

A Profile of the Working Poor, 1998



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About 34.5 million people, or 12.7 percent of the population, lived at or below the official poverty level in 1998—1.1 million fewer than in 1997. Although the Nation's poor were primarily children and adults who did not participate in the labor force, about 7.2 million persons were classified as the "working poor." This was nearly 300,000 fewer than in 1997. The working poor are individuals who spent at least 27 weeks in the labor force (working or looking for work), but whose family or personal incomes fell below the official poverty level. The poverty rate—defined in this report as the ratio of the working poor to persons in the labor force for at least 27 weeks—fell 0.3 percentage point to 5.4 percent in 1998. (See tables A and 1.)

Full-time work substantially lowers a person's probability of being poor. Among persons in the labor force for 27 weeks or more, the poverty rate for those usually employed full time was 4.1 percent, compared with 10.6 percent for part-time workers. Nevertheless, the majority of the working poor—63.3 percent—were full-time workers. Only a very small proportion of the working poor (5.1 percent) actively sought a job for more than 6 months in 1998 without finding any work. This was down from 6.8 percent in 1997.

This report presents data on the relationships between labor force activity and poverty in 1998 for individual workers and their families. The data were collected in the work experience and income supplement to the March 1999 Current Population Survey (CPS). For a more detailed description of the source of the data and an explanation of the concepts and definitions used in this report, see the technical note.

The earnings thresholds that are established to determine poverty status are in terms of family earnings, rather than personal earnings, if related individuals reside in the household. Thus, earnings from an individual's employment are only one factor in that person's poverty status; if the individual lives with family, then the earnings of others in the family and the presence of dependents also are important.

Demographic characteristics

Among those who were in the labor force for 27 weeks or more in 1998, the proportion of women classified as working

poor (6.3 percent) was much higher than that of men (4.7 percent). The rate for women had been as high as 7.3 percent as recently as 1993. The rate for men continued its steady decline from a high of 6.2 percent in 1993. (See table 2.)

Working wives were less likely than working husbands to be poor (in aggregate) because working wives were more likely to be in families with a second earner. In 1998, about 2.0 percent of married women who were in the labor force for 27 weeks or more were in poverty, compared with 3.7 percent of married men. In contrast, 20.4 percent of women who maintained families and who were in the labor force for at least 6 months were in poverty. Part of the explanation for the very high poverty rate among women who maintain families is that they are less likely to be in households in which another family member is an earner. (See "Family structure," below.)

Among those who were in the labor force for 6 months or more in 1998, 4.7 percent of whites were classified as working poor, compared with 10.8 percent of blacks and 12.5 percent of Hispanics. The chances of being among the working poor decline substantially with age, in part because earnings are higher and unemployment is lower among older workers than among younger ones. The poverty rate for teenagers who were in the labor force for 27 weeks or more fell substantially, from 11.6 percent in 1997 to 8.6 percent in 1998. The decline was due in part to a nearly 9-percentage-point drop in the rate for black teens. (See table 2.)

Table A. Poverty status of persons and primary families in the labor force for 27 weeks or more, 1995-98

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	1995	1996	1997	1998
Total persons ¹	126,020	128,320	130,047	131,731
In poverty	7,484	7,421	7,453	7,158
Poverty rate	5.9	5.8	5.7	5.4
Unrelated individuals .	24,207	25,539	26,158	26,971
In poverty	2,312	2,423	2,534	2,281
Poverty rate	9.5	9.5	9.7	8.5
Primary families ²	57,262	58,087	58,815	59,621
In poverty	4,008	4,084	4,068	4,019
Poverty rate	7.0	7.0	6.9	6.7

¹ Includes persons in families, not shown separately.

² Primary families with at least one member in the labor force for more than half of the year.

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Educational attainment

Lack of education and poverty are closely related among those in the labor force for at least half of the year. In 1998, 14.5 percent of high school dropouts were among the working poor, more than double the proportion for high school graduates (6.6 percent). The poverty rates were even lower for workers with an associate degree (2.5 percent) and for college graduates (1.4 percent). At all major levels of educational attainment, the proportions among the working poor were higher for women and blacks than for men and whites. (See table 3.)

