



Fewer students in work force as school age population declines

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The continuing decline in the 16- to 24-year-old population accounted for most of the half million drop in the school-age work force between October 1982 and October 1983. Sixty percent of this decrease was among students. In addition, labor force participation rates edged down among most student groups but were unchanged among out-of-school youth. Lower unemployment rates were recorded among both students and nonstudents, reflecting the strengthened economy. Not all worker groups shared in this improvement, however.¹ (See table 1.)

Students

Over a third of the high school students and over half of all college students were in the labor force, that is, working or looking for work, in October 1983. The labor force participation rate was virtually the same for female and male students at each level of school attended. This is in sharp contrast to the 1960's and early 1970's, when participation rates were as much as 11 percentage points higher among male high schoolers and 9 percentage points among male full-time college students.

Employment. About 29 percent of high school students and 40 percent of full-time college students had jobs in October 1983. Students usually work in industries requiring either irregular hours or extended schedules beyond "9 to 5," such as retail stores, restaurants (including "fast food" establishments), and financial service organizations. In October 1983, 84 percent of all employed teenage students and 71 percent of employed 20- to 24-year-old students were in the trade or services industries.

Full-time college students were employed an average of 18 hours per week compared to nearly 14 hours for high

school students. (See table 2.) Relatively few students worked full time (35 hours or more per week). Among both high school and full-time college students, the trend since 1970 has been for the working hours of women to rise while those of men have held steady, reflecting the increasing proportion of women who worked 15 to 21 hours and the decreasing proportion of men working more than 21 hours. Average hours worked by full-time college women have increased by more than 3 hours since 1967.

Among college students, paid employment is often arranged as part of a financial aid package along with scholarship grants and loans. The longitudinal study, "High School and Beyond,"² reported that 56 percent of the 1980 high school graduates who were enrolled in some form of post-secondary education used earnings to help finance their schooling.³ About one-third of all employed full-time college students worked up to 14 hours per week, and another third worked 15 to 21 hours in October 1983.

Table 2. Hours worked in nonagricultural industries by persons 16 to 24 years, enrolled in school by level of school attended, and sex, selected years, October 1967-83

[Numbers in thousands]

Hours of work and sex	High school				
	October 1967	October 1970	October 1973	October 1980	October 1983
Total at work	2,953	3,163	3,740	3,311	2,836
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1 to 14 hours	61.7	57.3	51.6	51.0	57.2
15 to 21 hours	19.8	24.0	27.3	30.5	28.6
22 to 34 hours	11.7	12.6	14.5	13.4	9.9
35 hours and over	6.7	6.1	6.6	5.1	4.3
Average hours (mean):					
Total	13.9	14.3	15.2	14.9	13.6
Men	15.5	16.0	17.0	15.8	14.3
Women	11.8	12.2	13.1	14.1	13.0
Hours of work and sex	Full-time college				
	October 1967	October 1970	October 1973	October 1980	October 1983
Total at work	1,308	1,709	1,913	2,395	2,509
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1 to 14 hours	42.7	36.2	33.4	36.5	33.8
15 to 21 hours	30.3	35.9	35.9	36.9	38.5
22 to 34 hours	16.8	16.7	18.6	17.0	18.2
35 hours and over	10.2	11.2	12.2	9.6	9.5
Average hours (mean):					
Total	17.2	18.2	18.9	17.8	18.2
Men	19.6	20.6	21.4	19.7	19.6
Women	14.3	15.6	16.9	17.4	17.6

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Out-of-school youth

The labor force activity of 16- to 24-year-old men and women who were no longer in school varied much more than among students. Women were less likely than men to be in the labor force at every level of completed education, with the difference narrowing as years of schooling increased. (See table 1.) Among high school dropouts, the labor force participation rate of women was 35 percentage points lower than that of men. Family responsibilities accounted for a large part of the difference; about half of the female dropouts were or had been married as of October 1983. However, male dropouts were more likely than women to have left school for job-related reasons or to support their family.⁴ At the other end of the educational spectrum, the

difference in participation rates between male and female college graduates differed by only about 4 percentage points.

