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COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND WORK ACTIVITY OF RECENT HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE GRADUATES – 2018

In October 2018, 69.1 percent of 2018 high school graduates age 16 to 24 were enrolled in colleges or universities, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Among 20- to 29-year-olds who received a bachelor's degree in 2018, 72.3 percent were employed.

Information on school enrollment and employment status 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 recent degree recipients and school enrollment. In addition to data on recent high school graduates age 16 to 24, this new release presents information on recent degree recipients age 20 to 29. For more information, see the Technical Note in this news release.

Following are some highlights from the October 2018 data:

- Among recent high school graduates age 16 to 24, college enrollment rates for men and women were 66.9 percent and 71.3 percent, respectively. (See table 1.)
- Among 16- to 24-year-olds, 47.2 percent of recent high school dropouts were working or looking for work, lower than the labor force participation rate of 74.0 percent for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college. (See table 1.)
- About 16.3 million persons age 16 to 24 were not enrolled in school—42.8 percent of all persons in this age group. (See table 2.)
- Among 20- to 29-year-olds, 75.0 percent of recent associate degree recipients, 72.3 percent of recent bachelor's degree recipients, and 80.7 percent of recent advanced degree recipients were employed. (See table 3.)
- One-fifth of recent bachelor's degree recipients age 20 to 29 were enrolled in school. (See table 3.)
- Among 20- to 29-year-olds, unemployment rates for recent associate degree recipients, recent bachelor's degree recipients, and recent advanced degree recipients were 9.6 percent, 12.9 percent, and 10.4 percent, respectively. (See table 3.)

Recent High School Graduates and Dropouts (Age 16 to 24)

Of the 3.2 million youth age 16 to 24 who graduated from high school between January and October 2018, about 2.2 million (69.1 percent) were enrolled in college in October. The college enrollment rate of recent high school graduates in October 2018 was little changed from the rate in October 2017 (66.7 percent). (See table 1.)

Among 2018 high school graduates age 16 to 24, the college enrollment rate for young women was 71.3 percent in October 2018, compared with 66.9 percent for young men. The college enrollment rate of recent graduates was 73.4 percent for Asians, 69.6 percent for Whites, 65.5 percent for Hispanics, and 63.6 percent for Blacks.

The labor force participation rate (the proportion of the population that is employed or looking for work) for recent high school graduates enrolled in college was 36.4 percent. The participation rates for male and female graduates enrolled in college were 37.3 percent and 35.5 percent, respectively.

Among recent high school graduates enrolled in college in October 2018, about 9 in 10 were full-time students. Recent graduates enrolled as full-time students were less than half as likely to be in the labor force (32.5 percent) as were their peers enrolled part time (74.3 percent).

About 2 in 3 recent high school graduates enrolled in college attended 4-year colleges. Of these students, 31.4 percent participated in the labor force in October 2018, lower than the 44.9 percent for recent graduates enrolled in 2-year colleges.

Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college in the fall of 2018 were about twice as likely as enrolled graduates to be in the labor force (74.0 percent versus 36.4 percent). The unemployment rate for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college was 18.6 percent, higher than the rate of 10.1 percent for recent graduates enrolled in college.

Between October 2017 and October 2018, 527,000 young people dropped out of high school. The labor force participation rate for recent dropouts (47.2 percent) was much lower than the rate for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college (74.0 percent). The jobless rate for recent high school dropouts was 13.7 percent in October 2018; the rate for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college was 18.6 percent.

All Youth Enrolled in High School or College (Age 16 to 24)

In October 2018, 57.2 percent of 16- to 24-year-olds, or 21.7 million youth, were enrolled in high school (9.4 million) or in college (12.3 million). The labor force participation rate for youth enrolled in school, at 36.7 percent, changed little from October 2017 to October 2018. The unemployment rate (6.7 percent) for youth enrolled in school was down from the previous year. (See table 2.)

In October 2018, high school students continued to be less likely than college students to participate in the labor force (22.7 percent, compared with 47.5 percent). In both high school and college, female students were more likely to participate in the labor force than their male counterparts.

Among college students, those enrolled full time were much less likely to participate in the labor force in October 2018 than were part-time students (42.0 percent versus 83.4 percent). Students at 4-year colleges were also less likely to be in the labor force than were students at 2-year schools (45.0 percent

and 55.3 percent, respectively). The labor force participation rate was lower for Asian college students (28.2 percent) than for their Black (47.1 percent), White (50.4 percent), and Hispanic (52.5 percent) counterparts.

