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## **NUMBER OF JOBS, LABOR MARKET EXPERIENCE, AND EARNINGS GROWTH AMONG AMERICANS AT 50: RESULTS FROM A LONGITUDINAL SURVEY**

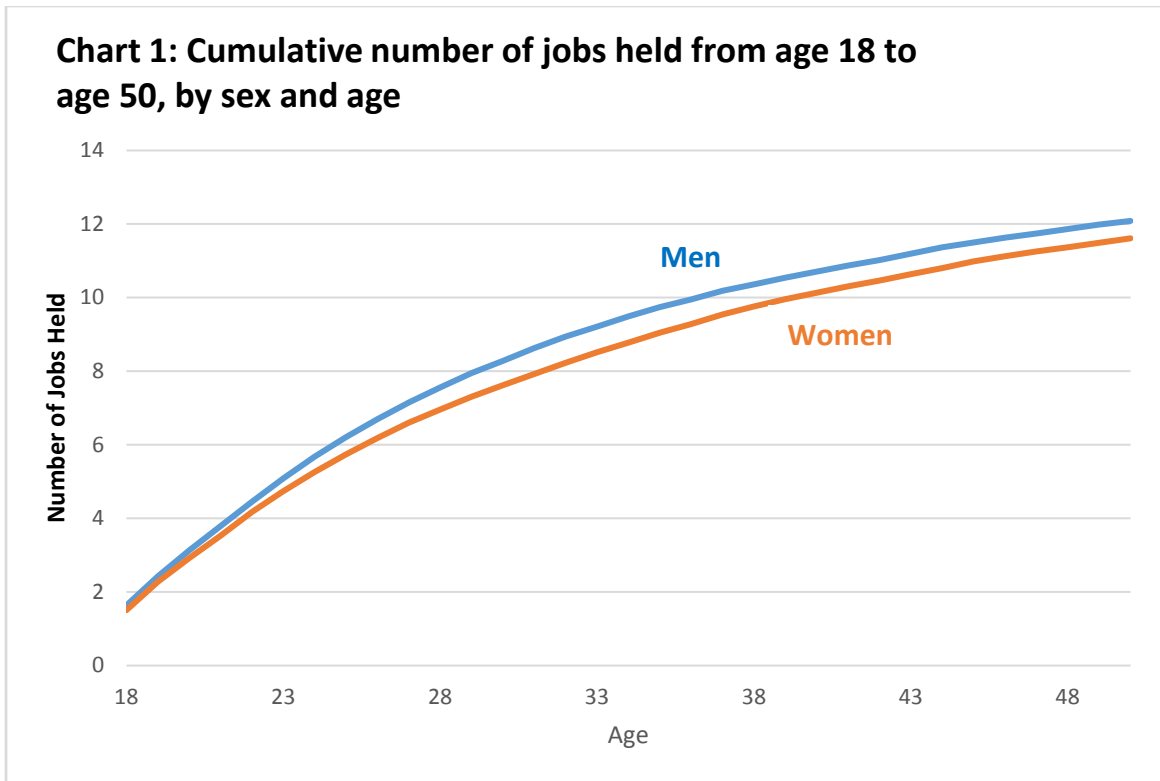
Individuals born in the latter years of the baby boom (1957-1964) held an average of 11.9 jobs from age 18 to age 50, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Nearly half of these jobs were held from ages 18 to 24.

These findings are from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979, a survey of 9,964 men and women who were ages 14 to 22 when first interviewed in 1979 and ages 49 to 58 when interviewed most recently in 2014-15. These respondents were born in the years 1957 to 1964, the latter years of the baby boom that occurred in the United States from 1946 to 1964. The survey spans 35 years and provides information on work and nonwork experiences, education, training, income and assets, health, and other characteristics. The information provided by respondents, who were interviewed annually from 1979 to 1994 and biennially since 1994, can be considered representative of all men and women born in the late 1950s and early 1960s and living in the United States when the survey began in 1979.

This release of the latest data from the longitudinal survey focuses on the number of jobs held, job duration, labor force participation, and earnings growth. Highlights from the survey include:

- Individuals born from 1957 to 1964 held an average of 11.9 jobs from ages 18 to 50. These baby boomers held an average of 5.5 jobs while ages 18 to 24. The average fell to 4.5 jobs from ages 25 to 34, to 2.9 jobs from ages 35 to 44, and to 1.7 jobs from ages 45 to 50. Jobs that span more than one age group were counted once in each age group, so the overall average number of jobs held from age 18 to age 50 is less than the sum of the number of jobs across the individual age groups. (See table 1.)
- Although job duration tended to be longer the older a worker was when starting the job, these baby boomers continued to have large numbers of short-duration jobs. Among jobs started by 35 to 44 year olds, 36 percent ended in less than a year, and 75 percent ended in fewer than 5 years. (See table 2.)
- On average, individuals were employed 78 percent of the weeks from age 18 to age 50. Generally, men spent a larger percent of weeks employed than did women (84 percent versus 71 percent). Women spent much more time out of the labor force (25 percent of weeks) than did men (11 percent of weeks). (See table 3.)