Except for high school dropouts, unemployment rates were generally about the same for men and women who were no longer in school and had completed the same years of schooling. Among persons with 4 years of high school or more, male and female unemployment rates have differed by only 1 or 2 percentage points since the mid-1970's. Among the dropouts, women's unemployment rates have historically been 5 to 8 percentage points higher than those of men. By October 1982, the difference had narrowed, in part, because of the recession-related increase in unemployment among men. In October 1983, the difference remained small, but the unemployment rate for women was once again significantly higher as the unemployment rate

Table 1. Employment status of persons 16 to 24 years by school enrollment status, years of school completed, and sex, October, 1982-83

[Numbers in thousands]

Characteristic	Civilian noninstitutional population		Civilian labor force		Participation rate		Unemployed		Unemployment rate	
	1982	1983	1982	1983	1982	1983	1982	1983	1982	1983
Total, 16 to 24 years	36,452	35,884	24,076	23,557	66.0	65.6	4,331	3,704	18.0	15.7
Enrolled										
Total, 16 to 24 years	15,624	15,357	7,194	6,883	46.0	44.8	1,202	1,053	16.7	15.5
16 to 19 years	10,725	10,637	4,398	4,233	41.0	39.8	916	798	20.8	18.9
20 to 24 years	4,897	4,720	2,796	2,650	57.1	56.1	286	255	10.2	9.6
High school	7,701	7,628	2,970	2,802	38.6	36.7	707	621	23.8	22.2
College	7,923	7,728	4,222	4,080	53.3	52.8	496	433	11.7	10.6
Full-time students	6,546	6,453	2,992	2,955	45.7	45.8	381	350	12.7	11.8
Part-time students	1,377	1,275	1,230	1,125	89.3	88.2	115	83	9.3	7.4
Men, 16 to 24 years	7,991	7,942	3,628	3,563	45.4	44.9	674	568	18.6	15.9
16 to 19 years	5,457	5,360	2,211	2,127	40.5	39.7	493	422	22.3	19.8
20 to 24 years	2,534	2,582	1,417	1,436	55.9	55.6	180	146	12.7	10.2
High school	4,045	4,016	1,589	1,490	39.3	37.1	417	344	26.2	23.1
College	3,945	3,925	2,038	2,070	51.7	52.7	258	223	12.7	10.9
Full-time students	3,336	3,294	1,481	1,500	44.9	45.5	186	182	12.6	12.3
Part-time students	609	631	557	570	91.5	90.3	72	41	12.9	7.2
Women, 16 to 24 years	7,633	7,415	3,566	3,320	46.7	44.8	528	485	14.8	14.6
16 to 19 years	5,270	5,277	2,187	2,106	41.5	39.9	423	376	19.3	17.9
20 to 24 years	2,363	2,138	1,379	1,214	58.4	56.8	105	109	7.6	9.0
High school	3,656	3,612	1,381	1,312	37.8	36.3	290	277	21.0	21.1
College	3,978	3,803	2,184	2,010	54.9	52.9	238	210	10.9	10.4
Full-time students	3,210	3,159	1,511	1,455	47.1	46.1	195	168	12.9	11.5
Part-time students	768	644	673	555	87.6	86.2	43	42	6.4	7.6
Not enrolled										
Total, 16 to 24 years	20,828	20,527	16,882	16,674	81.1	81.2	3,129	2,651	18.5	15.9
16 to 19 years	4,901	4,486	3,709	3,387	75.7	75.5	1,009	829	27.2	24.5
20 to 24 years	15,926	16,041	13,173	13,286	82.7	82.8	2,120	1,822	16.1	13.7
Men, 16 to 24 years	9,947	9,770	9,056	8,878	91.0	90.9	1,742	1,462	19.2	16.5
16 to 19 years	2,359	2,226	1,971	1,855	83.6	83.3	542	448	27.5	24.2
20 to 24 years	7,588	7,544	7,086	7,023	93.4	93.1	1,200	1,014	16.9	14.4
Less than 4 years of high school	2,600	2,631	2,193	2,182	84.3	82.9	684	572	31.2	26.2
16 to 19 years	981	882	765	662	78.0	75.1	297	216	38.8	32.6
20 to 24 years	1,620	1,749	1,428	1,520	88.1	86.9	387	356	27.1	23.4
4 years of high school	5,313	5,232	4,915	4,856	92.5	92.8	851	730	17.3	15.0
1 to 3 years of college	1,333	1,259	1,262	1,201	94.7	95.4	148	121	11.7	10.1
4 years of college or more	701	648	687	638	98.0	98.5	58	38	8.4	6.0
Women, 16 to 24 years	10,881	10,757	7,826	7,795	71.9	72.5	1,387	1,189	17.7	15.3
16 to 24 years	2,543	2,260	1,739	1,532	68.4	67.8	466	381	26.8	24.9
20 to 24 years	8,338	8,497	6,087	6,263	73.0	73.7	921	808	15.1	12.9
Less than 4 years of high school	2,455	2,275	1,159	1,082	47.2	47.6	382	319	33.0	29.5
16 to 19 years	910	745	442	335	48.6	45.0	172	110	38.9	32.8
20 to 24 years	1,545	1,530	719	747	46.5	48.8	212	209	29.5	28.0
4 years of high school	5,903	5,803	4,464	4,342	75.6	74.8	769	671	17.2	15.5
1 to 3 years of college	1,691	1,726	1,428	1,468	84.4	85.1	160	131	11.2	8.9
4 years of college or more	833	955	775	904	93.0	94.7	76	70	9.8	7.7

