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# A Profile of the Working Poor, 2008

Bureau of Labor Statistics

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# A Profile of the Working Poor, 2008

## **Abstract**

[Excerpt] This report presents data on the relationship between labor force activity and poverty status in 2008 for workers and their families. 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. The data were collected in the 2009 Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey. (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 at the end of the report.)

## **Keywords**

poverty, United States, labor force activity, workers, families

## **Comments**

### **Suggested Citation**

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# A Profile of the Working Poor, 2008



U.S. Department of Labor  
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics  
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Report 1022

In 2008, according to the Census Bureau, 39.8 million people, or 13.2 percent of the Nation's population, lived at or below the official poverty level.<sup>1</sup> The poor consisted primarily of adults who had not participated in the labor force during the year, but also included children. In 2008, about 8.9 million adults were among the "working poor," 1.4 million more than in 2007. The working poor are individuals who spent at least 27 weeks in the labor force (working or looking for work), but whose incomes still fell below the official poverty level. In 2008, the working-poor rate—the ratio of the working poor to all individuals in the labor force for at least 27 weeks—was 6.0 percent, up by 0.9 percentage point from the previous year's figure. (See tables A and 1, and chart 1.)

Following are some additional highlights from the 2008 data:

- Among persons in the labor force for 27 weeks or more in 2008, 3.9 percent of those usually employed full time were classified as working poor, compared with 13.7 percent of part-time workers.
- Black and Hispanic workers continued to be more than twice as likely as White or Asian workers to be poor.
- The likelihood of being classified as working poor greatly diminishes as workers attain higher levels of education. In 2008, only 1.7 percent of college graduates who were in the labor force for at least 27 weeks were among the working poor, compared with 18.3 percent of those with less than a high school diploma.
- 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 more likely than those without children to live in poverty.
- Women who maintain families were more than twice as likely as their male counterparts to be among the working poor.

This report presents data on the relationship between labor force activity and poverty status in 2008 for workers and their families. 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. The data were collected in the 2009 Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey. (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 at the end of the report.)

## Demographic characteristics

Of all individuals in the labor force for at least 27 weeks during 2008, nearly the same number of men and women were poor (4.4 million and 4.5 million, respectively). The working-poor rate, however, continued to be higher for women (6.5 percent) than for men (5.6 percent). (See table 2.) The levels and rates for both men and women were higher in 2008 than in 2007.

Although 71 percent of the working poor were White, Blacks and Hispanics continued to be more than twice as likely as their White counterparts to be among the working poor. White working men and women who spent at least 27 weeks or more in the labor force were about equally likely to be poor (5.1 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively), as were Hispanic men (12.6 percent) and women (12.1 percent). In contrast, Black women had a working-poor rate of 12.7 percent, higher than the rate for Black men (8.9 percent).

Young workers are more vulnerable to poverty than are other groups, in part because their earnings are lower and their unemployment is higher than their older counterparts' earnings and

Table A. **Poverty status of persons and primary families in the labor force for 27 or more weeks, 2005–08**

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	2005	2006	2007	2008
Total persons <sup>1</sup> .....	142,824	145,229	146,567	147,838
In poverty .....	7,744	7,427	7,521	8,883
Poverty rate .....	5.4	5.1	5.1	6.0
Unrelated individuals .....	31,422	31,887	33,226	32,785
In poverty .....	2,846	2,741	2,558	3,275
Poverty rate .....	9.1	8.6	7.7	10.0
Primary families <sup>2</sup> .....	64,360	65,388	65,158	65,907
In poverty .....	4,094	3,960	4,169	4,538
Poverty rate .....	6.4	6.1	6.4	6.9