**Chart 1: Cumulative number of jobs held from age 18 to age 50, by sex and age**



- The average annual percent growth in inflation-adjusted hourly earnings was highest during a worker’s late teens and early twenties. Earnings growth rates were generally higher for college graduates than for workers with less education. (See table 5.)

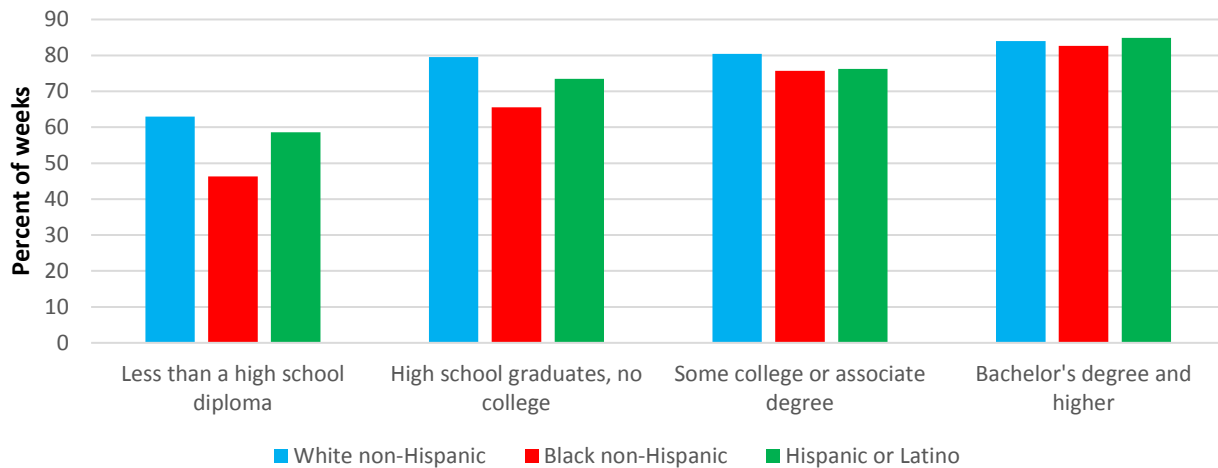
### Number of Jobs Held

Individuals held an average of 11.9 jobs from ages 18 to 50, with nearly half of these jobs held before age 25. A job is defined as an uninterrupted period of work with a particular employer. (See the Technical Note for additional information on the definition of a job.) On average, men held 12.1 jobs and women held 11.6 jobs from age 18 to age 50. Men held 5.7 jobs from age 18 to age 24, compared with 1.7 jobs from age 45 to age 50. The reduction in the average number of jobs held in successive age groups was similar for women. (See table 1.) Chart 1 shows the cumulative number of jobs held from age 18 to age 50, by sex and age. The decline in the slope of these curves indicates a decrease in the rate at which workers change jobs as they age.

On average, men without a high school diploma held 13.1 jobs from ages 18 to 50, while men with a bachelor’s degree and higher held 11.4 jobs between these ages. In contrast, women without a high school diploma held 9.3 jobs from ages 18 to 50, while women with a bachelor’s degree and higher held 12.7 jobs between these ages.

From age 18 to age 24, Whites held more jobs than Blacks, or Hispanics or Latinos. On average, Whites held 5.7 jobs between the ages of 18 and 24, while Blacks held 4.6 jobs, and Hispanics or Latinos held 4.9 jobs. Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics or Latinos held between 4.3 and 4.6 jobs from age 25 to age 34,

**Chart 2: Percent of weeks employed from age 18 to age 50, by educational attainment, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity**



and between 2.9 and 3.2 jobs from age 35 to age 44. From age 45 to age 50, Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics or Latinos all held an average of 1.7 jobs.

### **Duration of Employment Relationships**

The length of time a worker remains with an employer increased with the age at which the worker began the job. Of the jobs that workers began when they were 18 to 24 years of age, 69 percent of those jobs ended in less than a year and 93 percent ended in fewer than 5 years. Among jobs started by 35 to 44 year olds, 36 percent ended in less than a year, and 75 percent ended in fewer than 5 years. (See table 2.)

