A Profile of the Working Poor, 2014

April 2016 | Report 1060

In 2014, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 46.7 million people, or 14.8 percent of the nation's population, lived below the official poverty level.[1] (See the technical notes section for examples of poverty levels.) Although the poor were primarily children and adults who had not participated in the labor force during the year, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 9.5 million individuals were among the "working poor" in 2014; this measure was down from 2013. The working poor are people who spent at least 27 weeks in the labor force (that is, working or looking for work) but whose incomes still fell below the official poverty level. In 2014, the working-poor rate—the ratio of the working poor to all individuals in the labor force for at least 27 weeks—was 6.3 percent, down by 0.7 percentage point from the previous year's figure. (See table A and 1 and chart 1.)

Following are additional highlights from the 2014 data:

- Full-time workers continued to be less likely to be among the working poor than part-time workers. Among people in the labor force for 27 weeks or more, 4.1 percent of those usually employed full time were classified as working poor, compared with 13.5 percent of part-time workers.
- Women were more likely than men to be among the working poor. In addition, Blacks and Hispanics continued to be more than twice as likely as Whites and Asians to be among the working poor.
- The likelihood of being classified as working poor diminishes as workers attain higher levels of education. Among people with less than a high school diploma, 18.3 percent of those who were in the labor force for at least 27 weeks were classified as working poor, compared with 2.0 percent of college graduates.
- Individuals who were employed in service occupations continued to be more likely to be among the working poor than those employed in other major occupational groups.
- Among families with at least one member in the labor force for 27 weeks or more, those families with children under 18 years old were more than 4 times as likely as those without children to live in poverty. Families maintained by women were more likely than families maintained by men to be living below the poverty level.

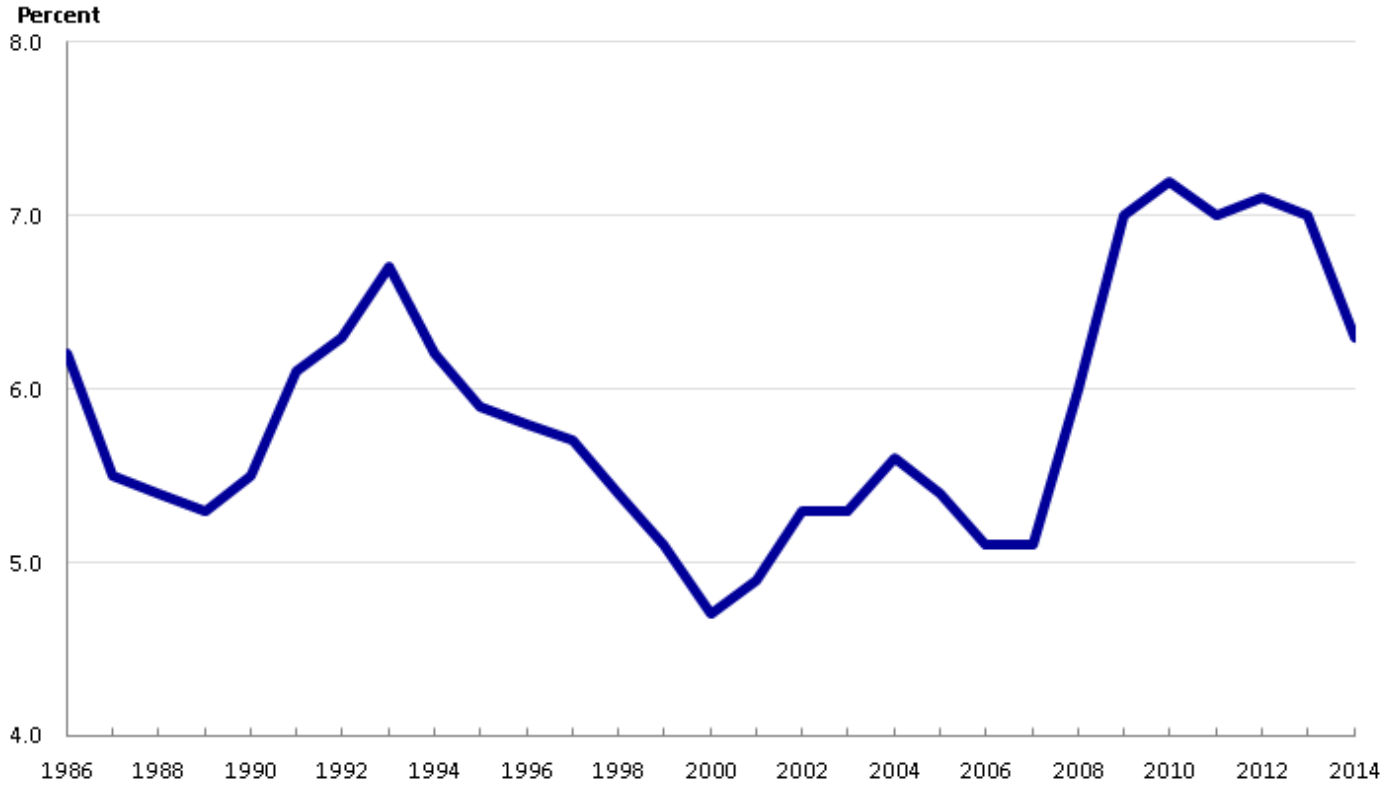
Table A. Poverty status of people and primary families in the labor force for 27 weeks or more, 2007–14(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
See footnotes at end of table.								
Total in the labor force[1]	146,567	147,838	147,902	146,859	147,475	148,735	149,483	150,319
In poverty	7,521	8,883	10,391	10,512	10,382	10,612	10,450	9,487
Working poor rate	5.1	6.0	7.0	7.2	7.0	7.1	7.0	6.3
Unrelated individuals	33,226	32,785	33,798	34,099	33,731	34,810	35,061	35,018
In poverty	2,558	3,275	3,947	3,947	3,621	3,851	4,141	3,395
Working poor rate	7.7	10.0	11.7	11.6	10.7	11.1	11.8	9.7
Primary families[2]	65,158	65,907	65,467	64,931	66,225	66,541	66,462	66,732
In poverty	4,169	4,538	5,193	5,269	5,469	5,478	5,137	5,108
Working poor rate	6.4	6.9	7.9	8.1	8.3	8.2	7.7	7.7

[1]Includes individuals in families, not shown separately.
[2]Primary families with at least one member in the labor force for more than half the year.
Note: Updated population controls are introduced annually with the release of January data.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

This report presents data on the relationship between labor force activity and poverty status in 2014 for workers and their families. These data were collected in the 2015 Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey. (For a detailed description of the source of the data and an explanation of the concepts and definitions used in this report, see the technical notes at the end of this report.) The specific income thresholds used to determine people's poverty status vary, depending on whether the individuals are living with family members or are living alone or with nonrelatives. For family members, the poverty threshold is determined by their family's total income; for individuals not living in families, their personal income is used as the determinant.