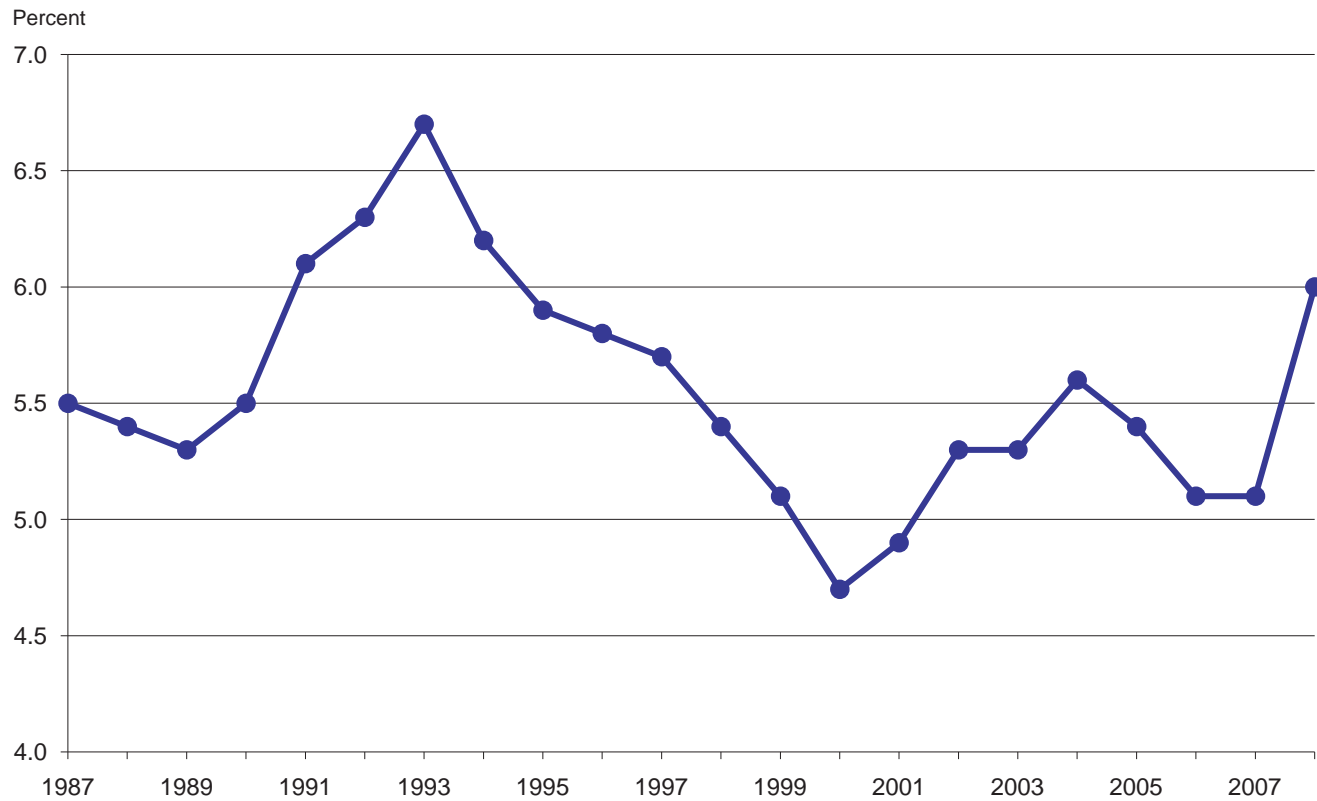
<sup>1</sup> Includes persons in families, not shown separately.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>1</sup> See *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2008*, Current Population Reports, series P-60, no. 236 (U.S. Census Bureau, September 2009), on the Internet at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2009pubs/p60-236.pdf>. (See table 4.)

**Chart 1. Poverty rate of persons in the labor force for 27 or more weeks, 1987–2008**



SOURCE: Annual Social and Economic Supplement, Current Population Survey (CPS), Bureau of Labor Statistics.

unemployment. Among youths who were in the labor force for 27 weeks or more in 2008, 12.7 percent of 16- to 19-year-olds and 11.5 percent of 20- to 24-year-olds were in poverty, roughly double the rate for workers aged 35 to 44 years (5.8 percent). Workers aged 45 to 54 years (4.1 percent) and 55 to 64 years (3.3 percent) had lower working-poor rates than the other age groups had in 2008.

### **Educational attainment**

Achieving higher levels of education greatly reduces the incidence of living in poverty. Individuals who complete more years of education have greater access to higher paying jobs—such as managerial, professional, and related occupations—than those with fewer years of education. Of all the people in the labor force for more than half of 2008, 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 (7.2 percent). Workers with an associate’s degree and those with a bachelor’s degree or higher posted the lowest working-poor rates: 3.5 percent and 1.7 percent, respectively. At all levels of educational attainment, Blacks and Hispanics were more likely to be among the working poor than were Whites or Asians. (See table 3.)

Working-poor rates were fairly similar among employed White men and women at all educational levels. For example, 18.2 percent of White women with less than a high school diploma who spent at least half the year in the labor force were among the working poor, compared with 16.1 percent of their male coun-

terparts. Among college graduates, the proportions classified as working poor were 1.8 percent and 1.2 percent for White women and White men, respectively. In contrast, Black women with less than a high school diploma were considerably more likely than their male counterparts to be among the working poor: 32.5 percent compared with 22.7 percent, respectively. Men and women of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity with less than a high school diploma also had relatively high working poor rates (20.4 percent and 23.2 percent, respectively).

### **Occupation**

The likelihood of being among the working poor varies widely by occupation. Workers in occupations requiring higher education and characterized by relatively higher earnings—such as managerial, professional, and related occupations—were least likely to be classified as working poor (2.1 percent) in 2008. In contrast, individuals employed in occupations that typically do not require high levels of education and that are characterized by relatively lower earnings were more likely to be among the working poor. For example, 12.1 percent of service workers were classified as working poor in 2008. Indeed, service occupations, with 2.9 million working poor, accounted for nearly one-third of all those classified as working poor. Among those employed in natural resource, construction, and maintenance occupations, 7.5 percent of workers were classified as working poor. Within this occupation group, 14.3 percent of workers employed in farming, forestry, and fishing occupations and 8.8

percent of those in construction and extraction occupations were among the working poor. (See table 4.)

### **Families**

In 2008, 4.5 million families were living below the poverty level despite having at least one member in the labor force for half the year or more. The 2008 figure was up from 4.2 million in 2007. Among families with only one member in the labor force for at least 27 weeks in 2008, married-couple families had a lower likelihood of living below the poverty level (8.8 percent) than did families maintained by women (23.7 percent) or by men (12.5 percent), a pattern that held regardless of which member of the married-couple family was in the labor force. (See table 5.)