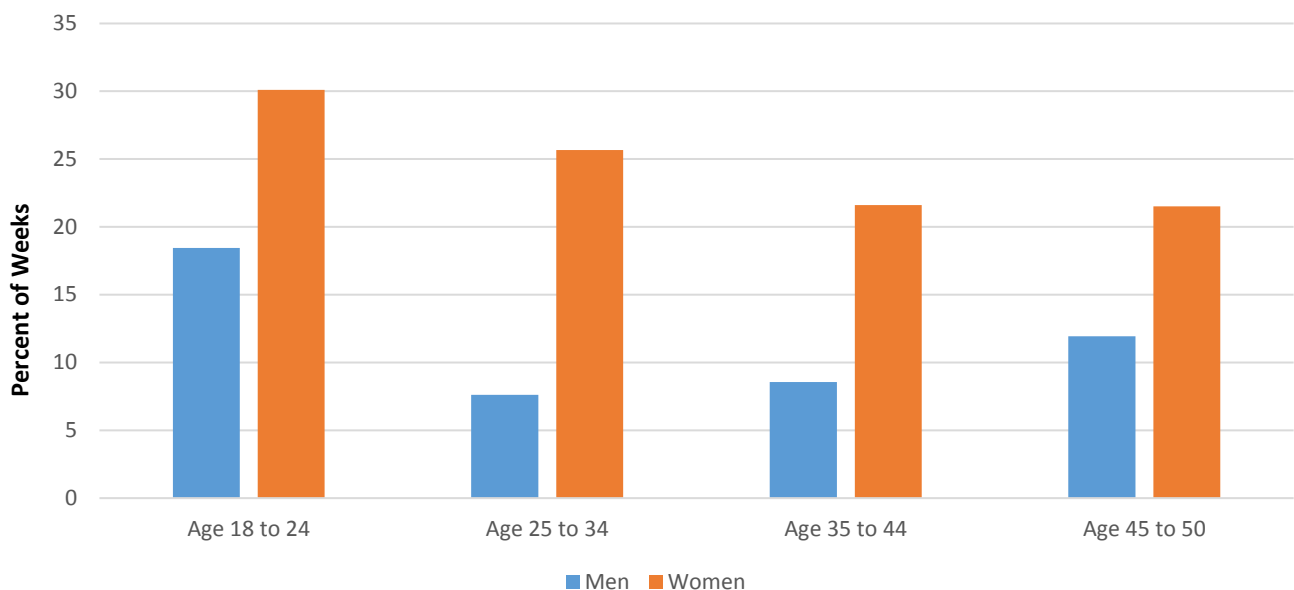
### **Percent of Weeks Employed, Unemployed, and Not in the Labor Force**

On average, the youngest baby boomers (born 1957-1964) were employed during 78 percent of all the weeks from age 18 to age 50. They were unemployed—that is, without jobs but seeking work—5 percent of the weeks. They were not in the labor force—that is, neither working nor seeking work—18 percent of the weeks. (See table 3.)

The amount of time spent employed differed substantially between those without a high school diploma and those who had graduated from high school or attained higher levels of education. Individuals with less than a high school diploma (as of the 2014-15 survey) spent 58 percent of weeks employed and 34 percent of weeks out of the labor force from age 18 to age 50. By comparison, high school graduates spent 77 percent of weeks employed and 18 percent of weeks out of the labor force, while those with a bachelor's degree and higher spent 84 percent of weeks employed and 14 percent of weeks out of the labor force.

White high school graduates with no college were employed a higher percentage of weeks and out of the labor force a smaller percentage of weeks than similarly educated Blacks, or Hispanics or Latinos.

**Chart 3: Percent of weeks not in the labor force from age 18 to age 50, by sex and age**



Among those with a bachelor’s degree and higher, there was little difference among racial and ethnic groups in labor market attachment; each group spent between 83 percent and 85 percent of weeks employed. (See chart 2.)

The amount of time spent in the labor force differs by sex, with women at every educational level spending fewer weeks in the labor force than men. Overall, men were out of the labor force 11 percent of weeks from age 18 to age 50 and women were out of the labor force 25 percent of weeks. Women’s labor force participation increased with their education level. Women without a high school diploma spent more than half (52 percent) of all weeks between age 18 and age 50 out of the labor force, while those with a high school diploma were out of the labor force 26 percent of weeks, those with some college were out of the labor force 23 percent of weeks, and women with a bachelor’s degree and higher were out of the labor force only 18 percent of weeks. Among men, those without a high school diploma were out of the labor force about 21 percent of weeks, while men in the top three education categories were out of the labor force only 9 percent to 11 percent of weeks. (See table 3.)

The labor force participation patterns of men and women differed. For both groups, time spent out of the labor force was greatest between the ages of 18 and 24, reflecting the transition from education and training to the work force. For women, time spent out of the labor force decreased in each successive age range, from 30 percent of weeks between the ages of 18 and 24 to 22 percent between the ages of 45 and 50. In comparison, men were out of the labor force fewer than 9 percent of weeks from age 25 to age 44; from age 45 to age 50, they increased their time out of the labor force to 12 percent of weeks. While the percent of weeks out of the labor force trended in different directions for the two sexes after age 24, women in each age range still spent more weeks out of the labor force than their male counterparts. (See table 4 and chart 3.)