Occupation

Nearly 12 percent of those who were in the labor force for at least 27 weeks, and whose longest job was a service occupation, lived below the poverty line. The 2.0 million working poor in these occupations accounted for nearly 30 percent of all workers living in poverty. Within the category of service workers, private household workers, almost all of whom were women, were the most likely to be in poverty (19.4 percent). Among the other major occupation groups, workers in farming, forestry, and fishing had the highest incidence of poverty in 1998 at 16.0 percent. The lowest poverty rates were for those employed in executive, administrative, and managerial occupations and in professional specialty jobs (1.4 percent), in which high earnings and full-time employment are typical. (See table 4.)

Family structure

Among families with at least one member in the labor force for 27 weeks or more in 1998, 4.0 million, or 6.7 percent, had incomes at or below the poverty line, about the same as in 1997. The poverty threshold for families reflects both total family income and the number of family members; thus, the larger the family, the higher the level of income needed to keep the family out of poverty. This, coupled with the fact that the presence of children tends to decrease the overall labor supply of a family, creates a circumstance in which the larger the family, the more likely it is to be below the poverty line. Consequently, families with children under age 18 were much more likely to be counted as working poor families than those without children (10.2 percent and 2.1 percent, respectively).

The likelihood that a family was living below the poverty line falls dramatically if more than one member was in the labor force for at least 6 months. Only 2.2 percent of families with two labor force participants and 1.0 percent of families with three or more participants were among the working poor. In contrast, 13.6 percent of families with only one member in the labor force were in poverty. (See tables 5 and 6.)

Unrelated individuals

Unrelated individuals are persons who live either alone or with nonrelatives. Of the 27 million unrelated individuals who were in the labor force for 27 weeks or more in 1998, 2.3 million, or 8.5 percent, lived below the poverty level. This rate was down from 9.7 percent in 1997.

Two types of living situations characterize unrelated individuals: some live by themselves, while some share housing with other unrelated persons. Of those who were labor force participants for more than 6 months in 1998, those living with unrelated individuals were much more likely to be among the working poor (11.7 percent) than were those living alone (5.6 percent). It should be noted that the poverty status of unrelated individuals is determined by their personal, rather than household, incomes. To the extent that unrelated individuals with low incomes live with others in order to share expenses and pool their resources, the proportion of these workers in poverty, in terms of their standard of living, may be overstated. Conversely, many of those who live alone do so because they have sufficient incomes to support themselves. (See table 7.)

Labor market problems

As noted above, people who usually work full time—that is, 35 hours or more per week—are far less likely to live in poverty than are others. However, there remains a sizable group of full-time workers who live below the poverty threshold. There are three primary labor market problems experienced by these full-time workers: Unemployment, low earnings, and involuntary part-time employment. (See definitions in the technical note.) Among those who participated in the labor force for more than half of the year and who usually worked in full-time wage and salary jobs, 3.8 million, or 3.7 percent, were classified as working poor in 1998, little changed from the prior year. (See table 8.)

About 83 percent of the working poor who usually worked full time experienced at least one of the major labor market problems. Low earnings continued to be the most common problem; about 7 in 10 poor workers faced low earnings, either alone or in conjunction with other labor market problems. Nearly a third of the working poor experienced unemployment, alone or in conjunction with other problems. Only 1 in 20 experienced all three problems—low earnings, unemployment, and involuntary part-time employment.

Some 650,000 of these working poor, or 17.2 percent, did not experience any of the three primary labor market problems in 1998. Their poverty status may be associated with other factors, including short-term employment, some weeks of voluntary part-time work, or a family structure that increases the risk of poverty.

Technical Note

Source of data

The primary source of data in this report is the work experience and income supplement (called the Annual Demographic Survey) to the March 1999 Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly survey of about 50,000 households conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics to collect demographic, social, and economic information about persons 16 years of age and older. The work experience and income information collected in the March supplement refers to activity in the entire prior calendar year.

The estimates are based on a sample; consequently, they may differ from the figures that would have been obtained from a complete census using the same questionnaire and procedures. Sampling variability may be relatively large in cases where the numbers are small. Thus, small estimates, or small differences between estimates, should be interpreted with caution. For a detailed explanation of the March supplement to the Current Population Survey, its sampling variability, and more complete definitions than those provided below, see *Poverty in the United States: 1998—Current Population Reports*, Series P-60, No. 207 (U.S. Census Bureau, September 1999). This publication also is available on the U.S. Census Bureau website (<http://www.census.gov>).

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For more information on the data provided in this report, write to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of Labor Force Statistics, Room 4675, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20212, e-mail: cpsinfo@bls.gov or telephone (202) 691-6378.