Among families with at least one member in the labor force for half the year, those with children had a greater likelihood of living below the poverty level than did families without children. The proportion of families with children aged 18 years and younger that lived in poverty was 10.6 percent, in contrast to 2.5 percent for families without children. About 25 percent of families maintained by a woman with children under the age of 18 were in poverty. The proportion in poverty for families maintained by men with children also was relatively high: 12.1 percent. Among married-couple families with children, the proportion classified as working poor was 6.2 percent in 2008, up from 5.5 percent in 2007.

### **Unrelated individuals**

Of the 32.8 million unrelated individuals who were in the labor force for half the year or longer in 2008, 3.3 million lived below the poverty level. The “unrelated individuals” category includes individuals who live by themselves or with others not related to them. The working-poor rate for unrelated individuals was 10.0 percent in 2008, up from 7.7 percent in 2007. (See table 6.)

Within the group of unrelated individuals, teenagers were those most likely to be among the working poor. In 2008, nearly half of teens living on their own or with others not related to them and who were in the labor force for 27 weeks or more lived below the poverty level. Overall, the working-poor rate for women and men living alone or with unrelated individuals was about the same: 10.2 percent and 9.8 percent, respectively. The rates for unrelated individuals classified as working poor were much higher for Blacks (12.1 percent) and Hispanics (16.2 percent) than for their White counterparts (9.6 percent). (See table 7.)

Of the 3.3 million unrelated individuals considered to be among the working poor in 2008, 64.3 percent lived with others. These individuals had a working-poor rate more than twice that of individuals who lived alone. 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, workers who usually work full time are much less likely to live in poverty than are others, 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, 4.1 million, or 3.6 percent, were classified as working poor in 2008, little different than the proportion in 2007. (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 Note for detailed definitions.)

In 2008, 85.8 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 nearly 7 in every 10 subject to low earnings, either alone or in combination with other labor market problems. About 38 percent experienced unemployment alone or in conjunction with other problems, up from 29 percent in 2007. In 2008, 6.7 percent of the working poor experienced all three problems: low earnings, unemployment, and involuntary part-time employment.

Some 576,000, or 14.2 percent, of the working poor who usually worked full time did not experience any of the three primary labor market problems in 2008. 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.

# Technical Note

## Source of data

The data presented in this report were collected in the Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS is a monthly sample survey of about 60,000 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 Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 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 2009 refer to the 2008 calendar year.

The 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. For a detailed explanation of the Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the CPS, its sampling variability, and more extensive definitions than those provided in this Technical Note, see *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2008*, Current Population Reports, series P-60-236 (RV), (U.S. Census Bureau, September 2009). This publication also is available on the U.S. Census Bureau Web site at <http://www.census.gov/prod/2009pubs/p60-236.pdf>.

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

## Comparability of estimates

The 2008 estimates in this report, which were collected in the 2009 Annual Social and Economic Supplement to the CPS, are not strictly comparable with data for 2007 and earlier years because of the introduction in January 2009 of revised population controls used in the CPS. For additional information, see "Adjustments to Household Survey Population Estimates in January 2009," on the Internet at <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cps09adj.pdf>.

## 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 in accordance with the makeup of the family. In 2008, the average poverty threshold for a family of four was \$22,025; for a family of nine or more persons, the threshold was \$44,346; and for an unrelated individual aged 65 years or older, it was \$10,326. 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 *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2008*, cited earlier.)

**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 that the measure maintains the same real value that it held in 1987. In 2008, the low-earnings threshold was \$316.89 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, on the Internet at <http://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 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, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2008*, previously cited.

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

**Involuntary part-time workers.** These are persons 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 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 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 persons 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 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 live alone, reside in a nonrelated family household, or live in group quarters with other unrelated individuals.

**Related children.** Related children are children (including sons, daughters, and step- or 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 or Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian or 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.** Hispanic or Latino ethnicity is assigned to persons who identified themselves in the CPS enumeration process as being Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino. People whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

Table 1. **People in the labor force: poverty status and work experience by weeks in the labor force, 2008**

(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
<b>TOTAL</b>			
Total in labor force .....	160,652	147,838	135,015
Did not work during the year .....	3,187	1,647	1,403
Worked during the year .....	157,465	146,191	133,611
Usual full-time workers .....	125,113	120,635	113,484
Usual part-time workers .....	32,352	25,556	20,127
Involuntary part-time workers .....	8,478	7,325	6,204
Voluntary part-time workers .....	23,875	18,231	13,923
<b>At or above poverty level</b>			
Total in labor force .....	149,416	138,955	127,526
Did not work during the year .....	2,004	945	818
Worked during the year .....	147,412	138,011	126,708
Usual full-time workers .....	119,582	115,949	109,360
Usual part-time workers .....	27,830	22,062	17,348
Involuntary part-time workers .....	6,372	5,535	4,692
Voluntary part-time workers .....	21,457	16,527	12,656
<b>Below poverty level</b>			
Total in labor force .....	11,236	8,883	7,489
Did not work during the year .....	1,183	702	586
Worked during the year .....	10,053	8,180	6,903
Usual full-time workers .....	5,531	4,687	4,124
Usual part-time workers .....	4,523	3,494	2,779
Involuntary part-time workers .....	2,105	1,790	1,512
Voluntary part-time workers .....	2,417	1,704	1,267
<b>Rate <sup>1</sup></b>			
Total in labor force .....	7.0	6.0	5.5
Did not work during the year .....	37.1	42.6	41.7
Worked during the year .....	6.4	5.6	5.2
Usual full-time workers .....	4.4	3.9	3.6
Usual part-time workers .....	14.0	13.7	13.8
Involuntary part-time workers .....	24.8	24.4	24.4
Voluntary part-time workers .....	10.1	9.3	9.1

<sup>1</sup> Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total in the labor force.



