



VITAL WORK FORCE STATISTICS

The Changing World of Work

- Between 1900 and 2005, the percentage of the work force that is white collar grew from less than 18% of the work force to 62.6%.¹
- While manual workers comprised 41% of the work force in 1950, by 2006, their proportion had shrunk to only 23.5% of the work force.²
- The work force is more equally comprised of men and women. In 2006, women accounted for 46.3% of the work force, up from 29% in 1950.³
- Women are the majority of professional and related workers (56.9%) and the majority of office and administrative support workers (75%), yet still the minority of management occupations (36.7%). They are also the majority of those who work in service occupations (57.3%).⁴
- The service sector is, and will continue to be, the dominant employment generator in the economy, adding 18.7 million jobs by 2014. Almost 60% of all new jobs created in the U.S. between 2004 and 2014 are expected to be in service and professional and related occupations.⁵
- While employment in the service sector increases by almost 17%, manufacturing is expected to *decrease* by more than 5% between 2004 and 2014.⁶
- The number of bachelor's degrees expected to be conferred in 2016 is 19% greater than in 2008; the number of master's degrees, 22.3% greater, first-professional, 15.7% greater; and PhDs, 14.9% greater.⁷

Unions Reflect Changes in the Work Force

- White collar workers accounted for more than 51% of all union members in 2006.⁸
- There are more union members among professionals than any other occupational group.⁹
- In 2006, over 4.7 million professional and related workers were union members; nearly 5.3 million were represented by unions.¹⁰
- Union representation among professionals and related workers was about 20% in 2006, while union representation was just 13% among the total work force.¹¹
- Significant numbers of administrative support workers are represented by unions: almost 2.1 million, or 10.9% of all such workers.¹²
- Women comprised 44% of the labor movement in 2006, up from 19% in 1962.¹³
- Women, and especially women of color, are forming and joining unions at a faster rate than men. Many of the unions organizing in industries dominated by women, such as education

and government, have consistently shown much higher win rates than those unions organizing in industries with fewer women members.¹⁴

Rapid Growth in Professional and Related Occupations Will Continue

- Employment in professional and related occupations is projected to grow faster and to add more workers (six million) than any other major occupational group. This amounts to a 21.2% increase in employment for professional and technical workers between 2004 and 2014. (Total U.S. employment is projected to increase by less than 13% over this period.)¹⁵
- Three-tenths of the growth in these occupations is projected to take place in health care and social services, one-quarter in government, and one-seventh in professional, scientific and technical services.¹⁶
- Of the eight subgroups in the professional and related occupations category, three subgroups—education, training and library occupations; health care practitioners and technicians; and computer and mathematical occupations—should account for 73.8% of the job growth in this category.¹⁷
- A 6.1% increase is projected for self-employed professional and related occupations. Most growth among the self-employed is projected for two groups—arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations; and computer and mathematical occupations.¹⁸
- Health care practitioners and technical occupations are projected to add more than 1.75 million jobs between 2004 and 2014. Registered nurses will account for more than 40% of these jobs. Registered nurse is the occupation projected to experience the second-largest job growth between 2004 and 2014, increasing from 2.4 million–3.1 million.¹⁹
- Education, training and library occupations are projected to increase by 20% (versus 13% for all occupations), adding 1.74 million jobs.²⁰
- Seven out of the 10 fastest-growing occupations are health care support occupations, such as physician’s assistants. These occupations are expected to add almost 1.1 million jobs by 2014.
- In the 2000–2010 Bureau of Labor Statistics’ projection period, eight of the fastest-growing occupations were computer-related, or information technology (IT), occupations. In the most recent projections, only three IT occupations remain, which together are expected to add nearly 500,000 jobs between 2004 and 2014. Nevertheless, this is an increase over the 2002–2012 projections, when only 400,000 new IT jobs were projected.²¹
- Over 29 million Americans (20.2% of the work force) were employed in professional and related occupations in 2006. By 2014, more than 34.5 million (21% of the work force) are expected to be employed in these occupations.²²

Growing Disparities in Educational Requirements for New Jobs

- New jobs are being created disproportionately at the two ends of the educational spectrum: of all new employment openings projected between 2004 and 2014, 36.6% will require a high school diploma or less, and 35.7% will require a bachelor’s degree or higher. In the middle, just 27.7% of new jobs will require some college as the highest level of education attained.²³

