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COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND WORK ACTIVITY OF 2007 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

In October 2007, 67.2 percent of high school graduates from the class of 2007 were enrolled in colleges or universities, according to data released today by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Information on school enrollment and work activity is collected monthly in the Current Population Survey (CPS). Each October, a supplement to the basic CPS gathers more detailed information on employment, unemployment, earnings, demographics, and other characteristics of the civilian noninstitutional population age 16 and over. Additional information about the October supplement is included in the Technical Note.

Recent High School Graduates and Dropouts

Of the nearly 3.0 million youth who graduated from high school between October 2006 and October 2007, about 2.0 million (67.2 percent) were attending college in October 2007. The college enrollment rates were 68.3 percent for young women and 66.1 percent for young men. (See table 1.)

Among recent high school graduates enrolled in college in October 2007, 93.2 percent were enrolled as full-time students. The labor force participation rate (the proportion of the population with a job or looking for work) was 37.3 percent for full-time students and 72.7 percent for part-time students.

About 64.1 percent of recent high school graduates enrolled in college were attending 4-year institutions. Of these students, 31.4 percent participated in the labor force; in contrast, 54.7 percent of students enrolled in 2-year institutions were in the labor force.

Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college in the fall of 2007 were more likely to be in the labor force than enrolled graduates (76.6 percent versus 39.7 percent). The unemployment rate for those not enrolled in college was 19.9 percent, compared with 9.8 percent for high school graduates enrolled in college (in either 2-year or 4-year institutions).

Between October 2006 and October 2007, 426,000 people between the ages of 16 and 24 dropped out of high school. Hispanics represented a disproportionately large share of dropouts (27.9 percent).

The labor force participation rate for dropouts was 56.2 percent, compared with 76.6 percent for those who graduated high school but were not enrolled in college. Among recent high school dropouts in October

2007, 60.4 percent of young men and 51.1 percent of young women were in the labor force. The unemployment rate for recent high school dropouts was 26.9 percent.

Youth Enrolled in School

In October 2007, 21.1 million young people between the ages of 16 and 24, or 56.2 percent of the 16- to 24-year-old population, were either enrolled in high school (9.7 million) or in college (11.3 million). (See table 2.)

College students were more likely to work or look for work than high school students (54.0 percent and 29.4 percent, respectively). Among college students, the labor force participation rate for part-time students (85.3 percent) was higher than for full-time students (48.6 percent). Female college students were more likely to be in the labor force than male college students (56.6 percent versus 51.0 percent).

The unemployment rate for high school students, at 15.2 percent in October 2007, was more than twice that for college students (5.9 percent). Nearly one-quarter of black high school students were unemployed (24.6 percent), as were 17.9 percent of Hispanics and 13.4 percent of whites. Among college students, unemployment rates were 9.9 percent for blacks, 7.0 percent for Asians, 5.0 percent for whites, and 4.3 percent for Hispanics.

Out-of-School Youth

In October 2007, there were 16.4 million youth not enrolled in school. These out-of-school youth participated in the labor force at a rate of 80.8 percent. Young men not enrolled in school were more likely to be working or looking for work than their female counterparts (87.9 percent versus 73.0 percent). Labor force participation rates among young out-of-school men and women were highest for college graduates and lowest for those with less than a high school diploma. (See table 2.)

The unemployment rate for youth not enrolled in school was 11.5 percent in October 2007. Among the educational attainment categories, unemployment rates were highest for men and women who were not in school and did not have a high school diploma (15.7 percent and 19.0 percent, respectively). In contrast, the unemployment rate among young college graduates was 7.4 percent for men and 5.4 percent for women. The unemployment rate for black youth not in school, at 21.5 percent, was more than twice that for white youth and Asian youth who were not enrolled (9.6 and 9.9 percent, respectively). The unemployment rate for Hispanic youth not in school was 11.5 percent.

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from a supplement to the October 2007 Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly survey of about 60,000 households that provides information on the labor force, employment, and unemployment for the nation. The survey is conducted monthly for the Bureau of Labor Statistics by the U.S. Census Bureau. Data in this release relate to the school enrollment status of persons 16 to 24 years of age in the civilian noninstitutional population in the calendar week that includes the 12th of October. Updated population controls for the Current Population Survey are introduced annually with the release of January data.