**Table 2. People in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: poverty status by age, sex, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 2008**

(Numbers in thousands)

Age and sex	Total	White	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Below poverty level				
						Total	White	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino ethnicity
Total, 16 years and older .....	147,838	120,660	16,817	6,772	21,005	8,883	6,321	1,844	349	2,604
16 to 19 years .....	4,079	3,357	494	73	654	518	365	110	16	117
20 to 24 years .....	13,311	10,688	1,680	453	2,415	1,525	1,094	303	38	368
25 to 34 years .....	32,349	25,626	4,121	1,627	6,172	2,555	1,753	614	72	858
35 to 44 years .....	33,689	26,892	4,120	1,852	5,539	1,953	1,389	398	99	716
45 to 54 years .....	35,633	29,385	3,906	1,654	3,941	1,462	1,053	291	75	366
55 to 64 years .....	22,349	19,088	2,000	891	1,849	738	558	111	45	156
65 years and older .....	6,428	5,624	495	221	434	132	109	16	3	22
Men, 16 years and older .....	79,280	65,908	7,817	3,621	12,593	4,418	3,331	698	195	1,585
16 to 19 years .....	2,066	1,701	235	46	353	232	164	46	9	59
20 to 24 years .....	7,042	5,720	813	238	1,419	694	510	118	15	221
25 to 34 years .....	17,854	14,522	1,935	859	3,947	1,229	941	192	39	539
35 to 44 years .....	18,403	15,014	1,922	1,021	3,363	1,053	807	152	63	458
45 to 54 years .....	18,618	15,622	1,777	853	2,210	750	557	128	40	196
55 to 64 years .....	11,705	10,147	901	467	1,053	398	302	57	25	95
65 years and older .....	3,593	3,182	234	137	248	61	50	5	3	16
Women, 16 years and older .....	68,558	54,752	9,000	3,151	8,412	4,464	2,990	1,146	154	1,020
16 to 19 years .....	2,013	1,655	260	27	301	286	201	64	7	59
20 to 24 years .....	6,269	4,968	868	216	996	831	584	185	23	147
25 to 34 years .....	14,495	11,104	2,186	768	2,225	1,326	813	422	33	319
35 to 44 years .....	15,286	11,877	2,198	831	2,176	899	583	246	36	258
45 to 54 years .....	17,015	13,763	2,129	801	1,731	712	496	163	35	170
55 to 64 years .....	10,644	8,942	1,099	424	797	340	256	54	20	61
65 years and older .....	2,836	2,441	261	84	186	70	59	11	-	6

Age and sex	Rate <sup>1</sup>				
	Total	White	Black or African American	Asian	Hispanic or Latino ethnicity
Total, 16 years and older .....	6.0	5.2	11.0	5.1	12.4
16 to 19 years .....	12.7	10.9	22.3	21.4	17.9
20 to 24 years .....	11.5	10.2	18.1	8.4	15.2
25 to 34 years .....	7.9	6.8	14.9	4.4	13.9
35 to 44 years .....	5.8	5.2	9.7	5.4	12.9
45 to 54 years .....	4.1	3.6	7.5	4.5	9.3
55 to 64 years .....	3.3	2.9	5.5	5.1	8.5
65 years and older .....	2.0	1.9	3.2	1.3	5.1
Men, 16 years and older .....	5.6	5.1	8.9	5.4	12.6
16 to 19 years .....	11.2	9.6	19.7	( <sup>2</sup> )	16.7
20 to 24 years .....	9.8	8.9	14.5	6.3	15.6
25 to 34 years .....	6.9	6.5	9.9	4.6	13.7
35 to 44 years .....	5.7	5.4	7.9	6.2	13.6
45 to 54 years .....	4.0	3.6	7.2	4.7	8.9
55 to 64 years .....	3.4	3.0	6.3	5.4	9.0
65 years and older .....	1.7	1.6	1.9	2.0	6.5
Women, 16 years and older .....	6.5	5.5	12.7	4.9	12.1
16 to 19 years .....	14.2	12.1	24.8	( <sup>2</sup> )	19.4
20 to 24 years .....	13.3	11.7	21.4	10.8	14.7
25 to 34 years .....	9.1	7.3	19.3	4.3	14.3
35 to 44 years .....	5.9	4.9	11.2	4.3	11.9
45 to 54 years .....	4.2	3.6	7.7	4.3	9.8
55 to 64 years .....	3.2	2.9	4.9	4.8	7.7
65 years and older .....	2.5	2.4	4.3	0.2	3.2

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

<sup>2</sup> Data not shown where base is less than 80,000.

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

American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race. Dash represents or rounds to zero.