Chart 1. Working-poor rate of people in the labor force for 27 weeks or more, 1986–2014



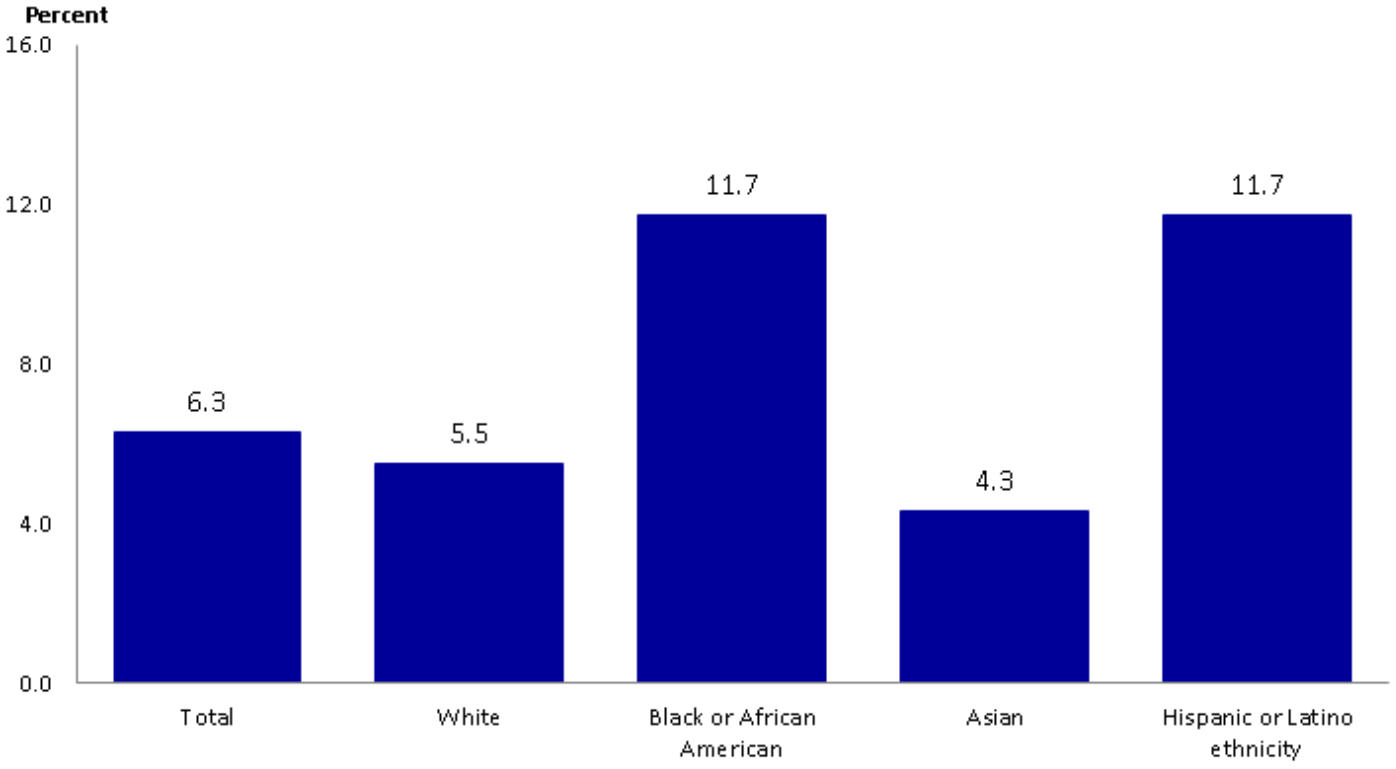
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

Demographic characteristics

Among those who were in the labor force for 27 weeks or more in 2014, the number of women classified as working poor (5.1 million) was higher than that of men (4.4 million). Similarly, the working poor rate continued to be higher for women (7.2 percent) than for men (5.5 percent). The working poor rates for both women and men were down from a year earlier. (See table 2).

Blacks and Hispanics were more than twice as likely as Whites and Asians to be among the working poor. In 2014, the working-poor rates of Blacks and Hispanics were both 11.7 percent, compared with 5.5 percent for Whites and 4.3 percent for Asians. (See chart 2 and table 2.)

Chart 2. Working-poor rates by race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 2014



Note: People whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

Among Whites, Blacks, and Hispanics, the working-poor rate was higher for women than for men. The rates for White women and men who spent at least 27 weeks in the labor force were 5.9 percent and 5.1 percent, respectively. The rate for Black women was 14.6 percent, compared with 8.4 percent for Black men. Hispanic women and men had rates of 12.6 percent and 11.1 percent, respectively. Among Asians, the rates for women and men were little different from each other.

Young workers are more likely to be poor than are workers in older age groups, in part because earnings are lower for young workers, and the unemployment rate for young workers is higher. Among youths who were in the labor force for 27 weeks or more, 10.4 percent of 16- to 19-year-olds and 12.1 percent of 20- to 24-year-olds were living in poverty in 2014, considerably higher than the rate for workers age 35 to 44 (6.7 percent). Workers age 45 to 54, 55 to 64, and those age 65 and older had lower working-poor rates—4.8 percent, 3.3 percent, and 2.0 percent, respectively—than did the younger age groups.

