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EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH — SUMMER 2012

From April to July 2012, the number of employed youth 16 to 24 years old rose 2.1 million to 19.5 million, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. This year, the share of young people employed in July was 50.2 percent. (The month of July typically is the summertime peak in youth employment.) Unemployment among youth increased by 836,000 from April to July 2012, compared with an increase of 745,000 for the same period in 2011. (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 2.9 million, or 14.2 percent, to a total of 23.5 million in July. (See table 1.)

The labor force participation rate for all youth—the proportion of the population 16 to 24 years old working or looking for work—was 60.5 percent in July, up from July 2011. Taking a longer-term perspective, the July 2012 participation rate was 17.0 percentage points below the peak rate for that month in 1989 (77.5 percent).

The July 2012 labor force participation rate for 16- to 24-year-old men was 63.2 percent. The rate for young women was 57.8 percent. From 1948, when the series began, to 1989, the July labor force participation rate for young men showed no clear trend, ranging from 81 to 86 percent. Since 1989, however, their July participation rate has trended down, falling by about 20 percentage points. The July labor force participation rate for young women peaked in 1989 at 72.4 percent, following a long-term upward trend. The participation rate of young women has fallen by about 15 percentage points since 1989.

The youth labor force participation rate for whites was 62.9 percent in July 2012, compared with 54.5 percent for blacks, 43.7 percent for Asians, and 57.1 percent for Hispanics.

Employment

Employment for 16- to 24-year-olds reached 19.5 million in July 2012, up 2.1 million since April. In 2011, youth employment rose by 1.7 million from April to July. The July 2012 employment-population ratio for youth—the proportion of the 16- to 24-year-old civilian noninstitutional population with a job—was 50.2 percent, up from July 2011. (See table 2.)

In July 2012, the youth employment-population ratio for men was 51.9 percent, and the ratio for women was 48.4 percent. The ratio for whites was 53.5 percent, compared with 38.9 percent for blacks, 37.4 percent for Asians, and 46.5 percent for Hispanics.

Twenty-six percent of employed youth worked in the leisure and hospitality sector (which includes food services) in July 2012, the same proportion as in July 2011. Another 19 percent of employed youth worked in the retail trade industry in July 2012, down slightly from the proportion in July 2011. (See table 3.)

Unemployment

The number of unemployed youth in July 2012 was 4.0 million, little changed from 4.1 million a year ago. The youth unemployment rate was 17.1 percent in July 2012. The unemployment rate for young men was 17.9 percent, in July 2012, and the rate for women was 16.2 percent. The jobless rate for whites was 14.9 percent, compared with 28.6 percent for blacks, 14.4 percent for Asians, and 18.5 percent for Hispanics. (See table 2.)

Adjustments to Population Estimates for Youth

Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data. The updated controls in January 2012 incorporated the Census 2010 population base for the first time; prior years' data shown in this release used the Census 2000 population base. The introduction of Census 2010-based controls had a disproportionate effect on the population age 16 to 24. Consequently, data for 2012 are not strictly comparable to those for earlier years. For more information, see *Adjustments to Household Survey Population Estimates in January 2012* on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/cps/cps12adj.pdf.

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.

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

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.

A full discussion of the reliability of data from the CPS and information on estimating standard errors is available at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#reliability.

Definitions

The principal definitions used in this release are

described briefly below.

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-operated enterprise; or (d) were temporarily absent from their jobs because of illness, vacation, labor dispute, or another reason.

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. Persons are classified using the 2007 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 receive wages, salary, commissions, tips, or pay in kind from a private employer or from a government entity.