**Table 3. People in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: poverty status by educational attainment, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and sex, 2008**

(Numbers in thousands)

Educational attainment, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total	Men	Women	Below poverty level			Rate <sup>1</sup>		
				Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Total, 16 years and older .....	147,838	79,280	68,558	8,883	4,418	4,464	6.0	5.6	6.5
Less than a high school diploma .....	15,097	9,580	5,517	2,769	1,628	1,141	18.3	17.0	20.7
Less than 1 year of high school .....	4,733	3,210	1,522	942	633	309	19.9	19.7	20.3
1-3 years of high school .....	8,616	5,282	3,334	1,554	832	722	18.0	15.7	21.7
4 years of high school, no diploma .....	1,749	1,087	661	273	164	109	15.6	15.1	16.5
High school graduates, no college <sup>2</sup> .....	43,085	24,404	18,681	3,113	1,508	1,605	7.2	6.2	8.6
Some college or associate degree .....	43,132	21,272	21,860	2,201	907	1,294	5.1	4.3	5.9
Some college, no degree .....	28,650	14,677	13,974	1,696	736	960	5.9	5.0	6.9
Associate degree .....	14,482	6,596	7,886	505	171	334	3.5	2.6	4.2
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>3</sup> .....	46,524	24,024	22,500	800	375	425	1.7	1.6	1.9
White, 16 years and older .....	120,660	65,908	54,752	6,321	3,331	2,990	5.2	5.1	5.5
Less than a high school diploma .....	12,319	8,117	4,202	2,076	1,309	767	16.9	16.1	18.2
Less than 1 year of high school .....	4,110	2,877	1,233	804	556	247	19.6	19.3	20.0
1-3 years of high school .....	6,913	4,399	2,513	1,109	650	459	16.0	14.8	18.3
4 years of high school, no diploma .....	1,297	842	456	163	103	60	12.6	12.2	13.3
High school graduates, no college <sup>2</sup> .....	35,023	20,162	14,861	2,178	1,110	1,068	6.2	5.5	7.2
Some college or associate degree .....	34,913	17,544	17,369	1,491	661	830	4.3	3.8	4.8
Some college, no degree .....	22,928	12,019	10,909	1,152	538	614	5.0	4.5	5.6
Associate degree .....	11,985	5,525	6,460	339	123	217	2.8	2.2	3.4
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>3</sup> .....	38,404	20,084	18,320	576	251	325	1.5	1.2	1.8
Black or African American, 16 years and older .....	16,817	7,817	9,000	1,844	698	1,146	11.0	8.9	12.7
Less than a high school diploma .....	1,715	849	866	474	193	282	27.7	22.7	32.5
Less than 1 year of high school .....	229	116	113	67	33	34	29.1	28.2	29.9
1-3 years of high school .....	1,174	566	608	324	115	209	27.6	20.3	34.4
4 years of high school, no diploma .....	312	166	146	84	45	39	26.8	26.9	26.5
High school graduates, no college <sup>2</sup> .....	5,888	3,083	2,804	735	284	451	12.5	9.2	16.1
Some college or associate degree .....	5,619	2,362	3,257	539	175	365	9.6	7.4	11.2
Some college, no degree .....	3,990	1,734	2,256	413	144	269	10.3	8.3	11.9
Associate degree .....	1,629	628	1,001	127	31	96	7.8	4.9	9.5
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>3</sup> .....	3,595	1,523	2,072	95	47	48	2.6	3.1	2.3
Asian, 16 years and older .....	6,772	3,621	3,151	349	195	154	5.1	5.4	4.9
Less than a high school diploma .....	520	274	245	84	48	36	16.2	17.5	14.9
Less than 1 year of high school .....	230	106	124	39	23	16	16.9	21.7	12.8
1-3 years of high school .....	211	125	86	33	17	16	15.7	13.6	18.6
4 years of high school, no diploma .....	79	43	35	13	8	5	( <sup>4</sup> )	( <sup>4</sup> )	( <sup>4</sup> )
High school graduates, no college <sup>2</sup> .....	1,156	576	580	85	50	34	7.3	8.7	5.9
Some college or associate degree .....	1,334	704	631	73	28	45	5.5	4.0	7.1
Some college, no degree .....	844	463	382	60	24	36	7.1	5.1	9.4
Associate degree .....	490	241	249	13	4	9	2.7	1.8	3.6
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>3</sup> .....	3,762	2,067	1,695	107	68	38	2.8	3.3	2.3
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 16 years and older .....	21,005	12,593	8,412	2,604	1,585	1,020	12.4	12.6	12.1
Less than a high school diploma .....	6,764	4,673	2,091	1,438	953	484	21.3	20.4	23.2
Less than 1 year of high school .....	3,474	2,447	1,027	730	504	226	21.0	20.6	22.0
1-3 years of high school .....	2,731	1,820	912	615	377	238	22.5	20.7	26.1
4 years of high school, no diploma .....	559	406	153	93	73	21	16.7	17.9	13.5
High school graduates, no college <sup>2</sup> .....	6,502	3,939	2,563	712	418	294	10.9	10.6	11.5
Some college or associate degree .....	4,844	2,496	2,348	362	175	187	7.5	7.0	8.0
Some college, no degree .....	3,466	1,843	1,623	266	137	128	7.7	7.5	7.9
Associate degree .....	1,379	653	725	96	37	59	7.0	5.7	8.1
Bachelor's degree and higher <sup>3</sup> .....	2,894	1,485	1,410	93	39	54	3.2	2.6	3.8

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

<sup>2</sup> Includes people with a high school diploma or equivalent.

<sup>3</sup> Includes people with bachelor's, master's, professional, and doctoral degrees.

<sup>4</sup> Data not shown where base is less than 80,000.

