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USDL 07-1284

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For release: 10:00 A.M. EDT
Friday, August 24, 2007

EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH—SUMMER 2007

From April to July 2007, the number of employed youth 16 to 24 years old increased by 2.3 million to 21.7 million, the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor reported today. July is the traditional summertime peak for youth employment. This summer's increase in youth employment was slightly lower than last year's 2.5 million increase. Unemployment among youth increased by 548,000 between April and July, a smaller rise than in 2006. (Because this analysis focuses on the seasonal changes in youth employment and unemployment that occur every 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 take or search for 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 to a total of 24.3 million in July. (See table 1.)

The labor force participation rate for youth—the proportion of their population working or looking for work—was 65.0 percent in July 2007, down from 66.7 percent in July 2006 and about 13 percentage points below its peak for that month in 1989 (77.5 percent). Over the 1989-2007 period, the proportion of youth enrolled in school in July trended up; youth enrolled in school are much less likely than those not in school to be in the labor force.

The July 2007 labor force participation rates for 16- to 24-year-old men (67.9 percent) and women (62.1 percent) were lower than a year earlier. For several decades prior to 1989, young men's July labor force participation rate showed no clear trend, ranging from 81 to 86 percent. Since July 1989, however, their participation rate has declined by about 15 percentage points. Young women's July labor force participation rate peaked in 1989 after a long-term upward trend; their rate has fallen by about 10 percentage points since then.

The July participation rates for whites (68.0 percent), blacks (54.1 percent), and Hispanics (59.5 percent) declined over the year. For all three groups, labor force participation rates were more than 10 percentage points lower than their peak levels for July 1989. The participation rate for Asian youth in July 2007 (49.4 percent) was not much different from July 2006. (See table 2.)

Employment

In July 2007, 21.7 million 16- to 24-year-olds were employed. The employment-population ratio for youth—the proportion of the 16- to 24-year-old civilian noninstitutional population that was employed—was

58.0 percent, 1.2 percentage points lower than in July 2006. The ratio has fallen by about 11 percentage points since its peak in July 1989. The July 2007 employment-population ratios for young men (60.3 percent), whites (61.7 percent), and Hispanics (52.5 percent) were lower than a year earlier; the rates for young women (55.6 percent), blacks (43.0 percent), and Asians (45.6 percent) were little changed. (See table 2.)

In July 2007, 22 percent of employed youth worked in the leisure and hospitality industry (which includes food services) and 20 percent worked in retail trade. In addition, nearly two-fifths of employed youth worked in education and health services, professional and business services, government, construction, and manufacturing combined. (See table 3.)

Unemployment

In July 2007, 2.6 million youth were unemployed. The youth unemployment rate (10.8 percent) was little different from July 2006. The July 2007 unemployment rates for young men (11.1 percent), women (10.4 percent), whites (9.3 percent), Asians (7.7 percent), and Hispanics (11.8 percent) showed little change from a year earlier. The rate for black youth (20.5 percent) decreased over the year. (See table 2.)

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a national sample survey of 60,000 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 2007, data reflect revised population controls used in the CPS. For a discussion of the introduction of the revised population controls and the impact that their introduction had on the CPS data, see “Adjustments to Household Survey Population Estimates in January 2007” in the February 2007 issue of *Employment and Earnings*, available at <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cps07adj.pdf> on the BLS Web site.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone: 1-800-877-8339.

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.

For a full discussion of the reliability of data from the CPS and information on estimating standard errors, see the

“Explanatory Notes and Estimates of Error” section of *Employment and Earnings*.

Definitions

The principal definitions used in this release are described briefly below.

Employed persons are (a) all those who, during the survey reference week, did any work at all as paid employees, worked in their own business, profession, or on their own farm, or who worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in a family-operated enterprise; and (b) all those who did not work but had jobs or businesses from which they were temporarily absent due to illness, bad weather, vacation, child-care problems, labor disputes or personal reasons, whether or not they were paid by their employers for the time off and whether or not they were seeking other jobs.

