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COLLEGE ENROLLMENT AND WORK ACTIVITY OF 2016 HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

In October 2016, 69.7 percent of 2016 high school graduates were enrolled in colleges or universities, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college in October 2016 were about twice as likely as enrolled graduates to be working or looking for work (72.3 percent, compared with 38.4 percent).

Information on school enrollment and work activity is collected monthly in the Current Population Survey (CPS), a nationwide survey of about 60,000 households that provides information on employment and unemployment. Each October, a supplement to the CPS gathers more detailed information about school enrollment, such as full- and part-time enrollment status. Additional information about the October supplement is included in the Technical Note.

Recent High School Graduates and Dropouts

Of the 3.1 million youth age 16 to 24 who graduated from high school between January and October 2016, about 2.2 million (69.7 percent) were enrolled in college in October. The college enrollment rate of recent high school graduates in October 2016 was little changed from the rate in October 2015 (69.2 percent). For 2016 high school graduates, the college enrollment rate was 71.9 percent for young women and 67.4 percent for young men. The college enrollment rate of recent Asian graduates (92.4 percent) was higher than for their Hispanic (72.0 percent), White (69.7 percent), and Black (58.2 percent) counterparts. (See table 1.)

The labor force participation rate (the proportion of the population working or looking for work) for recent high school graduates enrolled in college was 38.4 percent. The participation rates for male and female graduates enrolled in college were 41.5 percent and 35.7 percent, respectively.

Among recent high school graduates enrolled in college in October 2016, about 9 in 10 were full-time students. Recent graduates enrolled as full-time students were about half as likely to be in the labor force (34.6 percent) as were their peers enrolled part time (77.1 percent).

About 2 in 3 recent high school graduates enrolled in college attended 4-year colleges. Of these students, 31.5 percent participated in the labor force in October 2016, lower than the 51.8 percent for recent graduates enrolled in 2-year colleges.

Recent high school graduates not enrolled in college in the fall of 2016 were much more likely than enrolled graduates to be in the labor force (72.3 percent, compared with 38.4 percent). The unemployment rate for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college was 19.3 percent, more than double the rate of 8.0 percent for recent graduates enrolled in college.

Between October 2015 and October 2016, 513,000 young people dropped out of high school. The labor force participation rate for recent dropouts (50.9 percent) was lower than the rate for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college (72.3 percent). The jobless rate for recent high school dropouts was 31.9 percent in October 2016, higher than the rate for recent high school graduates not enrolled in college (19.3 percent).

All Youth Enrolled in High School or College

In October 2016, 57.5 percent of the nation's 22.1 million 16- to 24-year olds were enrolled in high school (9.5 million) or in college (12.5 million). The labor force participation rate (36.0 percent) and the unemployment rate (8.4 percent) for youth enrolled in school were both essentially unchanged from October 2015 to October 2016. (See table 2.)

In October 2016, high school students continued to be less likely than college students to participate in the labor force (20.7 percent, compared with 47.7 percent). Female high school students were more likely to be in the labor force (23.5 percent) than their male counterparts (18.1 percent).

Full-time college students were much less likely to participate in the labor force in October 2016 than were part-time students (42.3 percent versus 83.3 percent). Among college students, labor force participation was lower for Asians (31.2 percent) than for Blacks (45.0 percent), Hispanics (47.5 percent), and Whites (49.8 percent). Labor force participation rates for female and male college students were similar (48.3 percent and 47.0 percent, respectively).

The unemployment rate for high school students, at 16.3 percent in October 2016, was almost three times the rate for college students (5.9 percent). Among Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics, unemployment rates were higher for high school students than for college students.

All Youth Not Enrolled in School

In October 2016, 16.3 million persons age 16 to 24 were not enrolled in school. The labor force participation rate of youth not enrolled in school, at 79.7 percent, was little changed over the year. Among youth not enrolled in school in October 2016, young men continued to be more likely than young women to participate in the labor force (83.7 percent, compared with 75.5 percent). Labor force participation rates for not-enrolled men and women were highest for those with a bachelor's degree or higher (92.9 percent and 91.9 percent, respectively) and lowest for men and women with less than a high school diploma (69.6 percent and 47.4 percent, respectively). (See table 2.)