Concepts and definitions

Poverty classification. Poverty statistics presented in this report are based on definitions developed by the Social Security Administration in 1964 and revised by Federal interagency committees in 1969 and 1981. These definitions originally were based on the Department of Agriculture's Economy Food Plan and reflected the different consumption requirements of families based on factors such as family size and the number of children under 18 years of age.

The actual poverty thresholds vary in accordance with the makeup of the family. In 1998, the average poverty threshold for a family of four was \$16,660; for a family of nine or more persons, the threshold was \$33,339; and for an unrelated individual aged 65 or older, it was \$7,818. The poverty thresholds are updated each year to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). The thresholds do not vary geographically. For more information,

see *Poverty in the United States: 1998*, cited above.

Low earnings. The low earnings level, as first developed in 1987, represented the average of the real value of the minimum wage between 1967 and 1987 for a 40-hour week. The base year of 1967 was chosen because that was the first year in which minimum-wage legislation covered essentially the same broad group of workers who currently are covered. The low earnings level has subsequently been adjusted each year using the CPI-U, so that the measure maintains the same real value that it held in 1987. In 1998, the low earnings threshold was \$239.91 per week. For a more complete definition, see Bruce W. Klein and Philip L. Rones, "A Profile of the Working Poor," *Monthly Labor Review*, October 1989, pp. 3-13.

Income. Data on income are limited to money income received in the calendar year preceding the March survey date, before personal income taxes and payroll deductions. It does not include the value of noncash benefits such as Food Stamps, medicare, medicaid, public housing, and employer-provided benefits. For a complete definition of the income concept, see *Poverty in the United States: 1998*, cited above.

In the labor force. Persons in the labor force are those who worked or looked for work sometime during the calendar year preceding the March survey date. The number of weeks in the labor force is accumulated over the entire year. The focus in this report is on persons in the labor force for 27 weeks or more.

Involuntary part-time workers. These are persons who, in at least 1 week of the year, worked fewer than 35 hours because of slack work or business conditions, or because they could not find full-time work. The number of weeks of involuntary part-time work is accumulated over the year.

Occupation. Refers to the occupation in which a person worked the most weeks during the calendar year.

Unemployed. Unemployed persons are those who looked for work while not employed or those who were on layoff from a job and expecting recall. The number of weeks unemployed is accumulated over the entire year.

Family. A family is defined as a group of two or more persons residing together who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Persons in related subfamilies—married couples or parent-child groups sharing the living quarters of another family member—are included as members of that family and are not distinct family units. The count of families used in this report does not include unrelated subfamilies, such as lodgers, guests, or resident employees living in a household but not

related to the householder (the person in whose name the housing unit is owned or rented). Families are classified either as married-couple families or as those maintained by men or women without spouses present. Family status is determined at the time of the March interview, and thus may be different from that of the previous year.

Unrelated individuals. These are persons who are not living with any relatives. Such individuals may be living alone, reside in a nonrelated family household, or live in group quarters with other unrelated individuals.

Related children. Data on related children refer to own children (including sons, daughters, and step or adopted children) of the husband, wife, or person maintaining the

family and all other children related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.

Race. White, black, and other are terms used to describe the race of workers. Included in the “other” group are American Indians, Alaskan Natives, and Asians and Pacific Islanders; because of their relatively small sample size, data for this group are not separately tabulated or published.

Hispanic origin. This term refers to persons who identify themselves in the CPS enumeration process as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or of some other Hispanic origin or descent. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race; thus, they also are included in both the white and black population groups.

Table 1. Persons in the labor force: Poverty status and work experience by weeks in the labor force, 1998

(Numbers in thousands)

Poverty status and work experience	Total in the labor force	27 weeks or more in the labor force	
		Total	50 to 52 weeks
TOTAL			
Total in labor force	146,570	131,731	117,858
Did not work during the year	1,729	726	643
Worked during the year	144,841	131,005	117,216
Usual full-time workers	115,697	109,619	101,787
Usual part-time workers	29,144	21,386	15,428
Involuntary part-time workers	4,202	3,378	2,611
Voluntary part-time workers	24,942	18,008	12,817
At or above poverty level			
Total in labor force	136,666	124,573	112,126
Did not work during the year	935	364	313
Worked during the year	135,731	124,210	111,814
Usual full-time workers	109,941	105,091	98,008
Usual part-time workers	25,790	19,118	13,806
Involuntary part-time workers	3,081	2,508	1,952
Voluntary part-time workers	22,709	16,611	11,853
Below poverty level			
Total in labor force	9,903	7,158	5,732
Did not work during the year	794	362	330
Worked during the year	9,110	6,796	5,402
Usual full-time workers	5,756	4,528	3,779
Usual part-time workers	3,354	2,268	1,623
Involuntary part-time workers	1,121	871	659
Voluntary part-time workers	2,233	1,397	964
Poverty rate¹			
Total in labor force	6.8	5.4	4.9
Did not work during the year	45.9	49.9	51.3
Worked during the year	6.3	5.2	4.6
Usual full-time workers	5.0	4.1	3.7
Usual part-time workers	11.5	10.6	10.5
Involuntary part-time workers	26.7	25.8	25.2
Voluntary part-time workers	9.0	7.8	7.5