Educational attainment

Achieving higher levels of education reduces the incidence of living in poverty. Individuals who complete more years of education usually have greater access to higher paying jobs—such as management, professional, and related occupations—than those with fewer years of education. Of all the people in the labor force for 27 weeks or more in 2014, those with less than a high school diploma had a higher working-poor rate (18.3 percent) than did high school graduates with no college (8.3 percent). Workers with an associate's degree and those with a bachelor's degree or higher had the lowest working-poor rates (4.6 percent and 2.0 percent, respectively). In 2014, at nearly all levels of educational attainment, women were more likely than men to be among the working poor; by race and ethnicity, Blacks and Hispanics generally were more likely to be among the working poor than were Whites and Asians. (See table 3.)

Occupation

The likelihood of being among the working poor varies widely by occupation. Workers in occupations requiring higher education and characterized by relatively high earnings—such as management, professional, and related occupations—were least likely to be classified as working poor, 1.9 percent in 2014. By contrast, individuals employed in occupations that typically do not require high levels of education and are characterized by relatively low earnings were more likely to be among the working poor. For example, 12.8 percent of service workers who were in the labor force for at least 27 weeks were classified as working poor in 2014. Indeed, service occupations, with 3.2 million working poor, accounted for 37 percent of all those classified as working poor. Among those employed in natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations, 7.9 percent of workers were classified as working poor. Within this occupation group, 16.8 percent of workers employed in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations were among the working poor. (See table 4.)

Families

In 2014, the number of families living below the poverty level (5.1 million), despite having at least one member in the labor force for half the year or more, was unchanged from last year's figure. Among families with only one member in the labor force for at least 27 weeks in 2014, married-couple families had a lower likelihood of living below the poverty level (9.3 percent) than did families maintained by women (26.1 percent) or by men (15.2 percent). (See table 5.)

Among families with at least one member in the labor force for more than half the year, those with children in the household were much more likely to live below the poverty level than those without children. The proportion of families with children under age 18 that lived in poverty was 12.1 percent, compared with 2.7 percent for families without children. Among families with children under 18, the working-poor rate for those maintained by women (27.2 percent) was higher than that for those maintained by men (16.0 percent). Married-couple families with children under 18 had a working-poor rate of 6.8 percent in 2014.

Unrelated individuals

The "unrelated individuals" category includes individuals who live by themselves or with others not related to them. Of the 35.0 million unrelated individuals who were in the labor force for half the year or longer, 3.4 million lived below the poverty level in 2014, a decrease from last year's figure. The working-poor rate for unrelated individuals was 9.7 percent, down from 11.8 percent a year earlier. (See table 6.)

Within the group of unrelated individuals, teenagers continued to be the most likely to be among the working poor. In 2014, the working-poor rate was 36.5 percent for teens who were in the labor force for 27 weeks or more and who lived on their own or with others not related to them. Overall, the rate for men living alone or with nonrelatives (8.7 percent)

was lower than the rate for women (11.0 percent). The working-poor rates for unrelated individuals were 13.9 percent for Hispanics, 13.7 percent for Blacks, 9.0 percent for Whites, and 6.3 percent for Asians. (See table 7.)

Of the 3.4 million unrelated individuals considered to be among the working poor in 2014, about three-fifths lived with others. These individuals had a much higher working-poor rate than individuals who lived alone (12.3 percent and 7.3 percent, respectively). Many unrelated individuals living below the poverty level may live with others out of necessity. Conversely, many of those who live alone do so because they have sufficient income to support themselves. Unrelated individuals' poverty status, however, is determined by each person's resources. The pooling of resources and sharing of living expenses may permit some individuals in this category—who are technically classified as poor—to live at a higher standard than they would have if they lived alone.

Labor market problems

As noted earlier, people who usually work full time are less likely to live in poverty than are those who work part time, yet there remains a sizable group of full-time workers who live below the poverty threshold. Among those who participated in the labor force for 27 weeks or more and usually worked in full-time wage and salary jobs, 4.4 million, or 3.8 percent, were classified as working poor in 2014—little changed from a year earlier. (See table 8.)

There are three major labor market problems that can hinder a worker's ability to earn an income above the poverty threshold: low earnings, periods of unemployment, and involuntary part-time employment. (See the technical notes for detailed definitions.)

In 2014, 82 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, with 67 percent subject to low earnings, either as the major problem or in combination with other labor market problems. About 32 percent experienced unemployment as the main labor market problem or in conjunction with other problems. Four percent of the working poor experience all three problems: low earnings, unemployment, and involuntary part-time employment.

Some 819,000, or 18 percent, of the working poor who usually worked full time did not experience any of the three primary labor market problems in 2014. Their classification as working poor may be explained by other factors, including short-term employment, some weeks of voluntary part-time work, or a family structure that increases the risk of poverty.

Notes

[1] *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014*, Current Population Reports, P60-252 (U.S. Census Bureau, September 2015), table 3, at https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf.

Statistical Tables

Table 1. People in the labor force: poverty status and work experience by weeks in the labor force, 2014 (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
See footnotes at end of table.			
Total			
Total in the labor force	162,757	150,319	137,122
Did not work during the year	3,701	2,028	1,649
Worked during the year	159,056	148,291	135,473
Usual full-time workers	126,566	122,314	114,966
Usual part-time workers	32,490	25,977	20,508
Involuntary part-time workers	8,454	7,328	6,261
Voluntary part-time workers	24,036	18,649	14,246
At or above poverty level			
Total in the labor force	150,808	140,832	129,168
Did not work during the year	2,199	1,126	892
Worked during the year	148,609	139,706	128,275
Usual full-time workers	120,709	117,247	110,585
Usual part-time workers	27,900	22,460	17,691
Involuntary part-time workers	6,488	5,666	4,837
Voluntary part-time workers	21,412	16,794	12,854
Below poverty level			
Total in the labor force	11,950	9,487	7,954
Did not work during the year	1,503	902	756
Worked during the year	10,447	8,585	7,198
Usual full-time workers	5,857	5,067	4,381
Usual part-time workers	4,591	3,518	2,817
Involuntary part-time workers	1,966	1,662	1,424
Voluntary part-time workers	2,625	1,855	1,393
Rate[1]			
Total in the labor force	7.3	6.3	5.8
Did not work during the year	40.6	44.5	45.9
Worked during the year	6.6	5.8	5.3