The unemployment rate for high school students, at 10.5 percent in October 2018, continued to be higher than the rate for college students (5.3 percent).

All Youth Not Enrolled in School (Age 16 to 24)

In October 2018, 16.3 million persons age 16 to 24 were not enrolled in school. The labor force participation rate of youth not enrolled in school, at 79.1 percent, was little changed over the year. Among youth not enrolled in school in October 2018, young men continued to be more likely than young women to participate in the labor force (81.1 percent, compared with 76.9 percent). Labor force participation rates for not-enrolled men and women were highest for those with a bachelor's degree or higher (92.1 percent and 92.6 percent, respectively) and lowest for men and women with less than a high school diploma (63.3 percent and 54.0 percent, respectively). (See table 2.)

The unemployment rate for youth age 16 to 24 not enrolled in school, at 9.1 percent, was essentially unchanged over the year. Among not-enrolled youth who did not have a high school diploma, unemployment rates in October 2018 were 15.7 percent for young men and 12.3 percent for young women. The jobless rates of both young men and young women with at least a bachelor's degree were 6.6 percent. Among youth not enrolled in school, the unemployment rate was 15.0 percent for Blacks, 12.6 percent for Asians, 9.0 percent for Hispanics, and 7.6 percent for Whites.

Recent College Graduates (Age 20 to 29)

Between January and October 2018, 1.1 million 20- to 29-year-olds earned a bachelor's degree; of these, 810,000 (or 72.3 percent) were employed in October 2018. The unemployment rate for recent college graduates with a bachelor's degree was 12.9 percent in October 2018. (See table 3.)

There was little difference in the likelihood of being employed among male and female recent bachelor's degree recipients: 71.6 percent of men and 72.8 percent of women who recently earned a bachelor's degree were employed in October 2018. The jobless rates for recent male and female bachelor's degree recipients were 13.6 percent and 12.5 percent, respectively.

Twenty percent (or 224,000) of recent bachelor's degree recipients were enrolled in school in October 2018. These recent graduates who were enrolled in school were much less likely to be employed than those who were not enrolled (47.9 percent versus 78.5 percent).

Between January and October 2018, 352,000 persons age 20 to 29 earned an advanced degree—that is, a master's, professional, or doctoral degree. Those who recently earned an advanced degree were more likely than those who recently earned a bachelor's degree to be employed (80.7 percent, compared with 72.3 percent). In October 2018, the unemployment rate for recent advanced degree recipients was 10.4 percent.

Recent Associate Degree Recipients (Age 20 to 29)

Of the 374,000 20- to 29-year-olds who completed an associate degree between January and October 2018, 75.0 percent were employed in October 2018. The unemployment rate for recent associate degree recipients was 9.6 percent. (See table 3.)

Recent associate degree recipients age 20 to 29 were more likely to have completed an academic program than a vocational program (64.2 percent, compared with 35.8 percent). Associate degrees in academic programs are primarily in the arts and sciences and are often transferable to a bachelor's degree program, while associate degrees in vocational programs prepare graduates for a specific occupation.

In October 2018, 36.9 percent of recent associate degree recipients were enrolled in school. These recent graduates who were enrolled in school were less likely to be employed than those who were not enrolled (62.6 percent versus 82.2 percent).

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from a supplement to the October 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 CPS 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 in the civilian noninstitutional population in the calendar week that includes the 12th of October. Data about recent high school graduates and dropouts and the enrollment status of youth refer to persons 16 to 24 years of age. Data about recent associate degree recipients and college graduates refer to persons 20 to 29 years of age.

Updated population controls for the CPS 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 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.

Additional information about the reliability of data from the CPS and estimating standard errors is available at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#reliability.

Concepts

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 age 16 to 24 who completed high school in the calendar year of the survey (January through October) are recent high school graduates.

Recent high school dropouts. Persons age 16 to 24 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.

Recent college graduates. Persons age 20 to 29 who completed a bachelor's degree or an advanced degree—that is, a master's, professional (such as law or medicine), or doctoral degree—in the calendar year of the survey (January through October) are recent college graduates.

Recent associate degree recipients. Persons age 20 to 29 who completed an associate degree (either an academic program or a vocational program) in the calendar year of the survey (January through October) are recent associate degree recipients. Associate degrees in academic programs are primarily in the arts and sciences and may be transferable to a bachelor's degree program, while associate degrees in vocational programs prepare graduates for a specific occupation.