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

**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, 2008**

(Numbers in thousands)

Occupation, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total	Men	Women	Below poverty level			Rate <sup>1</sup>		
				Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Total, 16 years and older <sup>2</sup> .....	146,198	78,307	67,891	8,180	3,985	4,196	5.6	5.1	6.2
Management, professional, and related occupations ....	52,716	25,592	27,124	1,036	424	612	2.0	1.7	2.3
Management, business, and financial operations occupations .....	22,235	12,654	9,581	407	230	177	1.8	1.8	1.9
Professional and related occupations .....	30,481	12,939	17,543	628	194	434	2.1	1.5	2.5
Service occupations .....	24,480	10,405	14,075	2,964	1,045	1,919	12.1	10.0	13.6
Sales and office occupations .....	35,020	12,987	22,033	1,828	604	1,224	5.2	4.7	5.6
Sales and related occupations .....	16,019	8,251	7,768	1,096	377	719	6.8	4.6	9.3
Office and administrative support occupations .....	19,001	4,736	14,265	732	228	504	3.9	4.8	3.5
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations .....	15,460	14,855	606	1,154	1,105	49	7.5	7.4	8.0
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations .....	1,056	848	209	142	111	31	13.5	13.1	14.7
Construction and extraction occupations .....	9,010	8,812	198	809	794	15	9.0	9.0	7.4
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations .....	5,394	5,195	199	203	200	3	3.8	3.8	1.6
Production, transportation, and material-moving occupations .....	18,406	14,381	4,025	1,194	806	388	6.5	5.6	9.6
Production occupations .....	9,042	6,436	2,606	518	291	227	5.7	4.5	8.7
Transportation and material-moving occupations .....	9,364	7,945	1,419	676	515	160	7.2	6.5	11.3
White, 16 years and older <sup>2</sup> .....	119,535	65,250	54,285	5,876	3,050	2,826	4.9	4.7	5.2
Management, professional, and related occupations ....	43,813	21,674	22,138	749	336	413	1.7	1.6	1.9
Management, business, and financial operations occupations .....	19,091	11,177	7,914	330	194	136	1.7	1.7	1.7
Professional and related occupations .....	24,722	10,498	14,225	419	142	277	1.7	1.4	1.9
Service occupations .....	18,638	8,058	10,580	2,070	759	1,310	11.1	9.4	12.4
Sales and office occupations .....	28,769	10,706	18,063	1,240	427	814	4.3	4.0	4.5
Sales and related occupations .....	13,387	7,037	6,350	758	272	486	5.7	3.9	7.6
Office and administrative support occupations .....	15,382	3,670	11,712	482	154	328	3.1	4.2	2.8
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations .....	13,683	13,195	488	991	951	40	7.2	7.2	8.2
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations .....	950	772	177	126	101	25	13.2	13.0	14.0
Construction and extraction occupations .....	8,060	7,895	165	696	682	13	8.6	8.6	8.2
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations .....	4,674	4,528	146	170	169	2	3.6	3.7	1.1
Production, transportation, and material-moving occupations .....	14,534	11,545	2,990	820	576	245	5.6	5.0	8.2
Production occupations .....	7,323	5,356	1,967	352	209	143	4.8	3.9	7.3
Transportation and material-moving occupations .....	7,212	6,188	1,023	469	367	102	6.5	5.9	9.9
Black or African American, 16 years and older <sup>2</sup> .....	16,429	7,583	8,846	1,645	581	1,064	10.0	7.7	12.0
Management, professional, and related occupations ....	4,565	1,682	2,883	181	43	138	4.0	2.5	4.8
Management, business, and financial operations occupations .....	1,623	678	945	41	17	24	2.5	2.5	2.5
Professional and related occupations .....	2,943	1,005	1,938	140	26	115	4.8	2.6	5.9
Service occupations .....	4,002	1,541	2,461	650	173	477	16.2	11.2	19.4
Sales and office occupations .....	4,041	1,352	2,689	444	112	332	11.0	8.3	12.3
Sales and related occupations .....	1,594	654	940	253	64	189	15.9	9.8	20.1
Office and administrative support occupations .....	2,447	698	1,749	191	48	142	7.8	6.9	8.1
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations .....	1,060	981	79	108	104	4	10.2	10.6	( <sup>3</sup> )
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations .....	47	37	10	9	6	2	( <sup>3</sup> )	( <sup>3</sup> )	( <sup>3</sup> )
Construction and extraction occupations .....	550	525	25	73	73	-	13.3	13.9	( <sup>3</sup> )
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations .....	463	419	44	26	25	2	5.6	5.9	( <sup>3</sup> )
Production, transportation, and material-moving occupations .....	2,748	2,017	732	262	149	113	9.5	7.4	15.4
Production occupations .....	1,129	710	419	109	46	63	9.6	6.4	15.1
Transportation and material-moving occupations .....	1,619	1,306	313	153	103	50	9.4	7.9	16.0

See footnotes at end of table.