The percentage of weeks in which women were employed increased from 63 percent in the 18 to 24 age group to a peak of 76 percent in the 35 to 44 age group and then decreased slightly to 75 percent in the

45 to 50 age group. Following a similar pattern through age 44, the percentage of weeks in which men were employed increased from 73 percent in the 18 to 24 age group to a peak of 88 percent in the 35 to 44 age category. The percent of weeks employed then dipped to 84 percent in the 45 to 50 age group. (See table 4.)

### **Percent Growth in Real Earnings**

The inflation-adjusted earnings of workers born in the latter years of the baby boom (1957-1964) increased most rapidly while they were young. Hourly earnings grew by an average of 6.4 percent per year from ages 18 to 24. The earnings growth rate slowed to 3.3 percent annually from age 25 to age 34 and then to 1.8 percent annually from age 35 to age 44. From ages 45 to 50, earnings were stagnant (-0.1 percent annually). In every age category, growth rates of inflation-adjusted hourly earnings generally were higher for workers with more education. Earnings growth for 18 to 24 year olds with less than a high school diploma was 3.1 percent, while those with a bachelor's degree and higher saw their earnings grow by 9.6 percent at the same ages. On average, 45- to 50-year-olds with less than a high school diploma experienced negative earnings growth (-0.8 percent), while at the same ages earnings among those with a bachelor's degree and higher increased by 0.4 percent. This pattern in earnings growth reflects, in part, the state of the U.S. economy during the years in which survey participants were in each age group. (See table 5.)

Additional data are available at [www.bls.gov/nls/y79supp.htm](http://www.bls.gov/nls/y79supp.htm).

## Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained using data from the first 26 rounds of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 (NLSY79). This survey is conducted by the Center for Human Resource Research at The Ohio State University and the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago under the direction and sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

### Sample

The NLSY79 is a nationally representative sample of 12,686 young men and women who were 14 to 22 years of age when first surveyed in 1979. This survey sample was initially composed of three subsamples:

- A cross-sectional sample of 6,111 youths that was designed to represent the noninstitutionalized, civilian population of young people living in the U.S. in 1979 and born between Jan. 1, 1957, and Dec. 31, 1964.
- A supplemental sample of 5,295 youths that was designed to oversample non-institutionalized, civilian Black, Hispanic or Latino, and economically disadvantaged non-Black, non-Hispanic or Latino youths living in the U.S. in 1979 and born between Jan. 1, 1957, and Dec. 31, 1964.
- A military sample of 1,280 youths born between Jan. 1, 1957, and Dec. 31, 1961, and enlisted in the Army, Air Force, Navy, or Marine Corps as of September 30, 1978.

In 1985, the military sample was discontinued, and, in 1991, the economically disadvantaged non-Black, non-Hispanic or Latino youths were dropped from the supplemental sample. As a result, the NLSY79 sample now includes 9,964 individuals from the cross-sectional sample and the Black and

Hispanic or Latino supplemental samples. (This sample size is not adjusted for sample members who have died.)

Individuals were surveyed annually from 1979 to 1994 and biennially since 1994. In 2014-15, 7,071 individuals responded to the survey, for a retention rate of 71 percent (representing a 77 percent response rate among those sample members who are still living). Only these individuals are included in the estimates in this release. All results are weighted using the 2014-15 survey weights that correct for the oversampling, interview nonresponse, and permanent attrition from the survey. When weighted, the estimates represent all persons born in the years 1957 to 1964 and living in the U.S. when the survey began in 1979. Not represented by the survey are U.S. immigrants who were born from 1957 to 1964 and moved to the U.S. after 1979.

### Work history data

The total number of jobs that people hold during their work life is an easy concept to understand but a difficult one to measure. Reliable estimates require a survey that interviews the same people over the course of their entire work life and also keeps track of all the jobs they ever held. The NLSY79 tracks the number of jobs that people have held, but many of the respondents in this survey are still in their prime working years, ages 49 to 58 in 2014-15, and have more years of work life ahead of them. As the cohort continues to age, however, more complete information will become available.

A unique feature of the NLSY79 is that it collects the beginning and ending dates of all jobs held by a respondent so that a longitudinal history can be constructed of each respondent's work experiences. The NLSY79 work history data provide a week-by-week work record of each respondent from Jan. 1, 1978, through the most recent survey date. These data contain information on the respondent's labor force status each week, the usual hours worked per week at all jobs, and earnings for all jobs. If a respondent worked at more than one job in any week, hours and earnings are obtained for additional jobs. When a respondent

who missed one or more consecutive survey rounds is interviewed again, he or she is asked to provide information about all time since the last interview.