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. In terms of class-of-worker categories, wage and salary workers are those who receive wages, salaries, commissions, tips, or pay-in-kind from a private employer or from a government unit; self-employed persons are those who work for profit or fees in their own business, profession, or trade, or operate a farm; and unpaid family workers are persons working without pay for 15 hours a week or more in an enterprise operated by a member of their family.

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 2007

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	April	May	June	July	April-July changes ¹	
					Number	Percent
TOTAL						
Civilian noninstitutional population	37,349	37,379	37,410	37,443	94	.3
Civilian labor force	21,442	21,659	23,981	24,339	2,897	13.5
Participation rate	57.4	57.9	64.1	65.0	7.6	13.2
Employed	19,368	19,457	21,098	21,717	2,349	12.1
Employment-population ratio	51.9	52.1	56.4	58.0	6.1	11.8
Unemployed	2,074	2,203	2,883	2,622	548	26.4
Looking for full-time work	1,377	1,546	2,136	1,892	516	37.4
Looking for part-time work	698	656	746	730	32	4.6
Unemployment rate	9.7	10.2	12.0	10.8	1.1	11.4
Not in labor force	15,907	15,720	13,429	13,104	-2,803	-17.6
Men						
Civilian noninstitutional population	18,882	18,896	18,910	18,926	43	.2
Civilian labor force	11,274	11,458	12,686	12,845	1,571	13.9
Participation rate	59.7	60.6	67.1	67.9	8.2	13.7
Employed	10,080	10,157	11,020	11,421	1,341	13.3
Employment-population ratio	53.4	53.7	58.3	60.3	7.0	13.0
Unemployed	1,194	1,302	1,666	1,424	230	19.3
Looking for full-time work	822	980	1,266	1,059	237	28.8
Looking for part-time work	372	322	400	365	-7	-1.9
Unemployment rate	10.6	11.4	13.1	11.1	.5	4.7
Not in labor force	7,609	7,438	6,224	6,081	-1,528	-20.1
Women						
Civilian noninstitutional population	18,467	18,483	18,500	18,517	50	.3
Civilian labor force	10,168	10,201	11,294	11,494	1,326	13.0
Participation rate	55.1	55.2	61.1	62.1	7.0	12.7
Employed	9,288	9,300	10,078	10,296	1,008	10.9
Employment-population ratio	50.3	50.3	54.5	55.6	5.3	10.6
Unemployed	880	901	1,216	1,198	318	36.1
Looking for full-time work	555	566	870	833	279	50.2
Looking for part-time work	326	335	346	365	39	12.0
Unemployment rate	8.7	8.8	10.8	10.4	1.8	20.4
Not in labor force	8,298	8,282	7,205	7,023	-1,275	-15.4
White						
Civilian noninstitutional population	28,957	28,974	28,992	29,012	55	.2
Civilian labor force	17,360	17,540	19,405	19,734	2,374	13.7
Participation rate	60.0	60.5	66.9	68.0	8.1	13.5
Employed	15,928	15,942	17,363	17,899	1,972	12.4
Employment-population ratio	55.0	55.0	59.9	61.7	6.7	12.2
Unemployed	1,433	1,598	2,043	1,835	403	28.1
Looking for full-time work	930	1,071	1,495	1,304	373	40.1
Looking for part-time work	502	526	548	531	29	5.8
Unemployment rate	8.3	9.1	10.5	9.3	1.0	12.7
Not in labor force	11,597	11,434	9,587	9,278	-2,319	-20.0
Black or African American						
Civilian noninstitutional population	5,512	5,521	5,530	5,539	26	.5
Civilian labor force	2,649	2,713	3,057	2,998	349	13.2
Participation rate	48.1	49.1	55.3	54.1	6.1	12.6
Employed	2,155	2,239	2,356	2,382	227	10.5
Employment-population ratio	39.1	40.6	42.6	43.0	3.9	10.0
Unemployed	494	474	701	616	122	24.7
Looking for full-time work	341	380	551	488	147	43.1
Looking for part-time work	153	94	150	128	-25	-16.3
Unemployment rate	18.7	17.5	22.9	20.5	1.9	10.2
Not in labor force	2,864	2,808	2,473	2,541	-323	-11.3

See footnotes at end of table.