The supplement weights used in estimation were revised with the release of October 2007 data. An additional weighting step was added in order to bring the CPS estimates for persons receiving a high school diploma or GED more in line with administrative records. The 2007 October supplement data are not strictly comparable with published estimates from earlier years.

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

Reliability of the estimates

Statistics based on the CPS are subject to both sampling and nonsampling error. When a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed, there is a chance that the sample estimates may differ from the "true" population values they represent. The exact difference, or *sampling error*, varies depending on 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 Household Data section of the "Explanatory Notes and Estimates of Error" at http://www.bls.gov/cps/eetech_methods.pdf.

Concepts

The principal concepts used in connection with the school enrollment series are described briefly below.

School enrollment. Respondents were asked whether they were currently enrolled in a regular school, including day or night school in any type of public, parochial, or other private school. Regular schooling is that which may advance a person toward a high school diploma or a college, university, or professional degree. Such schools include elementary schools, junior or senior high schools, and colleges and universities.

Other schooling, including trade schools; on-the-job training; and courses that do not require physical presence in school, such as correspondence courses or other courses of independent study, is included only if the credits granted count towards promotion in regular school.

Full-time and part-time enrollment in college. College students are classified as attending full time if they were taking 12 hours of classes or more (or 9 hours of graduate classes) during an average school week and as part time if they were taking fewer hours.

High school graduation status. Persons who were not enrolled in school at the time of the survey were asked whether they had graduated from high school. Those who had graduated were asked when they completed their high school education. Persons who had not graduated, that is, school dropouts, were asked when they last attended a regular school. Those who were enrolled in college at the time of the survey also were asked when they graduated from high school.

Table 1. Labor force status of 2007 high school graduates and 2006-07 high school dropouts 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, October 2007

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Civilian noninstitutional population	Civilian labor force						Not in labor force
		Total	Percent of population	Employed		Unemployed		
				Total	Percent of population	Number	Rate	
Total, 2007 high school graduates ¹	2,955	1,531	51.8	1,307	44.2	224	14.7	1,424
Men	1,511	800	52.9	672	44.5	128	16.0	711
Women	1,444	731	50.6	635	44.0	96	13.2	713
White	2,380	1,224	51.4	1,091	45.9	132	10.8	1,156
Black or African American	420	231	55.0	151	35.9	80	34.8	189
Asian	66	24	(²)	22	(²)	3	(²)	42
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	355	157	44.2	134	37.6	23	14.9	198
Enrolled in college	1,986	789	39.7	712	35.9	77	9.8	1,197
Enrolled in 2-year college	711	389	54.7	349	49.0	41	10.4	322
Enrolled in 4-year college	1,274	400	31.4	363	28.5	36	9.1	875
Full-time students	1,851	691	37.3	621	33.5	70	10.2	1,160
Part-time students	135	98	72.7	91	67.7	7	6.8	37
Men	999	387	38.8	359	35.9	28	7.3	612
Women	986	402	40.7	353	35.8	49	12.1	585
White	1,636	658	40.2	603	36.9	55	8.4	978
Black or African American	232	87	37.4	74	32.0	13	14.5	145
Asian	60	18	(²)	16	(²)	3	(²)	41
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	227	82	35.9	78	34.5	3	3.9	146
Not enrolled in college	970	742	76.6	595	61.3	147	19.9	227
Men	512	413	80.6	313	61.1	100	24.1	99
Women	458	330	72.0	282	61.6	48	14.5	128
White	744	565	76.0	488	65.7	77	13.6	179
Black or African American	188	144	76.8	76	40.7	68	47.0	44
Asian	7	6	(²)	6	(²)	—	(²)	1
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	128	75	58.9	55	43.2	20	26.7	53
Total, 2006-07 high school dropouts ³	426	239	56.2	175	41.1	64	26.9	187
Men	233	141	60.4	96	41.4	44	31.5	92
Women	193	99	51.1	79	40.6	20	20.4	95
White	288	156	54.2	109	37.7	48	30.5	132
Black or African American	75	45	60.2	29	38.0	17	(²)	30
Asian	30	17	(²)	17	(²)	—	(²)	13
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	119	72	60.5	45	37.6	27	(²)	47

¹ Data refer to persons who graduated from high school between October 2006 and October 2007.