### **Interaction between time and age in a longitudinal survey**

Because the NLSY79 is a longitudinal survey, meaning the same people are surveyed over time, the ages of the respondents change with each survey round. It is important to keep in mind this inherent link between the calendar years and the ages of the respondents. For example, table 5 reports earnings growth from age 45 to age 50. The youngest respondents in the sample (birth year 1964) were these ages during 2009-14, whereas the oldest respondents (birth year 1957) were these ages during 2002-07.

Although participants in the NLSY79 were ages 49 to 58 during the 2014-15 interviews, this release covers only the period while the respondents were ages 18 to 50. The reason for not including older ages is that the sample sizes were still too small to provide statistically reliable estimates for age groups older than 50. As the NLSY79 continues to be administered and the respondents age, subsequent rounds of the survey will enable analyses to be conducted for older age groups.

As with age, the educational attainment of individuals may change from year to year. In the tables and analysis presented in this report, educational attainment is defined as of the 2014-15 survey. This definition is used even when data on age and educational attainment are presented together. For example, table 1 reports the number of jobs held during different age categories. Suppose that a respondent had completed a bachelor's degree at age 40. That respondent would be included in the "Bachelor's degree and higher" educational category in all age categories shown on the table, even though he or she did not have a bachelor's degree at any point from age 18 to age 39.

### **Definitions**

*Job.* A job is defined as an uninterrupted period of work with a particular employer. Jobs are therefore employer-based, not position-based. If a respondent indicates that he or she left a job but in a subsequent survey returned to the same job, it is counted as a new job. For example, if an individual worked in a retail establishment during the summer, quit at the end of summer to return to school, and then resumed working for the same employer the following spring, this sequence would count as two jobs, rather than one. For self-employed workers, each "new" job is defined by the individuals themselves.

*Unemployment.* If respondents indicate a gap between employers, they are asked how many of those weeks they spent searching for employment or on layoff. For that number of weeks, they are considered unemployed. For the remaining weeks, they are coded as not in the labor force. No probing for intensity of job search is done.

*Usual earnings.* Respondents can report earnings over any time frame (hour, day, week, month, year). For those who do not report an hourly wage, one is constructed using usual hours worked over that time frame. Wages greater than \$100 per hour and less than \$1 per hour (in 1979 dollars) were not included in the analysis of earnings growth because the reported earnings levels were almost certainly in error. For the same reason, individuals who had inflation-adjusted earnings growth greater than 100 percent were not included in the analysis.

*Race and ethnicity groups.* In this release, the findings are reported for non-Hispanic or Latino Whites, non-Hispanic or Latino Blacks, and Hispanics or Latinos. These three groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other race groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates. In other BLS publications, estimates usually are published for Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics or Latinos, but these groups are not mutually exclusive. The term

Hispanic or Latino is considered to be an ethnicity group, and Hispanics or Latinos can be of any race. Most other BLS publications include Hispanics or Latinos in the White and Black race groups in addition to the Hispanic or Latino ethnicity group.

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.



**Table 1. Number of jobs held by individuals from age 18 to age 50 in 1978-2014 by educational attainment, sex, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and age**

Characteristic	Average number of jobs for individuals ages 18 to 50 in 1978-2014				
	Total <sup>1</sup>	Ages 18 to 24 <sup>2</sup>	Ages 25 to 34	Ages 35 to 44	Ages 45 to 50 <sup>3</sup>
Total .....	11.9	5.5	4.5	2.9	1.7
Less than a high school diploma .....	11.5	4.8	4.5	2.8	1.3
High school graduates, no college <sup>4</sup> ....	11.5	5.1	4.4	3.0	1.7
Some college or associate degree .....	12.4	5.6	4.6	3.0	1.8
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>5</sup> .....	12.0	6.2	4.4	2.8	1.8
Men .....	12.1	5.7	4.7	2.9	1.7
Less than a high school diploma .....	13.1	5.8	5.3	3.0	1.4
High school graduates, no college <sup>4</sup> ....	12.1	5.6	4.8	3.0	1.7
Some college or associate degree .....	12.6	5.8	4.7	3.0	1.8
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>5</sup> .....	11.4	5.8	4.3	2.9	1.8
Women .....	11.6	5.3	4.2	2.9	1.7
Less than a high school diploma .....	9.3	3.5	3.5	2.4	1.2
High school graduates, no college <sup>4</sup> ....	10.9	4.6	4.0	3.0	1.6
Some college or associate degree .....	12.2	5.5	4.5	3.1	1.8
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>5</sup> .....	12.7	6.5	4.5	2.8	1.9
White non-Hispanic.....	11.9	5.7	4.4	2.9	1.7
Less than a high school diploma .....	12.3	5.3	4.8	2.8	1.3
High school graduates, no college <sup>4</sup> ....	11.6	5.4	4.4	2.9	1.7
Some college or associate degree .....	12.3	5.8	4.6	2.9	1.8
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>5</sup> .....	12.0	6.2	4.4	2.8	1.8
Black non-Hispanic .....	11.5	4.6	4.6	3.2	1.7
Less than a high school diploma .....	9.6	3.6	4.0	2.5	1.2
High school graduates, no college <sup>4</sup> ....	11.3	4.4	4.6	3.1	1.6
Some college or associate degree .....	12.4	5.0	4.8	3.5	1.9
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>5</sup> .....	12.3	5.6	4.6	3.1	2.1
Hispanic or Latino.....	11.6	4.9	4.3	3.0	1.7
Less than a high school diploma .....	11.3	4.4	4.3	2.9	1.5
High school graduates, no college <sup>4</sup> ....	11.2	4.9	4.2	3.0	1.7
Some college or associate degree .....	12.6	5.2	4.6	3.2	1.9
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>5</sup> .....	11.2	5.3	4.4	2.8	1.7