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 2007 — 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 ¹	
					Number	Percent
Asian						
Civilian noninstitutional population	1,534	1,548	1,526	1,511	-23	-1.5
Civilian labor force	688	627	707	747	59	8.6
Participation rate	44.8	40.5	46.3	49.4	4.6	10.2
Employed	644	585	646	689	45	7.0
Employment-population ratio	42.0	37.8	42.3	45.6	3.6	8.6
Unemployed	44	41	61	58	14	32.0
Looking for full-time work	29	27	43	32	3	11.3
Looking for part-time work	15	14	18	26	11	72.1
Unemployment rate	6.3	6.6	8.7	7.7	1.4	21.5
Not in labor force	846	921	819	764	-82	-9.7
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity						
Civilian noninstitutional population	6,560	6,572	6,584	6,597	37	.6
Civilian labor force	3,776	3,722	3,881	3,928	152	4.0
Participation rate	57.6	56.6	58.9	59.5	2.0	3.5
Employed	3,397	3,327	3,423	3,465	68	2.0
Employment-population ratio	51.8	50.6	52.0	52.5	.7	1.4
Unemployed	379	394	458	464	84	22.3
Looking for full-time work	275	274	351	341	65	23.8
Looking for part-time work	104	120	107	123	19	18.4
Unemployment rate	10.0	10.6	11.8	11.8	1.8	17.5
Not in labor force	2,785	2,851	2,703	2,669	-116	-4.2

¹ Changes are calculated using unrounded data.

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 2004-2007

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	2004	2005	2006	2007
TOTAL				
Civilian noninstitutional population	36,415	36,681	36,989	37,443
Civilian labor force	24,465	24,436	24,664	24,339
Participation rate	67.2	66.6	66.7	65.0
Employed	21,447	21,749	21,914	21,717
Employment-population ratio	58.9	59.3	59.2	58.0
Unemployed	3,018	2,688	2,750	2,622
Looking for full-time work	2,212	1,916	2,028	1,892
Looking for part-time work	806	771	722	730
Unemployment rate	12.3	11.0	11.2	10.8
Not in labor force	11,950	12,244	12,324	13,104
Men				
Civilian noninstitutional population	18,356	18,501	18,675	18,926
Civilian labor force	12,925	12,871	13,024	12,845
Participation rate	70.4	69.6	69.7	67.9
Employed	11,373	11,393	11,568	11,421
Employment-population ratio	62.0	61.6	61.9	60.3
Unemployed	1,552	1,478	1,456	1,424
Looking for full-time work	1,176	1,077	1,152	1,059
Looking for part-time work	377	401	303	365
Unemployment rate	12.0	11.5	11.2	11.1
Not in labor force	5,431	5,630	5,651	6,081
Women				
Civilian noninstitutional population	18,059	18,180	18,314	18,517
Civilian labor force	11,540	11,566	11,641	11,494
Participation rate	63.9	63.6	63.6	62.1
Employed	10,074	10,356	10,346	10,296
Employment-population ratio	55.8	57.0	56.5	55.6
Unemployed	1,465	1,209	1,295	1,198
Looking for full-time work	1,036	839	876	833
Looking for part-time work	429	370	419	365
Unemployment rate	12.7	10.5	11.1	10.4
Not in labor force	6,519	6,614	6,673	7,023
White				
Civilian noninstitutional population	28,410	28,566	28,736	29,012
Civilian labor force	19,859	19,712	20,002	19,734
Participation rate	69.9	69.0	69.6	68.0
Employed	17,848	17,944	18,193	17,899
Employment-population ratio	62.8	62.8	63.3	61.7
Unemployed	2,011	1,768	1,808	1,835
Looking for full-time work	1,406	1,234	1,289	1,304
Looking for part-time work	605	533	520	531
Unemployment rate	10.1	9.0	9.0	9.3
Not in labor force	8,551	8,854	8,735	9,278
Black or African American				
Civilian noninstitutional population	5,245	5,317	5,426	5,539
Civilian labor force	3,029	3,097	3,133	2,998
Participation rate	57.7	58.3	57.7	54.1
Employed	2,224	2,378	2,361	2,382
Employment-population ratio	42.4	44.7	43.5	43.0
Unemployed	804	719	772	616
Looking for full-time work	666	544	617	488
Looking for part-time work	138	176	155	128
Unemployment rate	26.6	23.2	24.7	20.5
Not in labor force	2,216	2,220	2,293	2,541