Table 1. Labor force status of 2018 high school graduates and 2017-2018 high school dropouts 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, October 2018

[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, 2018 high school graduates ¹	3,212	1,541	48.0	1,324	41.2	218	14.1	1,670
Men.....	1,614	787	48.7	690	42.7	97	12.3	827
Women.....	1,598	755	47.2	634	39.7	121	16.0	843
White.....	2,347	1,148	48.9	1,016	43.3	132	11.5	1,199
Black or African American.....	483	246	51.0	192	39.8	54	21.9	237
Asian.....	184	49	26.7	34	18.5	15	-	135
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	727	414	56.9	361	49.6	53	12.8	313
Enrolled in college								
Total, enrolled in college.....	2,220	808	36.4	726	32.7	82	10.1	1,412
Enrolled in 2-year college.....	819	368	44.9	341	41.6	27	7.3	451
Enrolled in 4-year college.....	1,401	440	31.4	385	27.5	55	12.4	961
Full-time students.....	2,015	656	32.5	583	28.9	73	11.1	1,360
Part-time students.....	205	152	74.3	143	69.9	9	5.9	53
Men.....	1,080	403	37.3	366	33.9	36	9.0	677
Women.....	1,140	405	35.5	360	31.6	45	11.2	735
White.....	1,634	629	38.5	569	34.8	60	9.6	1,005
Black or African American.....	307	106	34.3	97	31.5	9	8.1	202
Asian.....	135	19	14.2	13	9.7	6	-	116
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	476	223	46.8	209	44.0	13	6.0	253
Not enrolled in college								
Total, not enrolled in college.....	992	733	74.0	597	60.2	136	18.6	258
Men.....	534	384	71.9	324	60.6	60	15.7	150
Women.....	458	349	76.3	273	59.8	76	21.7	108
White.....	713	519	72.8	447	62.7	72	13.8	194
Black or African American.....	176	141	80.1	95	54.3	45	32.2	35
Asian.....	49	30	-	21	-	9	-	19
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	251	191	76.1	152	60.3	40	20.8	60
RECENT HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS								
Total, 2017-2018 high school dropouts ²	527	249	47.2	215	40.7	34	13.7	278
Men.....	249	117	46.8	102	41.0	14	12.3	133
Women.....	277	132	47.6	112	40.5	20	15.0	145
White.....	367	183	50.0	176	47.8	8	4.3	184
Black or African American.....	102	47	45.7	22	21.1	25	-	56
Asian.....	28	12	-	12	-	-	-	15
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	172	62	36.1	62	36.1	-	-	110

¹ Data refer to persons who graduated from high school in January through October 2018.

² Data refer to persons who dropped out of school between October 2017 and October 2018.

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 2018

[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.....	37,962	20,829	54.9	19,120	50.4	1,709	8.2	17,134
Enrolled in school								
Total, enrolled in school.....	21,698	7,962	36.7	7,429	34.2	533	6.7	13,735
Enrolled in high school ¹	9,435	2,137	22.7	1,912	20.3	225	10.5	7,298
Men.....	4,970	1,037	20.9	919	18.5	118	11.4	3,933
Women.....	4,465	1,100	24.6	993	22.2	107	9.7	3,365
White.....	6,860	1,654	24.1	1,495	21.8	159	9.6	5,207
Black or African American.....	1,416	240	16.9	199	14.1	40	16.8	1,176
Asian.....	449	52	11.5	47	10.6	4	-	398
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	2,193	360	16.4	307	14.0	53	14.8	1,833
Enrolled in college.....	12,263	5,825	47.5	5,517	45.0	308	5.3	6,437
Enrolled in 2-year college.....	3,008	1,663	55.3	1,564	52.0	99	6.0	1,345
Enrolled in 4-year college.....	9,254	4,162	45.0	3,953	42.7	209	5.0	5,092
Full-time students.....	10,641	4,472	42.0	4,227	39.7	246	5.5	6,168
Part-time students.....	1,622	1,353	83.4	1,290	79.6	63	4.6	269
Men.....	5,644	2,535	44.9	2,385	42.3	150	5.9	3,110
Women.....	6,618	3,290	49.7	3,132	47.3	159	4.8	3,328
White.....	8,913	4,494	50.4	4,285	48.1	209	4.7	4,420
Black or African American.....	1,683	793	47.1	734	43.6	59	7.4	890
Asian.....	1,082	306	28.2	283	26.1	23	7.4	777
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	2,482	1,303	52.5	1,256	50.6	47	3.6	1,179
Not enrolled in school								
Total, not enrolled in school.....	16,264	12,866	79.1	11,691	71.9	1,175	9.1	3,398
16 to 19 years.....	3,231	2,127	65.8	1,799	55.7	328	15.4	1,104
20 to 24 years.....	13,033	10,740	82.4	9,892	75.9	847	7.9	2,294
Men.....	8,492	6,886	81.1	6,252	73.6	634	9.2	1,606
Less than a high school diploma.....	1,212	767	63.3	646	53.3	121	15.7	445
High school graduates, no college ²	4,209	3,393	80.6	3,067	72.9	325	9.6	817
Some college or associate degree.....	1,894	1,643	86.8	1,527	80.6	116	7.1	251
Bachelor's degree and higher ³	1,177	1,084	92.1	1,012	86.0	72	6.6	93
Women.....	7,772	5,980	76.9	5,438	70.0	541	9.1	1,792
Less than a high school diploma.....	953	514	54.0	451	47.3	63	12.3	439
High school graduates, no college ²	3,118	2,271	72.8	1,980	63.5	291	12.8	847
Some college or associate degree.....	2,090	1,703	81.5	1,615	77.3	88	5.2	387
Bachelor's degree and higher ³	1,612	1,492	92.6	1,393	86.5	99	6.6	120
White.....	12,057	9,634	79.9	8,900	73.8	735	7.6	2,423
Black or African American.....	2,547	1,934	75.9	1,644	64.5	290	15.0	613
Asian.....	734	549	74.8	480	65.4	69	12.6	185
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	4,049	3,093	76.4	2,815	69.5	277	9.0	956