Table 1. People in the labor force: poverty status and work experience by weeks in the labor force, 2014 (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
Usual full-time workers	4.6	4.1	3.8
Usual part-time workers	14.1	13.5	13.7
Involuntary part-time workers	23.3	22.7	22.7
Voluntary part-time workers	10.9	9.9	9.8

[1]Number below the poverty level as a percentage of the total in the labor force.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

Table 2. People in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: poverty status by age, gender, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

Age and gender	Total	White	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Below poverty level					Rate[1]				
						Total	White	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total	White	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino ethnicity
See footnotes at end of table.															
Total, 16 years and older	150,319	118,831	18,076	8,747	24,335	9,487	6,503	2,112	379	2,843	6.3	5.5	11.7	4.3	11.7
16 to 19 years	3,303	2,581	414	118	687	343	235	71	10	88	10.4	9.1	17.1	8.7	12.8
20 to 24 years	13,234	10,129	1,959	544	2,816	1,605	1,140	367	39	363	12.1	11.2	18.8	7.2	12.9
25 to 34 years	33,239	25,397	4,420	2,181	6,513	2,762	1,757	722	101	872	8.3	6.9	16.3	4.6	13.4
35 to 44 years	31,936	24,516	4,084	2,213	6,161	2,134	1,468	453	95	818	6.7	6.0	11.1	4.3	13.3
45 to 54 years	33,356	26,653	3,930	1,954	4,901	1,597	1,113	321	96	488	4.8	4.2	8.2	4.9	10.0
55 to 64 years	26,139	21,707	2,587	1,335	2,564	864	647	149	30	180	3.3	3.0	5.7	2.2	7.0
65 years and older	9,110	7,847	681	402	693	181	144	29	8	33	2.0	1.8	4.2	1.9	4.8
Men, 16 years and older	80,139	64,664	8,430	4,659	14,130	4,409	3,290	705	191	1,561	5.5	5.1	8.4	4.1	11.1
16 to 19 years	1,576	1,259	185	49	356	140	110	22	3	40	8.9	8.7	11.7	(2)	11.1
20 to 24 years	6,842	5,333	937	284	1,579	623	484	105	18	171	9.1	9.1	11.2	6.5	10.9
25 to 34 years	18,120	14,164	2,096	1,182	3,946	1,265	873	247	58	460	7.0	6.2	11.8	4.9	11.7
35 to 44 years	17,218	13,562	1,894	1,179	3,647	1,093	837	154	41	509	6.3	6.2	8.1	3.5	13.9
45 to 54 years	17,632	14,378	1,796	1,046	2,762	811	595	128	55	270	4.6	4.1	7.1	5.2	9.8
55 to 64 years	13,749	11,586	1,213	693	1,457	386	313	42	14	93	2.8	2.7	3.5	2.0	6.4

Table 2. People in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: poverty status by age, gender, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

Age and gender	Total	White	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Below poverty level					Rate[1]				
						Total	White	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total	White	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino ethnicity
65 years and older	5,001	4,383	310	226	383	91	79	7	3	18	1.8	1.8	2.4	1.3	4.7
Women, 16 years and older	70,180	54,167	9,645	4,088	10,206	5,078	3,213	1,407	187	1,282	7.2	5.9	14.6	4.6	12.6
16 to 19 years	1,728	1,323	229	69	331	203	125	49	8	49	11.8	9.4	21.5	(2)	14.7
20 to 24 years	6,392	4,797	1,022	259	1,237	982	656	262	21	191	15.4	13.7	25.7	7.9	15.5
25 to 34 years	15,119	11,233	2,324	998	2,567	1,497	884	476	43	412	9.9	7.9	20.5	4.3	16.1
35 to 44 years	14,718	10,954	2,190	1,034	2,514	1,041	631	299	54	310	7.1	5.8	13.6	5.3	12.3
45 to 54 years	15,724	12,275	2,134	909	2,139	786	518	193	42	218	5.0	4.2	9.0	4.6	10.2
55 to 64 years	12,390	10,121	1,375	641	1,107	479	334	106	16	87	3.9	3.3	7.7	2.5	7.8
65 years and older	4,109	3,465	371	177	310	91	65	21	4	15	2.2	1.9	5.8	2.5	4.9

[1]Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force for 27 weeks or more.
[2]Data not shown where base is less than 80,000.
Note: Estimates for the race groups shown (White, Black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. People whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

Table 3. People in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: poverty status by educational attainment, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and gender, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

See footnotes at end of table.

Educational attainment, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total	Men	Women	Below poverty level			Rate[1]		
				Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Total, 16 years and older	150,319	80,139	70,180	9,487	4,409	5,078	6.3	5.5	7.2
Less than a high school diploma	13,054	8,216	4,838	2,395	1,373	1,022	18.3	16.7	21.1
Less than 1 year of high school	4,336	2,882	1,453	833	521	312	19.2	18.1	21.5
1–3 years of high school	6,707	4,088	2,619	1,230	653	577	18.3	16.0	22.0
4 years of high school, no diploma	2,012	1,246	765	332	199	133	16.5	16.0	17.4
High school graduates, no college[2]	40,825	23,770	17,055	3,403	1,571	1,832	8.3	6.6	10.7
Some college or associate's degree	43,572	21,470	22,102	2,642	961	1,682	6.1	4.5	7.6
Some college, no degree	27,804	14,159	13,644	1,914	725	1,189	6.9	5.1	8.7
Associate's degree	15,768	7,311	8,458	729	236	493	4.6	3.2	5.8
Bachelor's degree and higher[3]	52,868	26,682	26,186	1,047	505	542	2.0	1.9	2.1
White, 16 years and older	118,831	64,664	54,167	6,503	3,290	3,213	5.5	5.1	5.9
Less than a high school diploma	10,429	6,799	3,629	1,846	1,123	723	17.7	16.5	19.9
Less than 1 year of high school	3,731	2,538	1,193	719	455	264	19.3	17.9	22.2
1–3 years of high school	5,213	3,300	1,913	892	521	372	17.1	15.8	19.4
4 years of high school, no diploma	1,485	962	523	235	148	87	15.8	15.3	16.7
High school graduates, no college[2]	32,123	19,175	12,948	2,181	1,113	1,068	6.8	5.8	8.3
Some college or associate's degree	34,133	17,217	16,916	1,698	658	1,041	5.0	3.8	6.2
Some college, no degree	21,400	11,162	10,238	1,212	488	724	5.7	4.4	7.1
Associate's degree	12,733	6,055	6,677	487	170	317	3.8	2.8	4.7
Bachelor's degree and higher[3]	42,146	21,472	20,674	777	397	380	1.8	1.8	1.8
Black or African American, 16 years and older	18,076	8,430	9,645	2,112	705	1,407	11.7	8.4	14.6
Less than a high school diploma	1,418	737	680	327	129	198	23.1	17.5	29.1
Less than 1 year of high school	196	110	86	36	22	14	18.3	20.1	16.1
1–3 years of high school	877	449	428	217	73	144	24.8	16.3	33.6
4 years of high school, no diploma	344	178	166	74	34	40	21.6	19.1	24.2
High school graduates, no college[2]	5,832	3,036	2,796	941	325	616	16.1	10.7	22
Some college or associate's degree	6,251	2,667	3,584	702	210	492	11.2	7.9	13.7
Some college, no degree	4,289	1,933	2,356	509	162	347	11.9	8.4	14.7
Associate's degree	1,962	734	1,228	193	48	144	9.8	6.6	11.8