Self-employed workers 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 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 2012
 [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
TOTAL						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	38,778	38,784	38,791	38,799	21	0.1
Civilian labor force.....	20,562	21,118	23,086	23,472	2,910	14.2
Participation rate.....	53.0	54.5	59.5	60.5	7.5	14.2
Employed.....	17,387	17,681	18,907	19,461	2,074	11.9
Employment-population ratio.....	44.8	45.6	48.7	50.2	5.4	12.1
Unemployed.....	3,175	3,438	4,180	4,011	836	26.3
Looking for full-time work.....	2,274	2,545	3,174	3,074	800	35.2
Looking for part-time work.....	902	892	1,006	937	35	3.9
Unemployment rate.....	15.4	16.3	18.1	17.1	1.7	11.0
Not in labor force.....	18,216	17,665	15,704	15,327	-2,889	-15.9
Men						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,541	19,545	19,549	19,554	13	0.1
Civilian labor force.....	10,648	10,980	12,093	12,355	1,707	16.0
Participation rate.....	54.5	56.2	61.9	63.2	8.7	16.0
Employed.....	8,842	9,054	9,733	10,140	1,298	14.7
Employment-population ratio.....	45.2	46.3	49.8	51.9	6.7	14.8
Unemployed.....	1,806	1,926	2,360	2,215	409	22.6
Looking for full-time work.....	1,323	1,433	1,831	1,785	462	34.9
Looking for part-time work.....	484	493	529	430	-54	-11.2
Unemployment rate.....	17.0	17.5	19.5	17.9	0.9	5.3
Not in labor force.....	8,893	8,565	7,456	7,199	-1,694	-19.0
Women						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	19,237	19,239	19,242	19,245	8	0.0
Civilian labor force.....	9,914	10,138	10,994	11,117	1,203	12.1
Participation rate.....	51.5	52.7	57.1	57.8	6.3	12.2
Employed.....	8,545	8,626	9,174	9,321	776	9.1
Employment-population ratio.....	44.4	44.8	47.7	48.4	4.0	9.0
Unemployed.....	1,369	1,512	1,819	1,796	427	31.2
Looking for full-time work.....	951	1,112	1,342	1,289	338	35.5
Looking for part-time work.....	418	400	477	507	89	21.3
Unemployment rate.....	13.8	14.9	16.5	16.2	2.4	17.4
Not in labor force.....	9,323	9,101	8,248	8,128	-1,195	-12.8
White						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	28,951	28,952	28,953	28,956	5	0.0
Civilian labor force.....	16,075	16,490	17,921	18,213	2,138	13.3
Participation rate.....	55.5	57.0	61.9	62.9	7.4	13.3
Employed.....	13,811	14,071	15,054	15,498	1,687	12.2
Employment-population ratio.....	47.7	48.6	52.0	53.5	5.8	12.2
Unemployed.....	2,265	2,419	2,867	2,715	450	19.9
Looking for full-time work.....	1,576	1,756	2,113	2,019	443	28.1
Looking for part-time work.....	688	664	754	696	8	1.2
Unemployment rate.....	14.1	14.7	16.0	14.9	0.8	5.7
Not in labor force.....	12,876	12,462	11,032	10,743	-2,133	-16.6
Black or African American						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	5,968	5,969	5,970	5,971	3	0.1
Civilian labor force.....	2,823	2,912	3,258	3,256	433	15.3
Participation rate.....	47.3	48.8	54.6	54.5	7.2	15.2
Employed.....	2,164	2,162	2,274	2,323	159	7.3
Employment-population ratio.....	36.3	36.2	38.1	38.9	2.6	7.2
Unemployed.....	659	750	984	933	274	41.6
Looking for full-time work.....	521	611	817	783	262	50.3
Looking for part-time work.....	138	139	167	150	12	8.7
Unemployment rate.....	23.3	25.8	30.2	28.6	5.3	22.7
Not in labor force.....	3,145	3,057	2,712	2,715	-430	-13.7

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 2012 — 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
Asian						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	1,975	1,929	1,929	1,922	-53	-2.7
Civilian labor force.....	682	674	810	839	157	23.0
Participation rate.....	34.5	34.9	42.0	43.7	9.2	26.7
Employed.....	620	595	694	718	98	15.8
Employment-population ratio.....	31.4	30.8	36.0	37.4	6.0	19.1
Unemployed.....	62	79	116	121	59	95.2
Looking for full-time work.....	41	38	82	83	42	102.4
Looking for part-time work.....	21	41	34	38	17	81.0
Unemployment rate.....	9.1	11.7	14.3	14.4	5.3	58.2
Not in labor force.....	1,293	1,256	1,119	1,083	-210	-16.2
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	8,127	8,139	8,151	8,164	37	0.5
Civilian labor force.....	4,251	4,451	4,643	4,658	407	9.6
Participation rate.....	52.3	54.7	57.0	57.1	4.8	9.2
Employed.....	3,520	3,596	3,693	3,799	279	7.9
Employment-population ratio.....	43.3	44.2	45.3	46.5	3.2	7.4
Unemployed.....	731	855	951	860	129	17.6
Looking for full-time work.....	532	668	697	698	166	31.2
Looking for part-time work.....	199	188	254	162	-37	-18.6
Unemployment rate.....	17.2	19.2	20.5	18.5	1.3	7.6
Not in labor force.....	3,875	3,687	3,508	3,506	-369	-9.5