¹ Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force.

NOTE: Data refer to persons 16 years and older. Data for 1998, which were collected in the March 1999 supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS), are not strictly comparable with data for 1997 and earlier

years because of the introduction in January 1999 of revised population controls used in the survey. For additional information, see "Revisions in the Current Population Survey Effective January 1999" in the February 1999 issue of *Employment and Earnings*.

Table 2. Persons in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: Poverty status by age, sex, race, and Hispanic origin, 1998

(Numbers in thousands)

Age and sex	Total	White	Black	Hispanic origin	Below poverty level				Poverty rate ¹			
					Total	White	Black	Hispanic origin	Total	White	Black	Hispanic origin
Total, 16 years and older	131,731	110,617	15,041	13,341	7,158	5,219	1,617	1,665	5.4	4.7	10.8	12.5
16 to 19 years	5,101	4,371	554	589	439	340	80	122	8.6	7.8	14.4	20.6
20 to 24 years	12,362	10,210	1,591	1,844	1,361	1,021	291	297	11.0	10.0	18.3	16.1
25 to 34 years	31,077	25,248	4,157	4,086	2,138	1,485	549	554	6.9	5.9	13.2	13.6
35 to 44 years	36,697	30,575	4,375	3,563	1,881	1,390	406	458	5.1	4.5	9.3	12.9
45 to 54 years	28,653	24,480	2,927	2,148	789	577	165	166	2.8	2.4	5.6	7.7
55 to 64 years	13,770	12,063	1,164	923	446	325	110	59	3.2	2.7	9.5	6.4
65 years and older	4,070	3,670	273	188	105	80	17	10	2.6	2.2	6.2	5.1
Men, 16 years and older	71,067	60,783	7,015	7,912	3,364	2,689	506	999	4.7	4.4	7.2	12.6
16 to 19 years	2,617	2,257	269	322	184	146	31	52	7.1	6.5	11.6	16.2
20 to 24 years	6,521	5,512	734	1,129	619	502	92	189	9.5	9.1	12.5	16.8
25 to 34 years	16,977	14,080	1,961	2,557	982	773	165	360	5.8	5.5	8.4	14.1
35 to 44 years	19,932	16,949	2,031	2,049	879	723	106	264	4.4	4.3	5.2	12.9
45 to 54 years	15,168	13,174	1,376	1,202	420	327	66	98	2.8	2.5	4.8	8.2
55 to 64 years	7,565	6,718	522	527	225	170	45	33	3.0	2.5	8.5	6.3
65 years and older	2,287	2,093	122	127	54	49	1	3	2.4	2.3	1.2	2.0
Women, 16 years and older	60,664	49,834	8,026	5,428	3,795	2,530	1,111	666	6.3	5.1	13.8	12.3
16 to 19 years	2,484	2,115	285	267	254	194	49	69	10.2	9.2	17.1	26.0
20 to 24 years	5,841	4,698	857	715	742	519	199	107	12.7	11.0	23.2	15.0
25 to 34 years	14,100	11,168	2,196	1,529	1,156	713	383	194	8.2	6.4	17.5	12.7
35 to 44 years	16,765	13,625	2,344	1,514	1,002	667	300	194	6.0	4.9	12.8	12.8
45 to 54 years	13,485	11,306	1,551	946	368	250	99	68	2.7	2.2	6.4	7.2
55 to 64 years	6,205	5,345	642	396	221	155	66	26	3.6	2.9	10.2	6.5
65 years and older	1,783	1,577	151	61	51	32	15	7	2.9	2.0	10.2	(²)

¹ Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force for 27 weeks or more who worked during the year.