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.

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 3. Labor force status of 2018 associate degree recipients and college graduates 20 to 29 years old by selected characteristics, October 2018

[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 ASSOCIATE DEGREE RECIPIENTS¹								
Total, 20 to 29 years.....	374	310	82.9	281	75.0	30	9.6	64
Men.....	153	134	87.7	115	74.9	20	14.6	19
Women.....	221	176	79.7	166	75.1	10	5.7	45
20 to 24 years.....	238	187	78.5	165	69.6	21	11.4	51
25 to 29 years.....	136	124	90.7	115	84.5	8	6.9	13
Vocational program.....	134	124	92.0	115	85.3	9	7.3	11
Academic program.....	240	187	77.9	166	69.2	21	11.1	53
Enrolled in school.....	138	93	67.7	86	62.6	7	7.6	44
Not enrolled in school.....	237	217	91.8	195	82.2	23	10.4	19
RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATES²								
Total, 20 to 29 years.....	1,472	1,247	84.7	1,094	74.3	153	12.3	225
Men.....	592	497	83.9	432	73.1	64	13.0	95
Women.....	880	750	85.3	662	75.2	89	11.8	130
20 to 24 years.....	1,061	880	83.0	767	72.3	113	12.8	181
25 to 29 years.....	411	367	89.3	327	79.5	40	11.0	44
Enrolled in school.....	267	144	54.0	136	50.8	9	6.0	123
Not enrolled in school.....	1,205	1,103	91.6	958	79.6	144	13.1	102
White.....	1,052	925	87.9	833	79.2	92	9.9	127
Black or African American.....	168	136	81.3	120	71.7	16	11.8	31
Asian.....	192	135	70.2	99	51.4	36	26.7	57
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	137	109	79.7	100	73.0	9	8.5	28
Bachelor's degree								
Total, 20 to 29 years.....	1,119	930	83.1	810	72.3	120	12.9	189
Men.....	458	380	82.9	328	71.6	52	13.6	78
Women.....	661	550	83.2	481	72.8	69	12.5	111
20 to 24 years.....	977	811	83.0	702	71.9	109	13.4	166
25 to 29 years.....	143	119	83.4	108	75.3	12	9.7	24
Enrolled in school.....	224	112	49.9	107	47.9	4	4.0	112
Not enrolled in school.....	896	818	91.4	703	78.5	116	14.1	77
Advanced degree³								
Total, 20 to 29 years.....	352	317	90.0	284	80.7	33	10.4	35
Men.....	133	117	87.6	104	78.0	13	11.0	17
Women.....	219	200	91.5	180	82.3	20	10.0	19
20 to 24 years.....	84	69	82.4	65	77.3	4	-	15
25 to 29 years.....	268	248	92.4	219	81.7	29	11.6	20

¹ Data refer to persons who received an associate degree in January through October 2018.

² Data refer to persons who received a bachelor's or higher degree in January through October 2018.

³ Data refer to persons who received a master's, professional, or doctoral degree in January through October 2018.

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).