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

³ Data refer to persons who dropped out of school between October 2006 and October 2007.

NOTE: Detail for the above race groups (white, black or African American,

and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Because of rounding, sums of individual items may not equal totals. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data. Dash represents or rounds to zero.

Table 2. Labor force status of persons 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, October 2007

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Civilian noninstitutional population	Civilian labor force						Not in labor force
		Total	Percent of population	Employed		Unemployed		
				Total	Percent of population	Number	Rate	
Total, 16 to 24 years	37,480	22,243	59.3	19,921	53.2	2,322	10.4	15,237
Enrolled in school	21,061	8,979	42.6	8,181	38.8	798	8.9	12,083
Enrolled in high school ¹	9,724	2,855	29.4	2,421	24.9	434	15.2	6,869
Men	5,118	1,431	28.0	1,203	23.5	227	15.9	3,687
Women	4,607	1,425	30.9	1,218	26.4	206	14.5	3,182
White	7,370	2,371	32.2	2,053	27.9	318	13.4	4,999
Black or African American	1,590	294	18.5	222	14.0	72	24.6	1,296
Asian	352	72	20.3	58	16.3	14	(²)	281
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	1,659	368	22.2	302	18.2	66	17.9	1,291
Enrolled in college	11,337	6,124	54.0	5,760	50.8	364	5.9	5,213
Enrolled in 2-year college	3,217	2,066	64.2	1,946	60.5	121	5.8	1,151
Enrolled in 4-year college	8,120	4,057	50.0	3,814	47.0	243	6.0	4,063
Full-time students	9,659	4,693	48.6	4,398	45.5	295	6.3	4,966
Part-time students	1,678	1,431	85.3	1,362	81.2	69	4.8	247
Men	5,226	2,664	51.0	2,508	48.0	156	5.9	2,563
Women	6,110	3,460	56.6	3,252	53.2	208	6.0	2,651
White	8,912	5,008	56.2	4,759	53.4	249	5.0	3,904
Black or African American	1,423	674	47.4	607	42.7	67	9.9	749
Asian	668	240	35.9	223	33.4	17	7.0	428
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	1,414	836	59.1	800	56.6	36	4.3	578
Not enrolled in school	16,419	13,264	80.8	11,740	71.5	1,524	11.5	3,155
16 to 19 years	3,269	2,356	72.1	1,905	58.3	451	19.1	914
20 to 24 years	13,149	10,908	83.0	9,835	74.8	1,073	9.8	2,241
Men	8,595	7,554	87.9	6,628	77.1	926	12.3	1,042
Less than a high school diploma	1,859	1,496	80.5	1,261	67.8	236	15.7	362
High school graduates, no college ³	4,073	3,544	87.0	3,069	75.3	475	13.4	529
Some college or associate degree	1,768	1,662	94.0	1,509	85.4	152	9.2	106
Bachelor's degree and higher ⁴	895	852	95.1	789	88.1	63	7.4	44
Women	7,823	5,710	73.0	5,112	65.3	598	10.5	2,113
Less than a high school diploma	1,419	689	48.6	558	39.3	131	19.0	730
High school graduates, no college ³	3,340	2,371	71.0	2,077	62.2	294	12.4	969
Some college or associate degree	1,884	1,527	81.1	1,416	75.1	112	7.3	357
Bachelor's degree and higher ⁴	1,180	1,122	95.1	1,061	90.0	61	5.4	58
White	12,740	10,441	82.0	9,441	74.1	1,000	9.6	2,299
Black or African American	2,542	1,938	76.2	1,521	59.8	417	21.5	604
Asian	462	379	82.1	342	74.0	37	9.9	83
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	3,559	2,655	74.6	2,349	66.0	305	11.5	904

¹ Includes a small number of persons enrolled in grades below high school.

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

³ Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent.

⁴ Includes persons with bachelor's, master's, professional, and doctoral degrees.

NOTE: Detail for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Because of rounding, sums of individual items may not equal totals. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.