Table 3. People in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: poverty status by educational attainment, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and gender, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

Educational attainment, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total	Men	Women	Below poverty level			Rate[1]		
				Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Bachelor's degree and higher[3]	4,575	1,990	2,585	142	41	101	3.1	2.1	3.9
Asian, 16 years and older	8,747	4,659	4,088	379	191	187	4.3	4.1	4.6
Less than a high school diploma	581	290	291	103	51	52	17.7	17.4	18
Less than 1 year of high school	233	111	122	43	21	23	18.7	18.8	18.5
1–3 years of high school	250	126	124	50	24	26	19.8	18.9	20.8
4 years of high school, no diploma	97	53	44	10	6	4	10.1	(4)	(4)
High school graduates, no college[2]	1,515	807	708	106	58	48	7.0	7.1	6.8
Some college or associate's degree	1,623	840	783	75	31	43	4.6	3.7	5.5
Some college, no degree	1,023	550	473	61	25	35	5.9	4.6	7.5
Associate's degree	600	290	310	14	6	8	2.4	2.1	2.6
Bachelor's degree and higher[3]	5,028	2,721	2,306	95	52	43	1.9	1.9	1.9
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 16 years and older	24,335	14,130	10,206	2,843	1,561	1,282	11.7	11.1	12.6
Less than a high school diploma	6,611	4,414	2,197	1,334	820	514	20.2	18.6	23.4
Less than 1 year of high school	3,333	2,275	1,058	670	417	253	20.1	18.3	23.9
1–3 years of high school	2,549	1,658	891	537	321	217	21.1	19.3	24.3
4 years of high school, no diploma	730	481	248	127	82	45	17.4	17.1	18
High school graduates, no college[2]	7,664	4,618	3,045	918	486	433	12.0	10.5	14.2
Some college or associate's degree	6,148	3,160	2,988	442	189	253	7.2	6.0	8.5
Some college, no degree	4,225	2,195	2,030	319	134	184	7.5	6.1	9.1
Associate's degree	1,923	965	958	123	54	69	6.4	5.6	7.2
Bachelor's degree and higher[3]	3,912	1,937	1,975	149	67	82	3.8	3.5	4.1

[1]Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force for 27 weeks or more.
[2]Includes people with a high school diploma or equivalent.
[3]Includes people with bachelor's, master's, professional, and doctoral degrees.
[4]Data not shown where base is less than 80,000.
Note: Estimates for the race groups shown (White, Black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. People whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Dash represents or rounds to zero.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

Table 4. People in the labor force for 27 weeks or more who worked during the year: poverty status by occupation of longest job held, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and gender, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

Occupation, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total	Men	Women	Below poverty level			Rate[1]		
				Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
See footnotes at end of table.									
Total, 16 years and older[2]	148,291	78,985	69,306	8,585	3,943	4,642	5.8	5.0	6.7
Management, professional, and related occupations	56,949	27,538	29,411	1,107	484	623	1.9	1.8	2.1
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	23,807	13,542	10,265	486	263	223	2.0	1.9	2.2
Professional and related occupations	33,143	13,997	19,146	621	221	399	1.9	1.6	2.1
Service occupations	25,017	10,792	14,224	3,202	1,065	2,138	12.8	9.9	15.0
Sales and office occupations	34,133	13,186	20,947	1,996	619	1,377	5.8	4.7	6.6
Sales and related occupations	15,961	8,017	7,944	1,263	375	887	7.9	4.7	11.2
Office and administrative support occupations	18,172	5,169	13,003	733	243	490	4.0	4.7	3.8
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	14,100	13,443	658	1,113	1,041	72	7.9	7.7	11.0
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	1,104	842	262	186	142	44	16.8	16.8	16.8
Construction and extraction occupations	7,978	7,775	203	686	671	15	8.6	8.6	7.4
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	5,018	4,825	193	241	228	13	4.8	4.7	6.8
Production, transportation, and material-moving occupations	17,952	13,917	4,035	1,161	729	432	6.5	5.2	10.7
Production occupations	8,726	6,176	2,550	562	310	252	6.4	5.0	9.9
Transportation and material-moving occupations	9,226	7,741	1,484	599	419	180	6.5	5.4	12.1
White, 16 years and older[2]	117,553	63,917	53,635	5,962	2,991	2,971	5.1	4.7	5.5
Management, professional, and related occupations	46,224	22,718	23,507	836	388	448	1.8	1.7	1.9
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	19,861	11,637	8,223	380	216	164	1.9	1.9	2.0
Professional and related occupations	26,364	11,080	15,284	456	172	284	1.7	1.6	1.9
Service occupations	18,278	7,971	10,307	2,072	764	1,309	11.3	9.6	12.7
Sales and office occupations	26,916	10,556	16,361	1,311	428	883	4.9	4.1	5.4
Sales and related occupations	12,837	6,666	6,171	844	276	568	6.6	4.1	9.2
Office and administrative support occupations	14,079	3,889	10,190	467	152	315	3.3	3.9	3.1
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	12,341	11,818	523	952	895	58	7.7	7.6	11.0
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	982	762	219	161	124	37	16.4	16.2	17.0
Construction and extraction occupations	6,997	6,836	160	587	578	9	8.4	8.5	5.4
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	4,363	4,219	143	204	192	12	4.7	4.6	8.3
Production, transportation, and material-moving occupations	13,695	10,773	2,923	785	511	275	5.7	4.7	9.4
Production occupations	6,805	4,991	1,814	373	220	152	5.5	4.4	8.4