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 2009-2012
 [Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	July 2009	July 2010	July 2011	July 2012
TOTAL				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	37,586	37,944	38,196	38,799
Civilian labor force.....	23,691	22,938	22,742	23,472
Participation rate.....	63.0	60.5	59.5	60.5
Employed.....	19,304	18,564	18,632	19,461
Employment-population ratio.....	51.4	48.9	48.8	50.2
Unemployed.....	4,387	4,374	4,110	4,011
Looking for full-time work.....	3,430	3,374	3,238	3,074
Looking for part-time work.....	957	1,000	872	937
Unemployment rate.....	18.5	19.1	18.1	17.1
Not in labor force.....	13,895	15,006	15,454	15,327
Men				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	18,935	19,126	19,425	19,554
Civilian labor force.....	12,298	11,997	11,930	12,355
Participation rate.....	64.9	62.7	61.4	63.2
Employed.....	9,880	9,537	9,746	10,140
Employment-population ratio.....	52.2	49.9	50.2	51.9
Unemployed.....	2,418	2,460	2,184	2,215
Looking for full-time work.....	1,973	1,949	1,809	1,785
Looking for part-time work.....	444	510	375	430
Unemployment rate.....	19.7	20.5	18.3	17.9
Not in labor force.....	6,637	7,129	7,494	7,199
Women				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	18,650	18,819	18,772	19,245
Civilian labor force.....	11,393	10,942	10,812	11,117
Participation rate.....	61.1	58.1	57.6	57.8
Employed.....	9,424	9,027	8,886	9,321
Employment-population ratio.....	50.5	48.0	47.3	48.4
Unemployed.....	1,969	1,914	1,926	1,796
Looking for full-time work.....	1,456	1,425	1,428	1,289
Looking for part-time work.....	513	489	497	507
Unemployment rate.....	17.3	17.5	17.8	16.2
Not in labor force.....	7,257	7,877	7,960	8,128
White				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	29,010	29,164	29,377	28,956
Civilian labor force.....	19,147	18,441	18,266	18,213
Participation rate.....	66.0	63.2	62.2	62.9
Employed.....	16,000	15,455	15,367	15,498
Employment-population ratio.....	55.2	53.0	52.3	53.5
Unemployed.....	3,147	2,987	2,899	2,715
Looking for full-time work.....	2,403	2,253	2,203	2,019
Looking for part-time work.....	744	733	696	696
Unemployment rate.....	16.4	16.2	15.9	14.9
Not in labor force.....	9,863	10,722	11,111	10,743
Black or African American				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	5,662	5,756	5,763	5,971
Civilian labor force.....	2,995	2,972	2,893	3,256
Participation rate.....	52.9	51.6	50.2	54.5
Employed.....	2,060	1,980	1,996	2,323
Employment-population ratio.....	36.4	34.4	34.6	38.9
Unemployed.....	935	992	897	933
Looking for full-time work.....	772	843	778	783
Looking for part-time work.....	163	149	118	150
Unemployment rate.....	31.2	33.4	31.0	28.6
Not in labor force.....	2,667	2,783	2,870	2,715

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2009-2012 — Continued
 [Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.]

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	July 2009	July 2010	July 2011	July 2012
Asian				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	1,500	1,576	1,573	1,922
Civilian labor force.....	740	762	753	839
Participation rate.....	49.3	48.3	47.9	43.7
Employed.....	619	597	638	718
Employment-population ratio.....	41.3	37.9	40.5	37.4
Unemployed.....	121	165	115	121
Looking for full-time work.....	96	122	97	83
Looking for part-time work.....	24	42	18	38
Unemployment rate.....	16.3	21.6	15.3	14.4
Not in labor force.....	760	814	820	1,083
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity				
Civilian noninstitutional population.....	6,752	7,128	7,605	8,164
Civilian labor force.....	4,014	3,995	4,080	4,658
Participation rate.....	59.4	56.1	53.6	57.1
Employed.....	3,143	3,111	3,260	3,799
Employment-population ratio.....	46.5	43.6	42.9	46.5
Unemployed.....	871	884	820	860
Looking for full-time work.....	693	703	646	698
Looking for part-time work.....	178	181	174	162
Unemployment rate.....	21.7	22.1	20.1	18.5
Not in labor force.....	2,738	3,133	3,525	3,506

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 2011-2012

[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 2011	July 2012	July 2011	July 2012	July 2011	July 2012	July 2011	July 2012	July 2011	July 2012
Total employed.....	18,632	19,461	15,367	15,498	1,996	2,323	638	718	3,260	3,799
Agriculture and related industries.....	382	419	369	392	4	4	0	1	121	90
Nonagricultural industries.....	18,251	19,043	14,998	15,106	1,992	2,319	638	717	3,139	3,709
Private wage and salary workers ¹	16,472	17,318	13,575	13,724	1,773	2,129	589	663	2,899	3,421
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction.....	76	128	63	119	0	3	5	2	18	25
Construction.....	744	771	684	697	29	30	1	13	265	265
Manufacturing.....	1,106	1,278	896	1,047	116	121	58	51	192	292
Durable goods.....	688	776	590	640	49	66	35	37	99	126
Nondurable goods.....	418	502	306	407	67	56	24	14	93	166
Wholesale trade.....	342	319	278	296	47	12	14	5	112	92
Retail trade.....	3,869	3,772	3,104	2,856	502	599	153	136	662	636
Transportation and utilities.....	360	440	284	362	66	41	4	19	75	102
Information.....	329	340	271	257	22	50	21	15	47	51
Financial activities.....	716	696	595	576	66	52	36	40	117	135
Professional and business services....	1,326	1,380	1,071	1,077	141	186	69	56	262	329
Education and health services.....	1,936	2,231	1,520	1,658	285	318	75	134	246	376
Leisure and hospitality.....	4,770	5,092	4,016	4,053	456	627	127	177	763	995
Other services.....	898	870	795	726	42	89	27	15	138	124
Government wage and salary workers. ...	1,382	1,298	1,072	1,028	190	150	43	46	170	216
Federal.....	190	166	134	131	35	27	3	7	11	32
State.....	452	370	348	270	61	30	18	26	62	45
Local.....	739	762	590	628	95	93	22	13	97	139
Self-employed, unincorporated, and unpaid family workers.....	397	427	350	354	29	41	5	8	70	71

¹ 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.