<sup>1</sup> Jobs that were held in more than one of the age categories were counted in each appropriate column, but only once in the total column. The total excludes individuals who turned age 18 before January 1, 1978, or who had not yet turned age 51 when interviewed in 2014-15.

<sup>2</sup> This category excludes individuals who turned age 18 before January 1, 1978.

<sup>3</sup> This category excludes individuals who had not yet turned age 51 when interviewed in 2014-15.

<sup>4</sup> Includes individuals with a high school diploma or equivalent.

<sup>5</sup> Includes individuals with bachelor's, master's, professional, or doctoral degrees.

NOTE: The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 consists of men and women who were born in the years 1957-64 and were ages 14 to 22 when first interviewed in 1979. These individuals were ages 49 to 58 in 2014-15. Educational attainment is defined as of the 2014-15 survey. Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other race groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates.

**Table 2. Duration of employment relationships with a single employer for all jobs started from age 18 to age 50 in 1978-2014 by age at start of job, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity**

Age at the start of job and characteristic	Cumulative percent distribution of duration of completed employment relationships					Percent of jobs ongoing in 2014
	Less than 1 year	Less than 2 years	Less than 5 years	Less than 10 years	Less than 15 years	
Ages 18 to 24 <sup>1</sup> .....	69.1	82.9	92.8	96.3	97.5	1.2
Men .....	69.3	83.0	92.6	96.2	97.3	1.2
Women .....	68.9	82.8	93.1	96.5	97.7	1.1
White non-Hispanic .....	68.8	82.7	92.7	96.2	97.4	1.2
Black non-Hispanic .....	71.4	84.8	93.9	97.1	98.1	0.9
Hispanic or Latino .....	68.6	82.0	92.4	96.5	97.7	1.2
Ages 25 to 34.....	52.7	69.4	85.2	92.0	94.4	3.8
Men .....	52.5	68.9	84.3	91.0	93.7	4.4
Women .....	52.9	69.9	86.1	93.0	95.3	3.1
White non-Hispanic .....	51.3	67.9	84.3	91.4	94.1	4.1
Black non-Hispanic .....	57.6	74.6	88.3	93.9	95.9	2.6
Hispanic or Latino .....	56.1	72.5	86.4	92.9	95.2	3.3
Ages 35 to 44.....	35.8	53.7	74.6	(*)	(*)	11.6
Men .....	34.7	52.8	74.0	(*)	(*)	12.5
Women .....	37.0	54.5	75.3	(*)	(*)	10.7
White non-Hispanic .....	34.5	52.1	72.9	(*)	(*)	12.5
Black non-Hispanic .....	39.6	58.7	80.4	(*)	(*)	8.2
Hispanic or Latino .....	38.9	56.2	78.9	(*)	(*)	9.4
Ages 45 to 50 <sup>2</sup> .....	30.5	47.1	(*)	(*)	(*)	28.4
Men .....	27.4	44.3	(*)	(*)	(*)	30.0
Women .....	33.4	49.7	(*)	(*)	(*)	26.9
White non-Hispanic .....	29.2	45.5	(*)	(*)	(*)	29.7
Black non-Hispanic .....	35.3	54.0	(*)	(*)	(*)	23.7
Hispanic or Latino .....	32.5	49.3	(*)	(*)	(*)	25.1

(\*) Estimates are not presented for these categories because most sample members were not yet old enough at the time of the 2014-15 survey to have completed jobs of these durations.

<sup>1</sup> This category excludes individuals who turned age 18 before January 1, 1978.

<sup>2</sup> This category excludes individuals who had not yet turned age 51 when interviewed in 2014-15.

NOTE: The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 consists of men and women who were born in the years 1957-64 and were ages 14 to 22 when first interviewed in 1979. These individuals were ages 49 to 58 in 2014-15. Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other race groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates.