Table 4. People in the labor force for 27 weeks or more who worked during the year: poverty status by occupation of longest job held, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and gender, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

Occupation, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total	Men	Women	Below poverty level			Rate[1]		
				Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Transportation and material-moving occupations	6,890	5,782	1,108	413	291	122	6.0	5.0	11.0
Black or African American, 16 years and older[2]	17,521	8,138	9,383	1,824	582	1,242	10.4	7.2	13.2
Management, professional, and related occupations	5,114	1,942	3,171	167	42	125	3.3	2.2	3.9
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	1,936	871	1,066	66	23	43	3.4	2.6	4.0
Professional and related occupations	3,177	1,071	2,106	102	20	82	3.2	1.8	3.9
Service occupations	4,268	1,749	2,519	819	193	626	19.2	11.0	24.8
Sales and office occupations	4,355	1,426	2,929	486	117	370	11.2	8.2	12.6
Sales and related occupations	1,728	678	1,050	304	60	244	17.6	8.9	23.3
Office and administrative support occupations	2,627	748	1,879	182	56	125	6.9	7.5	6.7
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	977	894	83	89	80	9	9.1	9.0	10.3
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	59	40	19	12	9	3	20.0	(3)	(3)
Construction and extraction occupations	575	544	31	61	57	4	10.7	10.5	(3)
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	343	310	33	15	14	1	4.5	4.6	(3)
Production, transportation, and material-moving occupations	2,781	2,105	675	263	150	113	9.5	7.1	16.8
Production occupations	1,120	723	397	130	61	68	11.6	8.5	17.2
Transportation and material-moving occupations	1,660	1,382	278	134	89	45	8.1	6.4	16.2
Asian, 16 years and older[2]	8,667	4,611	4,055	359	182	177	4.1	3.9	4.4
Management, professional, and related occupations	4,332	2,339	1,993	66	37	29	1.5	1.6	1.5
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	1,490	789	701	22	13	9	1.5	1.6	1.4
Professional and related occupations	2,842	1,551	1,291	44	24	20	1.5	1.5	1.5
Service occupations	1,382	590	793	111	36	75	8.0	6.1	9.5
Sales and office occupations	1,760	808	952	93	47	46	5.3	5.8	4.8
Sales and related occupations	908	478	430	55	30	24	6.0	6.4	5.6
Office and administrative support occupations	851	330	522	38	17	22	4.5	5.0	4.1
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	312	293	19	20	18	2	6.5	6.3	(3)
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	26	15	11	7	5	2	(3)	(3)	(3)
Construction and extraction occupations	122	121	1	8	8	–	(3)	(3)	(3)
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	165	158	7	6	6	–	3.6	3.8	(3)
Production, transportation, and material-moving occupations	876	579	297	69	44	25	7.8	7.6	8.4
Production occupations	534	284	250	36	16	20	6.8	5.7	8.0

Table 4. People in the labor force for 27 weeks or more who worked during the year: poverty status by occupation of longest job held, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and gender, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

Occupation, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total	Men	Women	Below poverty level			Rate[1]		
				Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Transportation and material-moving occupations	342	295	47	32	28	5	9.5	9.3	(3)
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 16 years and older[2]	23,951	13,917	10,034	2,647	1,462	1,185	11.1	10.5	11.8
Management, professional, and related occupations	4,889	2,289	2,600	176	81	95	3.6	3.5	3.7
Management, business, and financial operations occupations	2,148	1,163	986	95	54	41	4.4	4.6	4.2
Professional and related occupations	2,740	1,126	1,614	81	27	54	3.0	2.4	3.4
Service occupations	5,866	2,684	3,182	1,057	456	601	18.0	17.0	18.9
Sales and office occupations	5,086	2,036	3,050	443	140	302	8.7	6.9	9.9
Sales and related occupations	2,349	1,093	1,256	282	77	204	12.0	7.1	16.2
Office and administrative support occupations	2,737	943	1,793	161	63	98	5.9	6.7	5.5
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	4,083	3,859	224	576	547	29	14.1	14.2	12.9
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	562	431	132	105	82	23	18.7	19	17.5
Construction and extraction occupations	2,605	2,533	72	387	383	4	14.9	15.1	(3)
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations	916	895	21	84	82	2	9.2	9.2	(3)
Production, transportation, and material-moving occupations	4,009	3,036	972	395	239	157	9.9	7.9	16.1
Production occupations	1,926	1,291	635	184	94	90	9.6	7.3	14.2
Transportation and material-moving occupations	2,082	1,746	337	211	145	66	10.1	8.3	19.7

[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.
[2]Estimates for the occupational groups do not sum to totals because data includes the long-term unemployed with no previous work experience and a small number of people whose last job was in the Armed Forces.
[3]Data not shown where base is less than 80,000.
Note: Estimates for the race groups shown (White, Black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. People whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Dash represents or rounds to zero.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

Table 5. Primary families: poverty status, presence of related children, and work experience of family members in the labor force for 27 weeks or more, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

See footnotes at end of table.