The unemployment rate for youth age 16 to 24 not enrolled in school, at 11.2 percent, was little changed over the year. Among not-enrolled youth who did not have a high school diploma,

unemployment rates in October 2016 were 24.0 percent for young men and 20.7 percent for young women. In contrast, the jobless rates of young men and women with at least a bachelor's degree were 8.3 percent and 5.1 percent, respectively. Black youth not enrolled in school had an unemployment rate of 20.4 percent in October 2016, higher than the rates for their Hispanic (10.5 percent), White (9.4 percent), and Asian (7.7 percent) counterparts.

Technical Note

The estimates in this release were obtained from a supplement to the October 2016 Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly survey of about 60,000 eligible 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. 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 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 component of this difference that occurs because samples differ by chance is known as *sampling error*, and 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.

Additional information about the reliability of data from the CPS and estimating standard errors is available at www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#reliability.

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.

Recent high school graduates. Persons who completed high school in the calendar year of the survey (January through October) are recent high school graduates.

Recent high school dropouts. Persons who were not enrolled in school at the time of the survey, attended school a year earlier, and did not have a high school diploma are recent dropouts.

Table 1. Labor force status of 2016 high school graduates and 2015-16 high school dropouts 16 to 24 years old by school enrollment, educational attainment, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, October 2016.

[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	
RECENT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES								
Total, 2016 high school graduates ¹	3,137	1,526	48.7	1,327	42.3	199	13.1	1,610
Men.....	1,517	811	53.4	685	45.2	126	15.5	706
Women.....	1,620	716	44.2	642	39.6	74	10.3	904
White.....	2,326	1,140	49.0	1,034	44.5	106	9.3	1,186
Black or African American.....	409	250	61.1	172	42.0	78	31.3	159
Asian.....	158	32	20.2	29	18.4	3	-	126
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	742	295	39.7	264	35.5	32	10.7	447
Enrolled in college								
Total, enrolled in college.....	2,188	840	38.4	773	35.3	67	8.0	1,348
Enrolled in 2-year college.....	744	386	51.8	349	47.0	36	9.4	359
Enrolled in 4-year college.....	1,444	455	31.5	424	29.4	31	6.8	989
Full-time students.....	1,992	689	34.6	632	31.7	58	8.4	1,303
Part-time students.....	196	151	77.1	142	72.3	9	6.2	45
Men.....	1,023	425	41.5	379	37.0	46	10.7	599
Women.....	1,165	416	35.7	394	33.9	21	5.2	749
White.....	1,622	644	39.7	600	37.0	44	6.9	978
Black or African American.....	238	109	45.8	89	37.4	20	18.4	129
Asian.....	146	25	17.4	23	15.4	3	-	121
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	534	163	30.6	149	28.0	14	8.5	371
Not enrolled in college								
Total, not enrolled in college.....	948	686	72.3	554	58.4	132	19.3	262
Men.....	493	386	78.3	306	62.0	80	20.7	107
Women.....	455	300	65.9	248	54.4	52	17.5	155
White.....	704	496	70.4	434	61.6	62	12.5	208
Black or African American.....	171	141	82.4	83	48.4	58	41.2	30
Asian.....	12	6	-	6	-	-	-	5
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	208	132	63.3	114	54.8	18	13.4	76
RECENT HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS								
Total, 2015-16 high school dropouts ²	513	261	50.9	178	34.7	83	31.9	252
Men.....	299	181	60.4	124	41.5	56	31.3	118
Women.....	214	81	37.7	54	25.1	27	33.3	134
White.....	362	175	48.2	115	31.7	60	34.1	188
Black or African American.....	94	59	63.4	41	44.2	18	-	34
Asian.....	13	4	-	4	-	-	-	9
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	113	53	47.1	32	28.2	21	-	60

¹ Data refer to persons who graduated from high school in January through October 2016.