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

NOTE: Detail for 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. Data for 1998,

which were collected in the March 1999 supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS), are not strictly comparable with data for 1997 and earlier years because of the introduction in January 1999 of revised population controls used in the survey. For additional information, see "Revisions in the Current Population Survey Effective January 1999" in the February 1999 issue of *Employment and Earnings*.

Table 3. Persons in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: Poverty status by educational attainment, race, and sex, 1998

(Numbers in thousands)

Educational attainment and race	Total	Men	Women	Below poverty level			Poverty rate ¹		
				Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Total, 16 years and older	131,731	71,067	60,664	7,158	3,364	3,795	5.4	4.7	6.3
Less than a high school diploma	16,196	9,830	6,366	2,342	1,277	1,066	14.5	13.0	16.7
Less than 1 year of high school	4,456	2,941	1,515	796	535	261	17.9	18.2	17.2
1-3 years of high school	10,098	5,830	4,268	1,330	609	721	13.2	10.4	16.9
4 years of high school, no diploma	1,642	1,059	583	216	132	83	13.1	12.5	14.3
High school graduates, no college	42,760	23,003	19,757	2,825	1,254	1,571	6.6	5.5	7.9
Some college, no degree	26,365	13,445	12,919	1,176	472	704	4.5	3.5	5.5
Associate degree	10,780	5,280	5,500	306	105	201	2.8	2.0	3.7
College graduates	35,630	19,508	16,122	509	256	253	1.4	1.3	1.6
White, 16 years and older	110,617	60,783	49,834	5,219	2,689	2,530	4.7	4.4	5.1
Less than a high school diploma	13,213	8,316	4,897	1,799	1,063	736	13.6	12.8	15.0
Less than 1 year of high school	3,835	2,589	1,246	710	485	225	18.5	18.7	18.1
1-3 years of high school	8,147	4,888	3,259	928	475	453	11.4	9.7	13.9
4 years of high school, no diploma	1,231	839	392	162	104	58	13.1	12.4	14.7
High school graduates, no college	35,705	19,435	16,270	1,965	958	1,006	5.5	4.9	6.2
Some college, no degree	21,685	11,274	10,411	829	374	455	3.8	3.3	4.4
Associate degree	9,304	4,616	4,689	221	76	145	2.4	1.6	3.1
College graduates	30,709	17,142	13,568	404	217	187	1.3	1.3	1.4
Black, 16 years and older	15,041	7,015	8,026	1,617	506	1,111	10.8	7.2	13.8
Less than a high school diploma	2,211	1,089	1,123	444	151	293	20.1	13.9	26.1
Less than 1 year of high school	367	221	145	42	17	25	11.4	7.6	17.1
1-3 years of high school	1,542	712	830	354	111	243	23.0	15.6	29.3
4 years of high school, no diploma	303	156	147	48	23	25	15.9	14.8	17.0
High school graduates, no college	5,661	2,820	2,841	769	252	517	13.6	8.9	18.2
Some college, no degree	3,578	1,598	1,980	281	63	218	7.9	3.9	11.0
Associate degree	1,020	431	590	51	12	39	5.0	2.9	6.6
College graduates	2,571	1,079	1,492	72	28	44	2.8	2.6	3.0

¹ Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force for 27 weeks or more who worked during the year.

NOTE: Data for 1998, which were collected in the March 1999 supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS), are not strictly comparable with data

for 1997 and earlier years because of the introduction in January 1999 of revised population controls used in the survey. For additional information, see "Revisions in the Current Population Survey Effective January 1999" in the February 1999 issue of *Employment and Earnings*.

Table 4. Persons in the labor force for 27 weeks or more who worked during the year: Poverty status by occupation of the longest job held, race, and sex, 1998

(Numbers in thousands)