Characteristic	Total families	At or above poverty level	Below poverty level	Rate[1]
Total primary families	66,732	61,624	5,108	7.7
With related children under 18 years	35,145	30,897	4,248	12.1
Without children	31,587	30,726	860	2.7
With one member in the labor force	28,974	24,659	4,315	14.9
With two or more members in the labor force	37,758	36,965	793	2.1
With two members	31,366	30,641	725	2.3
With three or more members	6,393	6,324	69	1.1
Married-couple families	49,325	47,215	2,110	4.3
With related children under 18 years	24,555	22,891	1,664	6.8
Without children	24,770	24,324	446	1.8
With one member in the labor force	17,162	15,570	1,592	9.3
Husband	12,276	11,048	1,228	10.0
Wife	4,209	3,917	292	6.9
Relative	676	605	72	10.6
With two or more members in the labor force	32,163	31,645	518	1.6
With two members	27,024	26,537	486	1.8
With three or more members	5,140	5,108	32	0.6
Families maintained by women	12,148	9,702	2,445	20.1
With related children under 18 years	7,946	5,784	2,162	27.2
Without children	4,202	3,918	283	6.7
With one member in the labor force	8,543	6,317	2,226	26.1
Householder	6,982	5,040	1,942	27.8
Relative	1,561	1,277	283	18.2
With two or more members in the labor force	3,605	3,386	219	6.1
Families maintained by men	5,259	4,706	553	10.5
With related children under 18 years	2,644	2,222	422	16.0
Without children	2,615	2,484	131	5.0
With one member in the labor force	3,269	2,772	497	15.2
Householder	2,667	2,240	427	16.0
Relative	602	532	70	11.6

Table 5. Primary families: poverty status, presence of related children, and work experience of family members in the labor force for 27 weeks or more, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total families	At or above poverty level	Below poverty level	Rate[1]
With two or more members in the labor force	1,990	1,934	56	2.8

[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.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

Table 6. People in families and unrelated individuals: poverty status and work experience, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

Poverty status and work experience	Total people	In married-couple families				In families maintained by women			In families maintained by men			Unrelated individuals
		Hus-bands	Wives	Related children under 18 years	Other relatives	House-holder	Related children under 18 years	Other relatives	House-holder	Related children under 18 years	Other relatives	
See footnotes at end of table.												
Total												
All people[1]	250,080	59,362	59,951	5,573	21,458	15,516	2,161	14,168	6,125	644	6,465	58,657
With labor force activity	162,757	45,113	37,048	1,335	13,485	10,756	388	8,476	4,685	142	3,994	37,336
1 to 26 weeks	12,438	1,571	2,730	776	2,412	624	235	1,095	254	81	342	2,318
27 weeks or more	150,319	43,542	34,318	558	11,073	10,131	153	7,381	4,431	61	3,652	35,018
With no labor force activity	87,323	14,249	22,903	4,239	7,973	4,760	1,773	5,691	1,439	502	2,471	21,321
At or above poverty level												
All people[1]	217,643	55,667	56,220	5,177	20,374	10,760	1,426	11,518	5,164	532	5,773	45,032
With labor force activity	150,808	43,249	36,118	1,302	13,129	8,233	319	7,580	4,140	131	3,810	32,798
1 to 26 weeks	9,975	1,423	2,515	754	2,305	236	183	823	183	71	308	1,175
27 weeks or more	140,832	41,826	33,603	548	10,824	7,996	136	6,757	3,957	60	3,502	31,623
With no labor force activity	66,835	12,418	20,102	3,875	7,245	2,528	1,107	3,938	1,024	401	1,963	12,234
Below poverty level												
All people[1]	32,437	3,695	3,732	396	1,084	4,756	735	2,649	961	112	692	13,625
With labor force activity	11,950	1,864	930	33	356	2,523	69	896	545	11	184	4,538
1 to 26 weeks	2,463	149	216	23	108	388	51	271	72	9	34	1,143
27 weeks or more	9,487	1,715	715	10	248	2,135	18	625	474	1	150	3,395
With no labor force activity	20,488	1,831	2,801	363	728	2,232	666	1,753	415	102	509	9,087
Rate[2]												
All people[1]	13.0	6.2	6.2	7.1	5.1	30.7	34.0	18.7	15.7	17.4	10.7	23.2
With labor force activity	7.3	4.1	2.5	2.5	2.6	23.5	17.8	10.6	11.6	7.6	4.6	12.2
1 to 26 weeks	19.8	9.5	7.9	2.9	4.5	62.1	21.9	24.8	28.1	11.6	9.9	49.3

Table 6. People in families and unrelated individuals: poverty status and work experience, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

Poverty status and work experience	Total people	In married-couple families				In families maintained by women			In families maintained by men			Unrelated individuals
		Hus-bands	Wives	Related children under 18 years	Other relatives	House-holder	Related children under 18 years	Other relatives	House-holder	Related children under 18 years	Other relatives	
27 weeks or more	6.3	3.9	2.1	1.8	2.2	21.1	11.5	8.5	10.7	(3)	4.1	9.7
With no labor force activity	23.5	12.9	12.2	8.6	9.1	46.9	37.6	30.8	28.9	20.2	20.6	42.6

[1]Data on families include primary families that own or rent the housing unit as well as related and unrelated subfamilies that reside with them.
[2]Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total.
[3]Data not shown where base is less than 80,000.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

Table 7. Unrelated individuals in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: poverty status by age, gender, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and living arrangement, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

See footnotes at end of table.

Characteristic	Total	At or above poverty level	Below poverty level	Rate[1]
Age and gender				
Total unrelated individuals	35,018	31,623	3,395	9.7
16 to 19 years	390	248	142	36.5
20 to 24 years	4,128	3,340	788	19.1
25 to 64 years	28,034	25,649	2,385	8.5
65 years and older	2,465	2,385	80	3.2
Men	19,244	17,577	1,667	8.7
Women	15,774	14,045	1,728	11.0
Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity				
White	27,538	25,059	2,479	9.0
Men	15,205	13,977	1,228	8.1
Women	12,333	11,082	1,250	10.1
Black or African American	4,865	4,198	667	13.7
Men	2,568	2,251	317	12.3
Women	2,297	1,947	350	15.3
Asian	1,509	1,414	95	6.3
Men	835	799	36	4.3
Women	674	615	59	8.7
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	4,835	4,163	673	13.9
Men	3,203	2,812	390	12.2
Women	1,632	1,350	282	17.3
Living arrangement				
Living alone	18,032	16,721	1,311	7.3
Living with others	16,986	14,902	2,085	12.3

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

People whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

Note: Estimates for the race groups shown (White, Black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races.