² Data refer to persons who dropped out of school between October 2015 and October 2016.

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. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data. Dash indicates no data or data that do not meet publication criteria (values not shown where base is less than 75,000).

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 2016.

[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.....	38,367	20,951	54.6	18,820	49.1	2,130	10.2	17,417
Enrolled in school								
Total, enrolled in school.....	22,058	7,947	36.0	7,276	33.0	671	8.4	14,111
Enrolled in high school ¹	9,521	1,971	20.7	1,650	17.3	321	16.3	7,550
Men.....	4,962	900	18.1	731	14.7	169	18.8	4,061
Women.....	4,560	1,071	23.5	919	20.2	152	14.2	3,489
White.....	6,847	1,546	22.6	1,329	19.4	217	14.0	5,301
Black or African American.....	1,557	196	12.6	127	8.2	69	35.2	1,362
Asian.....	504	75	14.9	60	11.9	15	20.1	429
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	2,179	384	17.6	307	14.1	76	19.9	1,796
Enrolled in college.....	12,536	5,976	47.7	5,626	44.9	350	5.9	6,561
Enrolled in 2-year college.....	3,070	1,792	58.4	1,656	53.9	136	7.6	1,278
Enrolled in 4-year college.....	9,466	4,184	44.2	3,970	41.9	214	5.1	5,282
Full-time students.....	10,887	4,601	42.3	4,320	39.7	281	6.1	6,286
Part-time students.....	1,649	1,374	83.3	1,306	79.2	68	5.0	275
Men.....	5,876	2,761	47.0	2,538	43.2	223	8.1	3,116
Women.....	6,660	3,215	48.3	3,088	46.4	127	3.9	3,445
White.....	9,259	4,611	49.8	4,348	47.0	263	5.7	4,648
Black or African American.....	1,674	753	45.0	696	41.6	57	7.6	921
Asian.....	1,017	318	31.2	295	29.0	23	7.1	699
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	2,647	1,258	47.5	1,145	43.3	113	9.0	1,389
Not enrolled in school								
Total, not enrolled in school.....	16,309	13,004	79.7	11,544	70.8	1,460	11.2	3,306
16 to 19 years.....	3,120	2,102	67.4	1,674	53.7	428	20.3	1,018
20 to 24 years.....	13,189	10,902	82.7	9,870	74.8	1,032	9.5	2,287
Men.....	8,500	7,110	83.7	6,217	73.1	894	12.6	1,389
Less than a high school diploma.....	1,371	954	69.6	725	52.9	229	24.0	417
High school graduates, no college ²	4,144	3,455	83.4	3,000	72.4	455	13.2	689
Some college or associate degree.....	1,904	1,697	89.1	1,571	82.5	126	7.4	207
Bachelor's degree and higher ³	1,081	1,004	92.9	921	85.2	83	8.3	77
Women.....	7,810	5,893	75.5	5,327	68.2	566	9.6	1,916
Less than a high school diploma.....	964	457	47.4	362	37.6	95	20.7	507
High school graduates, no college ²	3,182	2,249	70.7	1,982	62.3	267	11.9	933
Some college or associate degree.....	2,099	1,750	83.4	1,618	77.1	132	7.5	349
Bachelor's degree and higher ³	1,565	1,438	91.9	1,365	87.2	73	5.1	127
White.....	12,118	9,709	80.1	8,793	72.6	915	9.4	2,409
Black or African American.....	2,592	2,068	79.8	1,646	63.5	422	20.4	524
Asian.....	706	533	75.5	492	69.7	41	7.7	173
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity.....	3,686	2,844	77.2	2,545	69.1	298	10.5	842

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

² Includes persons with a high school diploma or equivalent.

³ 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. Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data. Dash indicates no data or data that do not meet publication criteria (values not shown where base is less than 75,000).