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, 2008 — Continued

(Numbers in thousands)

Occupation, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	Total	Men	Women	Below poverty level			Rate <sup>1</sup>		
				Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Asian, 16 years and older <sup>2</sup> .....	6,702	3,581	3,121	322	181	141	4.8	5.1	4.5
Management, professional, and related occupations ....	3,305	1,751	1,554	81	37	44	2.5	2.1	2.9
Management, business, and financial operations occupations .....	1,107	595	512	30	16	13	2.7	2.8	2.6
Professional and related occupations .....	2,198	1,156	1,041	51	20	31	2.3	1.7	3.0
Service occupations .....	1,069	463	606	112	58	54	10.5	12.6	8.9
Sales and office occupations .....	1,354	622	732	59	33	26	4.4	5.3	3.5
Sales and related occupations .....	696	405	291	39	21	18	5.6	5.2	6.2
Office and administrative support occupations .....	658	217	441	20	12	8	3.0	5.5	1.8
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations .....	328	304	24	14	14	—	4.1	4.5	( <sup>3</sup> )
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations .....	26	13	13	—	—	—	( <sup>3</sup> )	( <sup>3</sup> )	( <sup>3</sup> )
Construction and extraction occupations .....	138	134	5	11	11	—	8.2	8.5	( <sup>3</sup> )
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations .....	163	157	6	2	2	—	1.3	1.4	( <sup>3</sup> )
Production, transportation, and material-moving occupations .....	644	439	205	56	39	17	8.7	8.9	8.3
Production occupations .....	370	210	160	32	18	14	8.7	8.8	8.5
Transportation and material-moving occupations .....	274	229	45	24	21	3	8.8	9.0	( <sup>3</sup> )
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, 16 years and older <sup>2</sup> .....	20,762	12,440	8,322	2,474	1,499	975	11.9	12.1	11.7
Management, professional, and related occupations ....	3,741	1,740	2,001	147	66	82	3.9	3.8	4.1
Management, business, and financial operations occupations .....	1,595	879	716	53	31	23	3.4	3.5	3.2
Professional and related occupations .....	2,146	861	1,285	94	35	59	4.4	4.0	4.6
Service occupations .....	5,071	2,476	2,596	932	425	507	18.4	17.2	19.5
Sales and office occupations .....	4,339	1,701	2,638	373	143	230	8.6	8.4	8.7
Sales and related occupations .....	1,929	930	999	226	77	149	11.7	8.3	14.9
Office and administrative support occupations .....	2,410	772	1,638	147	65	81	6.1	8.5	5.0
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations .....	3,870	3,709	160	611	580	31	15.8	15.6	19.0
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations .....	486	386	100	109	83	26	22.5	21.6	26.0
Construction and extraction occupations .....	2,600	2,570	30	422	419	3	16.2	16.3	( <sup>3</sup> )
Installation, maintenance, and repair occupations .....	784	753	31	79	78	2	10.1	10.3	( <sup>3</sup> )
Production, transportation, and material-moving occupations .....	3,735	2,810	925	410	286	124	11.0	10.2	13.4
Production occupations .....	1,924	1,290	634	197	116	80	10.2	9.0	12.6
Transportation and material-moving occupations .....	1,810	1,520	291	213	170	44	11.8	11.2	15.0

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Includes the long-term unemployed with no previous work experience and a small number of people whose last job was in the Armed Forces.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

**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, 2008**

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total families	At or above poverty level	Below poverty level	Rate <sup>1</sup>
Total primary families .....	65,907	61,369	4,538	6.9
With related children under 18 years .....	35,700	31,928	3,772	10.6
Without children .....	30,207	29,441	765	2.5
With one member in the labor force .....	27,612	23,850	3,762	13.6
With two or more members in the labor force .....	38,295	37,519	776	2.0
With two members .....	32,115	31,433	682	2.1
With three or more members .....	6,180	6,086	94	1.5
Married-couple families .....	49,906	47,915	1,992	4.0
With related children under 18 years .....	25,646	24,060	1,586	6.2
Without children .....	24,261	23,855	406	1.7
With one member in the labor force .....	16,659	15,186	1,473	8.8
Husband .....	11,959	10,812	1,147	9.6
Wife .....	4,004	3,734	269	6.7
Relative .....	696	639	56	8.1
With two or more members in the labor force .....	33,247	32,729	519	1.6
With two members .....	28,145	27,683	462	1.6
With three or more members .....	5,102	5,046	56	1.1
Families maintained by women .....	11,419	9,281	2,138	18.7
With related children under 18 years .....	7,661	5,764	1,897	24.8
Without children .....	3,759	3,518	241	6.4
With one member in the labor force .....	8,213	6,267	1,946	23.7
Householder .....	6,774	5,082	1,692	25.0
Relative .....	1,439	1,185	255	17.7
With two or more members in the labor force .....	3,206	3,014	192	6.0
Families maintained by men .....	4,581	4,173	408	8.9
With related children under 18 years .....	2,394	2,105	289	12.1
Without children .....	2,187	2,069	119	5.4
With one member in the labor force .....	2,740	2,398	343	12.5
Householder .....	2,284	1,994	291	12.7
Relative .....	456	404	52	11.4
With two or more members in the labor force .....	1,841	1,776	65	3.5

<sup>1</sup> 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.