**Table 3. Percent of weeks individuals were employed, unemployed, or not in the labor force from age 18 to age 50 in 1978-2014 by educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity**

Characteristic	Percent of total weeks while ages 18 to 50 in 1978-2014		
	Employed	Unemployed	Not in labor force
Total, ages 18 to 50 in 1978-2014 .....	77.8	4.6	17.6
Less than a high school diploma .....	58.4	8.0	33.5
High school graduates, no college <sup>1</sup> .....	76.7	5.5	17.8
Some college or associate degree .....	79.3	4.2	16.5
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>2</sup> .....	83.9	2.4	13.7
Men .....	83.9	5.1	11.0
Less than a high school diploma .....	69.9	9.5	20.7
High school graduates, no college <sup>1</sup> .....	82.8	6.0	11.1
Some college or associate degree .....	87.1	4.3	8.6
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>2</sup> .....	88.2	2.5	9.3
Women .....	71.4	4.1	24.5
Less than a high school diploma .....	42.2	6.1	51.7
High school graduates, no college <sup>1</sup> .....	69.4	5.0	25.6
Some college or associate degree .....	73.2	4.2	22.6
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>2</sup> .....	79.6	2.3	18.1
White non-Hispanic .....	80.0	3.8	16.2
Less than a high school diploma .....	63.0	7.3	29.7
High school graduates, no college <sup>1</sup> .....	79.5	4.6	15.9
Some college or associate degree .....	80.4	3.5	16.1
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>2</sup> .....	83.9	2.2	13.8
Black non-Hispanic .....	68.6	8.5	22.8
Less than a high school diploma .....	46.3	10.9	42.8
High school graduates, no college <sup>1</sup> .....	65.6	9.8	24.6
Some college or associate degree .....	75.7	7.3	17.0
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>2</sup> .....	82.7	4.6	12.7
Hispanic or Latino .....	72.4	5.7	21.9
Less than a high school diploma .....	58.6	8.2	33.2
High school graduates, no college <sup>1</sup> .....	73.5	5.8	20.7
Some college or associate degree .....	76.2	4.8	18.9
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>2</sup> .....	84.9	2.4	12.8

<sup>1</sup> Includes individuals with a high school diploma or equivalent.

<sup>2</sup> Includes individuals with bachelor's, master's, professional, or doctoral degrees.

NOTE: This table excludes individuals who turned age 18 before January 1, 1978, and who had not yet turned age 51 when interviewed in 2014-15. The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 consists of men and women who were born in the years 1957-64 and were ages 14 to 22 when first interviewed in 1979. These individuals were ages 49 to 58 in 2014-15. Educational attainment is defined as of the 2014-15 survey. Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other race groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates.

**Table 4. Percent of weeks individuals were employed, unemployed, or not in the labor force from age 18 to age 50 in 1978-2014 by age, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity**

Age and characteristic	Percent of total weeks		
	Employed	Unemployed	Not in labor force
Total, ages 18 to 50 in 1978-2014 <sup>1</sup> .....	77.8	4.6	17.6
Ages 18 to 24 in 1978-1988 <sup>2</sup> .....	67.9	8.0	24.2
Ages 25 to 34 in 1982-1998 .....	78.8	4.3	16.8
Ages 35 to 44 in 1992-2008 .....	81.5	3.1	15.4
Ages 45 to 50 in 2002-2014 <sup>3</sup> .....	79.2	4.1	16.7
Men, ages 18 to 50 in 1978-2014 <sup>1</sup> .....	83.9	5.1	11.0
Ages 18 to 24 in 1978-1988 <sup>2</sup> .....	72.5	9.0	18.5
Ages 25 to 34 in 1982-1998 .....	87.7	4.7	7.6
Ages 35 to 44 in 1992-2008 .....	88.1	3.3	8.6
Ages 45 to 50 in 2002-2014 <sup>3</sup> .....	83.5	4.6	11.9
Women, ages 18 to 50 in 1978-2014 <sup>1</sup> .....	71.4	4.1	24.5
Ages 18 to 24 in 1978-1988 <sup>2</sup> .....	63.0	6.9	30.1
Ages 25 to 34 in 1982-1998 .....	70.8	3.6	25.7
Ages 35 to 44 in 1992-2008 .....	75.6	2.8	21.6
Ages 45 to 50 in 2002-2014 <sup>3</sup> .....	74.8	3.7	21.5
White non-Hispanic, ages 18 to 50 in 1978-2014 <sup>1</sup> ..	80.0	3.8	16.2
Ages 18 to 24 in 1978-1988 <sup>2</sup> .....	70.6	7.0	22.5
Ages 25 to 34 in 1982-1998 .....	81.5	3.3	15.2
Ages 35 to 44 in 1992-2008 .....	83.5	2.4	14.1
Ages 45 to 50 in 2002-2014 <sup>3</sup> .....	81.4	3.4	15.2
Black non-Hispanic, ages 18 to 50 in 1978-2014 <sup>1</sup> ...	68.6	8.5	22.8
Ages 18 to 24 in 1978-1988 <sup>2</sup> .....	55.6	13.2	31.1
Ages 25 to 34 in 1982-1998 .....	70.8	8.1	21.2
Ages 35 to 44 in 1992-2008 .....	75.5	6.1	18.5
Ages 45 to 50 in 2002-2014 <sup>3</sup> .....	70.4	7.5	22.1
Hispanic or Latino, ages 18 to 50 in 1978-2014 <sup>1</sup> .....	72.4	5.7	21.9
Ages 18 to 24 in 1978-1988 <sup>2</sup> .....	63.5	8.8	27.7
Ages 25 to 34 in 1982-1998 .....	73.2	4.8	22.0
Ages 35 to 44 in 1992-2008 .....	78.0	4.0	18.0
Ages 45 to 50 in 2002-2014 <sup>3</sup> .....	74.3	5.1	20.6