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population 16 to 24 years of age by sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, July 2004-2007 — Continued

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Employment status, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	2004	2005	2006	2007
Asian				
Civilian noninstitutional population	1,503	1,497	1,474	1,511
Civilian labor force	786	794	687	747
Participation rate	52.3	53.1	46.6	49.4
Employed	719	699	631	689
Employment-population ratio	47.8	46.7	42.8	45.6
Unemployed	68	95	56	58
Looking for full-time work	46	58	33	32
Looking for part-time work	22	38	23	26
Unemployment rate	8.6	12.0	8.2	7.7
Not in labor force	716	702	787	764
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity				
Civilian noninstitutional population	6,275	6,335	6,406	6,597
Civilian labor force	3,926	3,800	3,943	3,928
Participation rate	62.6	60.0	61.5	59.5
Employed	3,428	3,428	3,534	3,465
Employment-population ratio	54.6	54.1	55.2	52.5
Unemployed	498	372	409	464
Looking for full-time work	373	292	287	341
Looking for part-time work	125	80	122	123
Unemployment rate	12.7	9.8	10.4	11.8
Not in labor force	2,349	2,536	2,463	2,669

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 2006-2007

(Numbers in thousands. Data are not seasonally adjusted.)

Industry and class of worker	Total		White		Black or African American		Asian		Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
Total employed	21,914	21,717	18,193	17,899	2,361	2,382	631	689	3,534	3,465
Agriculture and related industries	411	345	395	326	9	4	—	6	116	97
Nonagricultural industries	21,503	21,372	17,798	17,574	2,352	2,377	631	683	3,418	3,368
Private wage and salary workers	19,513	19,375	16,218	15,975	2,086	2,107	580	625	3,146	3,070
Mining	67	97	62	91	—	4	1	—	20	10
Construction	1,704	1,558	1,558	1,439	100	56	8	5	512	477
Manufacturing	1,392	1,398	1,173	1,145	142	154	26	71	302	224
Durable goods	862	818	729	655	72	94	24	47	153	71
Nondurable goods	530	580	444	491	70	61	2	23	149	153
Wholesale trade	371	442	335	408	19	26	3	0	73	107
Retail trade	4,548	4,242	3,678	3,456	565	505	156	132	562	589
Transportation and utilities	440	479	347	380	75	71	6	14	71	90
Information	410	384	316	289	63	49	14	19	42	54
Financial activities	959	980	740	784	129	108	51	57	114	171
Professional and business services	1,489	1,672	1,250	1,355	161	208	35	62	268	259
Education and health services	2,098	2,238	1,611	1,749	311	353	92	69	216	308
Leisure and hospitality	4,909	4,710	4,130	3,861	474	490	155	173	785	612
Other services	1,127	1,174	1,018	1,019	48	82	32	23	181	168
Government	1,516	1,607	1,179	1,267	232	234	41	50	192	196
Federal	198	171	133	127	43	25	6	13	25	16
State	462	505	354	378	60	86	20	21	49	67
Local	856	930	693	763	129	123	14	16	118	113
Self-employed and unpaid family workers	474	390	401	332	34	36	11	9	81	102

— Dash represents or rounds to zero.

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.