Table 6. People in families and unrelated individuals: poverty status and work experience, 2008

(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	
<b>TOTAL</b>												
All people <sup>1</sup> .....	235,079	58,404	59,088	5,823	19,522	14,457	2,245	12,073	5,236	591	5,644	51,994
With labor force activity .....	160,652	45,889	38,512	1,729	12,969	10,383	508	7,516	4,157	136	3,883	34,969
1 to 26 weeks .....	12,814	1,406	2,965	1,009	2,626	704	296	999	211	85	330	2,184
27 weeks or more .....	147,838	44,483	35,546	720	10,343	9,679	213	6,516	3,947	52	3,553	32,785
With no labor force activity .....	74,427	12,515	20,577	4,095	6,552	4,074	1,737	4,557	1,078	455	1,761	17,025
<b>At or above poverty level</b>												
All people <sup>1</sup> .....	207,945	55,189	55,827	5,366	18,495	10,307	1,554	10,015	4,516	489	5,091	41,097
With labor force activity .....	149,416	44,103	37,579	1,666	12,575	8,126	402	6,733	3,764	119	3,663	30,685
1 to 26 weeks .....	10,461	1,261	2,725	965	2,497	299	227	813	153	71	275	1,175
27 weeks or more .....	138,955	42,842	34,854	701	10,078	7,828	175	5,921	3,611	48	3,388	29,511
With no labor force activity .....	58,529	11,086	18,248	3,700	5,920	2,180	1,152	3,282	752	370	1,427	10,412
<b>Below poverty level</b>												
All people <sup>1</sup> .....	27,134	3,216	3,261	457	1,027	4,151	691	2,058	720	102	553	10,897
With labor force activity .....	11,236	1,787	933	63	394	2,257	106	783	394	17	219	4,284
1 to 26 weeks .....	2,353	145	241	43	129	406	68	187	57	13	55	1,009
27 weeks or more .....	8,883	1,641	692	20	265	1,851	38	596	336	—	165	3,275
With no labor force activity .....	15,898	1,429	2,329	394	632	1,894	585	1,276	326	85	334	6,613
<b>Rate <sup>2</sup></b>												
All people <sup>1</sup> .....	11.5	5.5	5.5	7.9	5.3	28.7	30.8	17.0	13.7	17.3	9.8	21.0
With labor force activity .....	7.0	3.9	2.4	3.6	3.0	21.7	20.8	10.4	9.5	12.4	5.7	12.3
1 to 26 weeks .....	18.4	10.3	8.1	4.3	4.9	57.6	23.0	18.7	27.2	15.9	16.6	46.2
27 weeks or more .....	6.0	3.7	1.9	2.7	2.6	19.1	17.8	9.1	8.5	( <sup>3</sup> )	4.6	10.0
With no labor force activity .....	21.4	11.4	11.3	9.6	9.7	46.5	33.7	28.0	30.3	18.7	19.0	38.8

<sup>1</sup> Data on families include people in primary families and unrelated subfamilies.

<sup>2</sup> Number below the poverty level as a percent of the total.

<sup>3</sup> Data not shown where base is less than 80,000.

NOTE: Dash represents or rounds to zero.

Table 7. **Unrelated individuals in the labor force for 27 weeks or more: poverty status by age, sex, race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, and living arrangement, 2008**

(Numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Total	At or above poverty level	Below poverty level	Rate <sup>1</sup>
<b>Age and sex</b>				
Total unrelated individuals .....	32,785	29,511	3,275	10.0
16 to 19 years .....	504	265	239	47.5
20 to 24 years .....	4,140	3,380	760	18.4
25 to 64 years .....	26,350	24,143	2,207	8.4
65 years and older .....	1,790	1,723	68	3.8
Men .....	18,224	16,429	1,795	9.8
Women .....	14,561	13,081	1,480	10.2
<b>Race and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity</b>				
White .....	26,564	24,027	2,537	9.6
Men .....	14,884	13,518	1,366	9.2
Women .....	11,680	10,509	1,171	10.0
Black or African American .....	4,266	3,748	517	12.1
Men .....	2,260	1,952	308	13.6
Women .....	2,006	1,796	209	10.4
Asian .....	1,048	956	92	8.8
Men .....	572	528	44	7.6
Women .....	476	428	48	10.1
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity .....	4,012	3,363	649	16.2
Men .....	2,725	2,307	419	15.4
Women .....	1,287	1,056	231	17.9
<b>Living arrangement</b>				
Living alone .....	17,472	16,302	1,170	6.7
Living with others .....	15,313	13,208	2,105	13.7

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

NOTE: Estimates for the above race groups (white, black or

African American, and Asian) do not sum to totals because data are not presented for all races. Persons whose ethnicity is identified as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

**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, 2008**

(Numbers in thousands)

Labor market problems	Total	At or above poverty level	Below poverty level	Rate <sup>1</sup>
Total, full-time wage and salary workers .....	114,029	109,980	4,050	3.6
No unemployment, involuntary part-time employment, or low earnings <sup>2</sup> .....	90,912	90,336	576	.6
Unemployment only .....	7,788	7,334	454	5.8
Involuntary part-time employment only .....	2,975	2,900	75	2.5
Low earnings only .....	7,488	5,880	1,607	21.5
Unemployment and involuntary part-time employment .....	1,594	1,472	122	7.7
Unemployment and low earnings .....	1,786	1,107	679	38.0
Involuntary part-time employment and low earnings .....	906	641	265	29.3
Unemployment, involuntary part-time employment, and low earnings .....	580	309	271	46.7
Unemployment (alone or with other problems) .....	11,749	10,223	1,526	13.0
Involuntary part-time employment (alone or with other problems) .....	6,056	5,322	734	12.1
Low earnings (alone or with other problems) .....	10,760	7,937	2,823	26.2

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

<sup>2</sup> The low-earnings threshold in 2008 was \$316.89 per week.