NOTE: Because of rounding, sums of individual items may not equal totals.

for men declined more during recovery.

White, black, and Hispanic youth

Labor force participation was about unchanged over the year among white and black youth for both students and nonstudents. (See table 3.) Black youth, however, continued to be less than half as likely as whites to be in the labor force while in high school, and substantial differences also persisted by race among college students and out-of-school youth at all educational attainment levels. Participation rates for black high school students and high school graduates have been declining for several years. Among black high school students, for example, the participation rate slipped from 25 percent in October 1978 and 1979 to 16 percent in October 1983 and declined from 78 to 72 percent over the same period for black high school graduates. On the other hand, the participation rates for black college students and those out of school with some college education have been fairly stable.

Labor force participation rates of Hispanic students were also about unchanged over the year and remained between those of black and white youth. Relatively more Hispanic than white students in the labor force were enrolled at the high school level, perhaps reflecting slower progress in school for those who lacked a facility with English and/or were poorly prepared. Some 38 percent of the Hispanic high school students were age 18 or older, compared to 17 percent of the white high schoolers. Among youth no longer in school, Hispanics were twice as likely as whites to have left school before graduating from high school, reflecting,

Table 3. Labor force participation and unemployment rates of persons 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, race, and Hispanic origin, October 1982-83

Enrollment status	White		Black		Hispanic origin	
	1982	1983	1982	1983	1982	1983
Enrolled						
Labor force participation rate	49.2	48.4	28.7	25.6	34.6	35.6
High school students	43.0	41.6	18.6	16.1	23.5	25.9
College students	54.8	54.6	44.4	41.1	53.8	52.2
Unemployment rate	14.7	13.5	36.7	35.6	22.4	16.8
High school students	21.2	19.4	52.7	56.4	36.6	18.8
College students	10.2	9.4	26.6	22.3	12.7	15.7
Not enrolled						
Labor force participation rate	82.7	83.4	72.2	69.4	71.3	72.9
Less than 4 years of high school	68.2	68.9	59.3	57.3	65.0	66.3
4 years of high school only	85.2	85.5	74.7	71.7	76.0	77.2
College: 1 to 3 years	89.3	90.4	88.2	82.6	79.6	81.8
4 years or more	95.4	96.5	(¹)	90.7	(¹)	(¹)
Unemployment rate	15.7	12.8	38.6	37.3	21.4	17.7
Less than 4 years of high school	27.8	23.5	52.9	48.0	24.7	22.0
4 years of high school only	14.6	11.9	35.7	37.5	19.9	17.5
College: 1 to 3 years	8.9	7.3	28.4	23.8	15.2	3.4
4 years or more	8.6	5.9	(¹)	23.1	(¹)	(¹)