Occupation and race	Total	Men	Women	Below poverty level			Poverty rate ¹		
				Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Total, 16 years and older ²	131,005	70,691	60,314	6,796	3,197	3,598	5.2	4.5	6.0
Managerial and professional specialty	39,094	19,729	19,364	589	276	312	1.5	1.4	1.6
Executive, administrative, and managerial	19,316	10,492	8,824	263	145	119	1.4	1.4	1.3
Professional specialty	19,778	9,237	10,541	325	132	194	1.6	1.4	1.8
Technical, sales, and administrative support	37,976	13,872	24,104	1,662	383	1,279	4.4	2.8	5.3
Technicians and related support	4,236	2,016	2,220	66	29	37	1.6	1.4	1.7
Sales occupations	15,750	8,088	7,662	949	261	688	6.0	3.2	9.0
Administrative support, including clerical	17,990	3,768	14,222	648	93	554	3.6	2.5	3.9
Service occupations	17,535	6,916	10,619	2,013	564	1,448	11.5	8.2	13.6
Private household	696	30	666	135	7	129	19.4	(³)	19.3
Protective service	2,408	1,942	466	64	25	39	2.6	1.3	8.4
Service, except private household and protective	14,431	4,944	9,488	1,814	533	1,281	12.6	10.8	13.5
Precision production, craft, and repair	14,766	13,472	1,294	660	596	64	4.5	4.4	4.9
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	18,226	13,903	4,322	1,353	962	391	7.4	6.9	9.0
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	7,621	4,869	2,752	487	266	221	6.4	5.5	8.0
Transportation and material moving occupations	5,350	4,801	549	331	278	53	6.2	5.8	9.7
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	5,255	4,234	1,021	534	418	116	10.2	9.9	11.4
Farming, forestry, and fishing	3,239	2,644	595	518	414	104	16.0	15.7	17.5
White, 16 years and older ²	110,148	60,503	49,644	5,011	2,575	2,436	4.5	4.3	4.9
Managerial and professional specialty	34,027	17,523	16,504	453	240	213	1.3	1.4	1.3
Executive, administrative, and managerial	16,981	9,473	7,509	208	131	77	1.2	1.4	1.0
Professional specialty	17,046	8,050	8,995	245	110	135	1.4	1.4	1.5
Technical, sales, and administrative support	32,068	11,842	20,226	1,176	282	894	3.7	2.4	4.4
Technicians and related support	3,540	1,716	1,824	43	28	16	1.2	1.6	.9
Sales occupations	13,565	7,116	6,449	659	192	468	4.9	2.7	7.3
Administrative support, including clerical	14,963	3,010	11,954	473	63	410	3.2	2.1	3.4
Service occupations	13,454	5,420	8,034	1,357	425	931	10.1	7.8	11.6
Private household	536	26	510	104	7	97	19.4	(³)	19.1
Protective service	1,818	1,517	301	33	16	17	1.8	1.1	5.5
Service, except private household and protective	11,100	3,877	7,223	1,220	402	817	11.0	10.4	11.3
Precision production, craft, and repair	13,029	12,003	1,025	556	510	46	4.3	4.3	4.5
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	14,466	11,188	3,278	1,014	762	252	7.0	6.8	7.7
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	6,011	3,965	2,046	355	211	144	5.9	5.3	7.0
Transportation and material moving occupations	4,343	3,900	444	250	216	34	5.8	5.5	7.7
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	4,112	3,324	788	410	335	75	10.0	10.1	9.5
Farming, forestry, and fishing	2,974	2,407	567	456	355	100	15.3	14.8	17.7
Black, 16 years and older ²	14,823	6,937	7,886	1,480	461	1,019	10.0	6.7	12.9
Managerial and professional specialty	3,011	1,121	1,890	94	21	74	3.1	1.9	3.9
Executive, administrative, and managerial	1,441	549	891	34	4	30	2.4	.7	3.4
Professional specialty	1,570	572	999	60	17	43	3.8	3.0	4.3
Technical, sales, and administrative support	4,233	1,303	2,930	405	69	336	9.6	5.3	11.5
Technicians and related support	447	197	250	16	-	16	3.7	-	6.5
Sales occupations	1,431	562	870	233	46	187	16.3	8.3	21.5
Administrative support, including clerical	2,355	545	1,810	156	23	133	6.6	4.2	7.3
Service occupations	3,286	1,159	2,127	584	101	482	17.8	8.8	22.7
Private household	128	5	123	27	-	27	21.2	-	21.9
Protective service	538	381	157	28	6	22	5.2	1.6	13.8
Service, except private household and protective	2,620	773	1,847	529	95	434	20.2	12.3	23.5
Precision production, craft, and repair	1,187	1,016	171	59	52	7	5.0	5.2	3.9
Operators, fabricators, and laborers	2,882	2,131	750	283	165	117	9.8	7.8	15.7
Machine operators, assemblers, and inspectors	1,135	634	501	107	40	67	9.4	6.3	13.3
Transportation and material moving occupations	833	749	84	73	54	19	8.7	7.2	22.5
Handlers, equipment cleaners, helpers, and laborers	913	748	165	104	72	32	11.4	9.6	19.2
Farming, forestry, and fishing	188	173	14	55	52	3	29.1	30.1	(³)

¹ Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force for 27 weeks or more who worked during the year.