<sup>1</sup> This category excludes individuals who turned age 18 before January 1, 1978, or who had not yet turned age 51 when interviewed in 2014-15.

<sup>2</sup> This category excludes individuals who turned age 18 before January 1, 1978.

<sup>3</sup> This category excludes individuals who had not yet turned age 51 when interviewed in 2014-15.

NOTE: The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 consists of men and women who were born in the years 1957-64 and were ages 14 to 22 when first interviewed in 1979. These individuals were ages 49 to 58 in 2014-15. Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other race groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates.

**Table 5. Average annual percent growth in inflation-adjusted hourly earnings from 1978-2014 by educational attainment, sex, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and age**

Characteristic	Average annual percent growth in hourly earnings			
	Ages 18 to 24 <sup>1</sup>	Ages 25 to 34	Ages 35 to 44	Ages 45 to 50 <sup>2</sup>
Total .....	6.4	3.3	1.8	-0.1
Less than a high school diploma .....	3.1	1.4	1.3	-0.8
High school graduates, no college <sup>3</sup> .....	4.9	2.2	1.7	-0.2
Some college or associate degree .....	6.2	3.4	1.6	-0.1
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>4</sup> .....	9.6	5.2	2.3	0.4
Men .....	7.0	3.6	1.7	-0.1
Less than a high school diploma .....	3.2	1.5	0.6	-1.0
High school graduates, no college <sup>3</sup> .....	5.8	2.3	1.5	-0.3
Some college or associate degree .....	7.7	4.1	1.6	-0.3
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>4</sup> .....	9.9	6.4	2.5	0.7
Women .....	5.8	2.8	1.8	0.0
Less than a high school diploma .....	2.9	1.2	2.2	-0.5
High school graduates, no college <sup>3</sup> .....	3.9	2.2	1.8	-0.1
Some college or associate degree .....	5.1	2.9	1.6	0.1
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>4</sup> .....	9.4	4.0	2.1	0.1
White non-Hispanic .....	6.8	3.4	1.9	-0.1
Less than a high school diploma .....	3.6	1.5	1.4	-1.1
High school graduates, no college <sup>3</sup> .....	5.2	2.2	1.7	-0.3
Some college or associate degree .....	6.3	3.6	1.6	-0.2
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>4</sup> .....	9.9	5.2	2.4	0.4
Black non-Hispanic .....	4.5	2.9	1.4	-0.1
Less than a high school diploma .....	1.8	0.9	1.0	-0.4
High school graduates, no college <sup>3</sup> .....	3.4	2.5	1.5	-0.2
Some college or associate degree .....	5.7	2.9	1.5	0.1
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>4</sup> .....	7.1	5.4	1.4	-0.2
Hispanic or Latino.....	5.7	2.7	1.8	0.1
Less than a high school diploma .....	2.4	1.2	1.5	-0.2
High school graduates, no college <sup>3</sup> .....	5.5	2.7	1.1	-0.6
Some college or associate degree .....	6.6	2.4	2.2	0.4
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>4</sup> .....	9.2	5.1	4.0	1.4

<sup>1</sup> This category excludes individuals who turned age 18 before January 1, 1978.

<sup>2</sup> This category excludes individuals who had not yet turned age 51 when interviewed in 2014-15.

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

<sup>4</sup> Includes individuals with bachelor's, master's, professional, or doctoral degrees.

Note: The CPI-U-RS was used to adjust hourly earnings to constant dollars, prior to calculating the growth rates. The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 consists of men and women who were born in the years 1957-64 and were ages 14 to 22 when first interviewed in 1979. These individuals were ages 49 to 58 in 2014-15. Educational attainment is defined as of the 2014-15 survey. Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity groups are mutually exclusive but not exhaustive. Other race groups, which are included in the overall totals, are not shown separately because their representation in the survey sample is not sufficiently large to provide statistically reliable estimates.