wholesale trade.....	304	266	234	200	52	53	13	9	77	62
Retail trade.....	3,682	3,647	2,800	2,708	574	583	164	140	840	809
Transportation and utilities.....	577	663	447	435	73	145	16	40	184	169
Information.....	276	277	212	204	25	34	23	31	49	41
Financial activities.....	797	728	621	556	99	92	30	46	176	173
Professional and business services...	1,738	1,706	1,322	1,327	232	182	108	131	389	361
Education and health services.....	2,383	2,844	1,778	2,108	404	447	83	144	469	557
Leisure and hospitality.....	5,463	5,282	4,158	4,083	666	661	270	247	1,125	1,189
Other services.....	1,014	941	812	781	104	97	41	44	204	123
Government wage and salary workers.....	1,398	1,466	1,064	1,119	190	193	66	53	176	239
Federal.....	177	219	100	162	48	35	9	6	18	44
State.....	465	507	375	381	47	62	30	30	44	59
Local.....	757	740	589	575	96	96	28	17	114	136
Self-employed, unincorporated, and unpaid family workers.....	388	401	282	318	62	34	14	18	88	76

<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.