² Includes a small number of persons whose last job was in the Armed Forces.

³ Data not shown where base is less than 75,000.

NOTE: Data for 1998, which were collected in the March 1999 supplement

to the Current Population Survey (CPS), are not strictly comparable with data for 1997 and earlier years because of the introduction in January 1999 of revised population controls used in the survey. For additional information, see "Revisions in the Current Population Survey Effective January 1999" in the February 1999 issue of *Employment and Earnings*. Dash represents or rounds to zero.

Table 5. Persons in families and unrelated individuals: Poverty status and work experience, 1998

(Numbers in thousands)

Poverty status and work experience	Total persons	In married-couple families				In families maintained by women			In families maintained by men			Unrelated individuals
		Husbands	Wives	Related children under 18	Other relatives	Householder	Related children under 18	Other relatives	Householder	Related children under 18	Other relatives	
TOTAL												
All persons	207,038	54,184	54,725	5,384	17,109	12,781	1,904	9,641	3,958	433	3,858	43,061
With labor force activity	146,570	43,299	36,131	2,510	12,765	9,462	785	6,553	3,225	167	2,608	29,065
1 to 26 weeks	14,838	1,566	3,810	1,484	2,815	973	520	1,027	173	100	276	2,094
27 weeks or more	131,731	41,734	32,320	1,026	9,950	8,489	264	5,526	3,052	67	2,332	26,971
With no labor force activity	60,468	10,884	18,595	2,874	4,344	3,319	1,120	3,088	733	266	1,250	13,995
At or above poverty level												
All persons	184,813	51,338	51,851	5,027	16,434	8,953	1,265	8,192	3,484	391	3,522	34,355
With labor force activity	136,666	41,565	35,162	2,412	12,482	7,084	655	5,981	2,937	157	2,479	25,753
1 to 26 weeks	12,093	1,380	3,499	1,422	2,715	330	418	825	107	91	243	1,063
27 weeks or more	124,573	40,184	31,663	990	9,766	6,754	238	5,156	2,830	65	2,237	24,690
With no labor force activity	48,147	9,773	16,689	2,615	3,952	1,869	610	2,211	547	235	1,043	8,603
Below poverty level												
All persons	22,225	2,846	2,874	357	675	3,828	639	1,449	474	42	336	8,705
With labor force activity	9,903	1,735	968	97	284	2,378	129	572	288	11	128	3,313
1 to 26 weeks	2,745	186	311	62	100	643	103	202	65	9	33	1,031
27 weeks or more	7,158	1,549	657	36	184	1,735	27	370	223	2	95	2,281
With no labor force activity	12,322	1,111	1,906	259	391	1,450	510	877	186	31	208	5,393
Poverty rate¹												
All persons	10.7	5.3	5.3	6.6	3.9	29.9	33.6	15.0	12.0	9.7	8.7	20.2
With labor force activity	6.8	4.0	2.7	3.9	2.2	25.1	16.5	8.7	8.9	6.5	4.9	11.4
1 to 26 weeks	18.5	11.9	8.2	4.1	3.6	66.1	19.7	19.7	37.7	9.2	12.0	49.2
27 weeks or more	5.4	3.7	2.0	3.5	1.8	20.4	10.1	6.7	7.3	2.6	4.1	8.5
With no labor force activity	20.4	10.2	10.2	9.0	9.0	43.7	45.5	28.4	25.4	11.7	16.6	38.5

¹ Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force.

NOTE: Data refer to persons 16 years and older. Data for 1998, which were collected in the March 1999 supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS), are not strictly comparable with data for 1997 and earlier years

because of the introduction in January 1999 of revised population controls used in the survey. For additional information, see "Revisions in the Current Population Survey Effective January 1999" in the February 1999 issue of *Employment and Earnings*.