¹Data not shown where base is less than 75,000.

Table 4. School enrollment and labor force status of 1983 high school graduates and 1982-83 school dropouts 16 to 24 years, by sex, race, and Hispanic origin, October 1982-83

Characteristic	October 1982			October 1983		
	Civilian noninstitutional population	Participation rate	Unemployment rate	Civilian noninstitutional population	Participation rate	Unemployment rate
Total recent high school graduates ¹	3,100	63.0	22.5	2,964	63.6	22.3
Men	1,508	64.7	21.2	1,390	67.5	22.6
Women	1,592	61.3	23.9	1,574	60.2	22.0
White	2,644	64.5	19.0	2,496	64.6	7.7
Black	384	54.9	53.0	392	57.4	49.6
Hispanic origin	174	57.0	34.3	138	63.8	21.6
Enrolled in college	1,568	44.3	15.7	1,562	44.9	17.0
Men	739	42.8	14.6	721	47.7	17.4
Women	829	45.7	16.6	841	42.6	16.5
Full-time students	1,419	40.6	16.3	1,416	41.5	16.0
Part-time students	149	79.2	12.7	146	78.8	21.7
White	1,376	46.1	15.0	1,372	46.7	15.6
Black	140	30.0	(²)	151	27.8	(²)
Hispanic origin	75	33.3	(²)	75	34.7	(²)
Not enrolled in college	1,532	82.0	26.3	1,402	84.5	25.5
Men	769	85.8	24.4	669	88.8	25.6
Women	763	78.2	28.5	733	80.5	25.4
White	1,268	84.6	21.4	1,124	86.4	19.2
Black	244	69.3	58.0	241	75.9	54.1
Hispanic origin	99	74.7	(²)	63	(²)	(²)
Total recent school dropouts ¹	668	63.0	41.6	597	63.1	31.6
Men	355	76.6	43.4	329	75.4	32.7
Women	313	47.6	38.3	268	48.1	29.5
Single	216	50.5	38.5	208	50.0	33.7
Other marital status	96	41.7	(²)	60	(²)	(²)
White	513	67.1	36.0	445	63.8	25.7
Black	135	51.9	(²)	124	57.3	(²)
Hispanic origin	73	(²)	(²)	79	67.1	(²)

¹Data refer to persons who graduated from high school or dropped out of school between October 1981-82 or October 1982-83.

²Percent not shown where base is less than 75,000.

Note: Detail for the above race and Hispanic-origin groups will not sum to totals because data for the "other races" group are not presented and Hispanics are included in both the white and black population groups.

in part, the need to help support their families as well as lack of opportunity for some of the immigrants among them to have attended school in their native country.

Unemployment rates dropped somewhat over the year among most groups of white students, and much larger declines took place among those no longer in school. For the latter group, the unemployment rates of 5.9 percent for college graduates, 11.9 for high school graduates, and 23.5 for high school dropouts were 2 to 4 percentage points lower than in 1982. By contrast, unemployment rates among black youth, both in and out of school, were nearly three times

as high as for whites and showed relatively little response to improved economic conditions. For Hispanic youth, jobless rates declined substantially among high school students and those no longer in school. However, the unemployment rate for out-of-school Hispanic youth remained almost 5 percentage points higher than for white youth.