- Of the 30 fastest-growing occupations between 2004–2014, 24 require a post-secondary award or higher. This proportion is up from the previous 2002–2012 projections, in which 21 out of the top 30 fastest-growing occupations required such credentials.²⁴
- Six of the 10 fastest-growing occupations require a bachelor's or associate degree: three of these are health practitioner and technician occupations, and three are computer science occupations.²⁵
- The occupations expected to add the second- and third-largest number of new jobs by 2014 are registered nurses and postsecondary teachers, both of which require degrees. Together, these occupations are expected to add more than 1.2 million new jobs.²⁶
- The number of jobs for biomedical and environmental engineers—both occupations requiring at least a bachelor's degree—are expected to increase by 30.7% and 30% respectively, more than twice as fast as overall employment growth. Computer software engineers (both applications and systems software) are projected to add 368,000 jobs by 2014, growing at a rate more than three times that of jobs overall.²⁷
- Employment for occupational and physical therapists, both of which require a master's degree, is expected to increase by 33.6% and 36.7%, respectively, both more than 2.5 times the rate of all jobs.²⁸

Women: More Degrees and Still Unequal Pay

- Women have been earning more bachelor's degrees than men since 1982, and more master's degrees than men since 1981. In 2006, women earned 57% of all bachelor's degrees, 58% of all master's, and 47% of all doctorates and first professional degrees. Women were projected to exceed 50% of enrollment for doctorates and first professional degrees for the first time in 2006.²⁹
- By 2016 women are projected to receive over 60% of bachelor degrees, 61% of master's degrees and over 53% of all doctorate and first professional degrees.³⁰
- Women are the majority of both service occupation and professional and related workers. Equal pay remains a problem in every occupational category, despite the number of degrees earned by women. In 2006, professional and technical men earned 36% more than their female counterparts; men in office and administrative support occupations earned almost 11% more, despite women constituting nearly 75% of these workers. Women in sales occupations earned 36% less than similarly employed men, while women in service occupations earned more than 21% less than men in service occupations.³¹

Working Families with Children Under Age Eighteen

- Married couples where both parents are employed are the majority (62.0%), followed by married couples with only the father employed (30.5%) while couples with only the mother employed are a small minority (4.8%).³²
- Working mothers are seven times more likely to work part-time rather than full-time as opposed to men.³³
- There are four times as many single mothers as there are single fathers.³⁴
- 71.2% of single mother's are employed while 83.1% of single fathers are employed.³⁵

- 5.1% of employed individuals in a marriage work multiple jobs.³⁶

¹ U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the U.S., Colonial Times to 1970*, 1975; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Population Survey*, 2007, www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat10.pdf

² Ibid.

³ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Perspectives on Working Women*, Bulletin 2080; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Population Survey*, 2007,.

⁴ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Population Survey*, 2007.

⁵ Ibid; Jay Berman, “Industry Output and Employment Projections to 2014”, U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, Volume 128, No. 11, November 2005.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics: 2006*.

⁸ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *News*, “Union Members in 2006”, USDL 07–0113, 2007.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Bronfenbrenner, Kate and Robert Hickey, “Changing to Organize: A National Assessment of Union Organizing Strategies”, in *Organize or Die: Labor’s Prospects in Neoliberal America*, edited by Ruth Milkmen and Kim Voss, Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2004; Bronfenbrenner, Kate, “Organizing Women: The Nature and Process of Union Organizing Efforts Among U.S. Women Workers Since Around the Mid–1990s”, *Work and Occupations*, Volume 32, No. 4, November 2005.

¹⁵ Hecker, Daniel, “Occupational Employment Projections to 2014”, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, Volume 128, No. 11, November 2005.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics: 2006*.

²⁴ *Current Population Survey*, op. cit.

²⁵ Hecker, Daniel, “Occupational Employment Projections to 2014”, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, Volume 128, No. 11, November 2005.

²⁶ Ibid; Hecker, Daniel, “Occupational Employment Projections to 2014”, U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Monthly Labor Review*, Volume 128, No. 11, November 2005.

²⁷ Hecker 2005, op. cit.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics: 2006*.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Current Population Survey*, 2007

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

For further information on professional workers, check out DPE's Web site: www.dpeaflcio.org.

The Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE) comprises 23 AFL-CIO unions representing over four million people working in professional, technical and administrative support occupations. DPE-affiliated unions represent: teachers, college professors and school administrators; library workers; nurses, doctors and other health care professionals; engineers, scientists and IT workers; journalists and writers, broadcast technicians and communications specialists; performing and visual artists; professional athletes; professional firefighters; psychologists, social workers and many others. DPE was chartered by the AFL-CIO in 1977 in recognition of the rapidly-growing professional and technical occupations.

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