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

Table 8. People in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: poverty status and labor market problems of full-time wage and salary workers, 2014 (Numbers in thousands)

See footnotes at end of table.

Labor market problems	Total	At or above poverty level	Below poverty level	Rate[1]
Total, full-time wage and salary workers	116,175	111,728	4,447	3.8
No unemployment, involuntary part-time employment, or low earnings[2]	96,090	95,271	819	0.9
Unemployment only	5,291	4,820	471	8.9
Involuntary part-time employment only	2,681	2,596	85	3.2
Low earnings only	8,289	6,440	1,849	22.3
Unemployment and involuntary part-time employment	1,059	973	86	8.2
Unemployment and low earnings	1,561	853	708	45.3
Involuntary part-time employment and low earnings	814	556	258	31.7
Unemployment, involuntary part-time employment, and low earnings	389	220	170	43.6
Unemployment (alone or with other problems)	8,301	6,865	1,435	17.3
Involuntary part-time employment (alone or with other problems)	4,944	4,344	600	12.1
Low earnings (alone or with other problems)	11,053	8,069	2,985	27.0

[1]Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force for 27 weeks or more.
[2]The low-earnings threshold in 2014 was $348.44 per week.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC).

Technical Notes

Source of data

The data presented in this report were collected in the Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) to the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly sample survey of about 60,000 eligible households, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Data from the CPS are used to obtain the monthly estimates of the nation's employment and unemployment levels. The ASEC, conducted in the months of February through April, includes questions about work activity and income during the previous calendar year. For instance, data collected in 2015 refer to the 2014 calendar year.

Estimates in this report are based on a sample and, consequently, may differ from figures that would have been obtained from a complete count using the same questionnaire and procedures. Sampling variability may be relatively large in cases where the numbers are small. Thus, both small estimates and small differences between estimates should be interpreted with caution. The 2014 data in this report are based on a redesigned questionnaire aimed at improving income reporting, increasing response rates and reducing reporting errors. For a detailed explanation of the ASEC supplement to the CPS, its sampling variability, and more extensive definitions than those provided in these Technical Notes, see *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014, Current Population Reports*, P60-252 (U.S. Census Bureau, September 2015). This publication is available on the U.S. Census Bureau website at https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf, and additional information about income and poverty measures is available at https://www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/income.html.

Material in this report is in the public domain and may be reproduced without permission.

Upon request, this information is available to individuals who are sensory-impaired. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

For more information on the data provided in this report, contact the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Division of Labor Force Statistics. Email: cpsinfo@bls.gov; Telephone: (202) 691-6378.

Comparability of estimates

The data presented in this release are not strictly comparable with data for earlier years due to the introduction of updated population estimates, or controls, used in the CPS. The population controls are updated each year in January to reflect the latest information about population change. Additional information is at https://www.bls.gov/cps/documentation.htm#pop.

Prior editions of this report included estimates for years through 2012 that were affected by several errors, as described at https://www.bls.gov/bls/errata/corrected-working-poor-data.htm. These errors do not affect estimates for 2014.

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 predicated on the basis of factors such as family size and the number of children under 18 years of age.

The actual poverty thresholds vary, due to the makeup of the family. In 2014, the weighted average poverty threshold for a family of four was $24,230; for a family of nine or more people, the threshold was $49,021; and for one person (unrelated individual), it was $12,071. Poverty thresholds are updated each year to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U). Thresholds do not vary geographically. (For more information, see Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014, at https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf.)

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 workweek. The year 1967 was chosen as the base year because that was the first year in which minimum-wage legislation covered essentially the same broad group of workers that currently is covered. The low-earnings level has been adjusted each year since then in accordance with the CPI-U, so the measure maintains the same real value that it held in 1987. In 2014, the low-earnings threshold was $348.44 per week. For a complete definition, see Bruce W. Klein and Philip L. Rones, "A profile of the working poor," *Monthly Labor Review*, October 1989, pp. 3–11, at https://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/1989/10/art1full.pdf.

Income. Data on income are limited to money income—before personal income taxes and payroll deductions—received in the calendar year preceding the CPS supplement. Data on income do not include the value of noncash benefits such as food stamps, Medicare, Medicaid, public housing, and employer-provided benefits. For a complete definition of income, see Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014, at https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf.

Labor force. People in the labor force are those who worked or looked for work sometime during the calendar year. The number of weeks in the labor force is accumulated over the entire year. The focus in this report is on people who were in the labor force for 27 weeks or more.

Working poor. The working poor are people who spent at least 27 weeks in the labor force (that is, working or looking for work) but whose incomes still fell below the official poverty level.

Working-poor rate. This rate is the number of individuals in the labor force for at least 27 weeks whose incomes still fell below the official poverty level as a percent of all people who were in the labor force for at least 27 weeks during the calendar year.

Involuntary part-time workers. These are people who, during 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. This term refers to the job in which a person worked the most weeks during the calendar year.

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

Family. A family is defined as a group of two or more people residing together who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. The count of families used in this report includes only primary families. A primary family consists of the reference person (householder) and all people living in the household who are related to the reference person. 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 survey interview and, thus, may be different from that of the previous year.

Unrelated individuals. These are people who are not living with anyone related to them by birth, marriage, or adoption. Such individuals may live alone, reside in a nonrelated family household, or live in group quarters with other unrelated individuals.

Related children. Related children are children under age 18 (including sons, daughters, stepchildren, and adopted children) of the husband, wife, or person maintaining the family, as well as other children related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.

Race. White, Black or African American, and Asian are categories used to describe the race of people. People in these categories are those who selected that race group only. Data for the two remaining race categories—American Indian and Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander—and for people who selected more than one race category are included in totals, but are not shown separately because the number of survey respondents is too small to develop estimates of sufficient quality for publication. In the enumeration process, race is determined by the household respondent.

Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. This refers to people who identified themselves in the CPS enumeration process as being of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish ethnicity. People whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.