Recent high school graduates and dropouts

Although there were fewer high school graduates in 1983 than in 1982, about the same number went on to college in both years. (See table 4.) Thus, college enrollment levels remained unchanged, as a somewhat higher entry rate offset the declining school-age population. Black high school graduates continued to be less likely to enter college than white or Hispanic graduates.

Nearly 85 percent of recent high school graduates not enrolled in college were in the labor force in October 1983. This was somewhat higher than in October 1982, but, in contrast to the situation among the total out-of-school youth group, the unemployment rate for recent graduates was virtually unchanged. As among all 16- to 24-year-olds with a high school diploma, lower proportions of black and Hispanic recent graduates were in the labor force compared with whites.

The number of recent high school dropouts declined over the year, reflecting the decrease in the teenage population. In both 1982 and 1983, recent school leavers accounted for about 3 percent of all 16- to 24-year-olds no longer in school, down from 4 percent during the peak years of the baby boom. While about the same proportion of dropouts as a year earlier were in the labor force, unemployment rates for this group decreased by about 10 percentage points for both men and women. □

—FOOTNOTES—

¹Data in this report are based primarily on supplementary questions in the October 1983 Current Population Survey (CPS), conducted and tabulated for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the Bureau of the Census. Most data relate to persons 16 to 24 years of age in the civilian noninstitutional population in the week ending Oct. 15, 1983.

Sampling variability may be relatively large in cases where the numbers are small. Small estimates, or small differences between estimates, should be interpreted with caution. For the most recent report in this series, see Anne McDougall Young, "Youth labor force marked turning point in 1982," *Monthly Labor Review*, August 1983, pp. 29-32, reprinted with additional tabular data and explanatory notes as Bulletin 2192 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, December 1983).

²High School and Beyond (HS&B) is a national longitudinal study of high school students being conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

³*Packaging of Grants, Loans, and Earnings for Financing Postsecondary Education*, Bulletin 83-2206 (National Center for Education Statistics, February 1984).

⁴Samuel S. Peng, *High School Dropouts: Descriptive Information from High School and Beyond*, Bulletin 83-221b (National Center for Education Statistics, November 1983.)

Auto industry experiments with the Guaranteed Income Stream

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The Nation's recent experience with high unemployment and occupational dislocation has renewed the interest of workers and their unions in improving employment security through the collective bargaining process. William M. Davis notes, for example, that employment security was the most important topic in the 1983 round of national negotiations,¹ and results of a 1982 survey by D. Quinn Mills also suggest that concern with unemployment has been a major influence shaping current union bargaining positions.²

A number of innovative arrangements to improve employment security have come out of recent contract negotiations. Of these, perhaps the most interesting and important are the Guaranteed Income Stream (GIS) plans introduced in the auto industry. These plans address the growing problem of structural unemployment by providing a novel form of income protection for workers, and financial incentives for firms to avoid long-term layoffs and to find alternative employment for workers who are laid off.

GIS versus other plans

There are two basic ways to ensure employment security. The first, and most straightforward, is to guarantee jobs directly, as in the case of contractual manning levels. In practice, these guarantees are difficult for workers to secure because they pose considerable risk to firms facing uncertain product markets. According to a June 1982 *Business Week* poll, only 2 percent of the firms surveyed were willing to provide explicit employment guarantees even in return for union concessions on other issues.³ The most noteworthy of such agreements, the lifetime employment experiment introduced in the auto industry in 1982, covers relatively few workers in a small number of plants, giving rise to the possibility that these jobs will be guaranteed at the expense of employment and production opportunities at noncovered automaking facilities.

The second and more common method for addressing the problem of unemployment is through income maintenance plans. These protect workers' income from employment adjustments and provide financial incentives for firms to minimize layoffs. The most important of these are supplemental unemployment benefit plans (SUBS), which are a contractual form of unemployment insurance with perfect experience rating—each employer bears the total cost of unemployment benefits for its workers.⁴ (State-sponsored plans, in contrast, involve cross-subsidization because an

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