Table 6. Primary families: Poverty status, presence of related children, and work experience of family members in the labor force for 27 weeks or more, 1998

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total families	At or above poverty level	Below poverty level	Poverty rate ¹
Total primary families	59,621	55,602	4,019	6.7
With related children under 18	34,201	30,728	3,473	10.2
Without children	25,420	24,874	546	2.1
With one member in the labor force	24,442	21,122	3,320	13.6
With two or more members in the labor force	35,179	34,481	698	2.0
With two members	29,356	28,713	643	2.2
With three or more members	5,823	5,768	55	1.0
Married-couple families:				
With related children under 18	25,428	23,939	1,489	5.9
Without children	20,721	20,385	336	1.6
With one member in the labor force	15,141	13,841	1,300	8.6
Husband	11,429	10,381	1,048	9.2
Wife	3,014	2,817	196	6.5
Relative	698	643	56	8.0
With two or more members in the labor force	31,008	30,483	525	1.7
With two members	25,915	25,433	482	1.9
With three or more members	5,093	5,050	43	.8
Families maintained by women:				
With related children under 18	6,896	5,135	1,761	25.5
Without children	3,084	2,921	163	5.3
With one member in the labor force	7,191	5,405	1,786	24.8
Householder	5,987	4,371	1,616	27.0
Relative	1,204	1,034	170	14.1
With two or more members in the labor force	2,789	2,651	138	5.0
Families maintained by men:				
With related children under 18	1,876	1,654	223	11.9
Without children	1,615	1,568	47	2.9
With one member in the labor force	2,110	1,875	235	11.1
Householder	1,784	1,589	194	10.9
Relative	326	286	40	12.4
With two or more members in the labor force	1,382	1,347	35	2.5

¹ Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force for 27 weeks or more.

NOTE: Data relate to primary families with at least one member in the labor force for 27 weeks or more. Data for 1998, which were collected in the March 1999 supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS), are not strictly comparable with data for

1997 and earlier years because of the introduction in January 1999 of revised population controls used in the survey. For additional information, see "Revisions in the Current Population Survey Effective January 1999" in the February 1999 issue of *Employment and Earnings*.

Table 7. Unrelated individuals in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: Poverty status by age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, and living arrangement, 1998

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total	At or above poverty level	Below poverty level	Poverty rate ¹
Age and sex				
Total unrelated individuals	26,971	24,690	2,281	8.5
16 to 19 years	545	348	197	36.1
20 to 24 years	3,514	2,862	652	18.6
25 to 64 years	21,825	20,429	1,397	6.4
65 years and older	1,086	1,051	36	3.3
Men	15,137	13,946	1,191	7.9
Women	11,834	10,744	1,090	9.2
Race and Hispanic origin				
White	22,673	20,836	1,838	8.1
Men	12,828	11,842	987	7.7
Women	9,845	8,994	851	8.6
Black	3,237	2,863	375	11.6
Men	1,731	1,551	181	10.4
Women	1,506	1,312	194	12.9
Hispanic origin	2,233	1,850	383	17.2
Men	1,497	1,227	270	18.0
Women	735	622	113	15.4
Living arrangement				
Living alone	14,382	13,573	810	5.6
Living with others	12,589	11,117	1,472	11.7

¹ Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force for 27 weeks or more who worked during the year.

NOTE: Detail for 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. Data for 1998, which were collected in the March 1999 supplement to the Current

Population Survey (CPS), are not strictly comparable with data for 1997 and earlier years because of the introduction in January 1999 of revised population controls used in the survey. For additional information, see "Revisions in the Current Population Survey Effective January 1999" in the February 1999 issue of *Employment and Earnings*.

Table 8. Persons in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: Poverty status and labor market problems of full-time wage and salary workers, 1998

(Numbers in thousands)

Poverty status and labor market problems	Total	At or above poverty level	Below poverty level	Poverty rate ¹
Total, full-time wage and salary workers	102,752	98,971	3,781	3.7
No unemployment, involuntary part-time employment, or low earnings ²	84,410	83,760	650	.8
Unemployment only	5,489	5,141	348	6.3
Involuntary part-time employment only	2,001	1,969	32	1.6
Low earnings only	7,357	5,662	1,695	23.0
Unemployment and involuntary part-time employment	969	885	84	8.6
Unemployment and low earnings	1,428	822	606	42.4
Involuntary part-time employment and low earnings	656	485	171	26.0
Unemployment, involuntary part-time employment, and low earnings	443	247	196	44.2

¹ Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force for 27 weeks or more who worked during the year.

² The low earnings threshold in 1998 was \$239.91 per week.

NOTE: Data refer to persons 16 years and older. Data for 1998, which were collected in the March 1999 supplement to the Current Population

Survey (CPS), are not strictly comparable with data for 1997 and earlier years because of the introduction in January 1999 of revised population controls used in the survey. For additional information, see "Revisions in the Current Population Survey Effective January 1999" in the February 1999 issue of *Employment and Earnings*.