

Youth unemployment in the United States

July–December 2019

National youth unemployment rate



8.0%
Youth



2.9%
Working-age adults

The youth unemployment rate (for those ages 16 to 24) was 8.0 percent in the second half of 2019. This was 2.8 times higher than the unemployment rate among working age adults (those ages 25 to 64), for whom the unemployment rate was 2.9 percent.

Youth unemployment by age group



12.0%
Youth 16 – 19



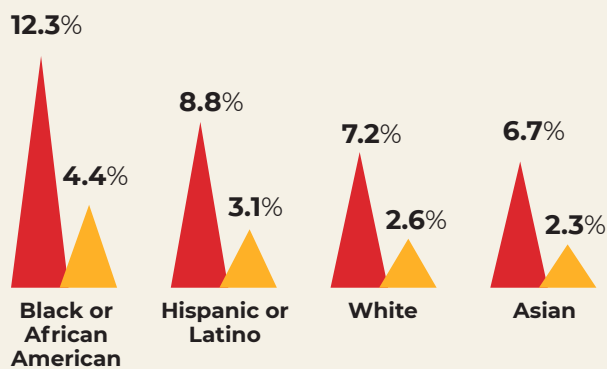
6.3%
Youth 20 – 24

Unemployment was higher for younger youth than older youth. The unemployment rate for youth ages 16 to 19 was 12.0 percent, while it was 6.3 percent among youth ages 20 to 24.

Youth unemployment by race and ethnicity

The unemployment rate was the highest among Black or African American youth (12.3 percent), followed by Hispanic or Latino youth (8.8 percent) and White youth (7.2 percent). The unemployment rate was the lowest among Asian youth (6.7 percent).

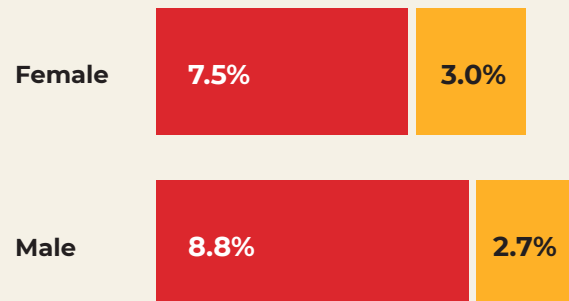
▲ Youth ▲ Working-age adults



Youth unemployment by gender

The unemployment rate was higher among male youth than female youth; however, the unemployment rate among working-age adults was higher among women than men.

■ Youth ■ Working-age adults



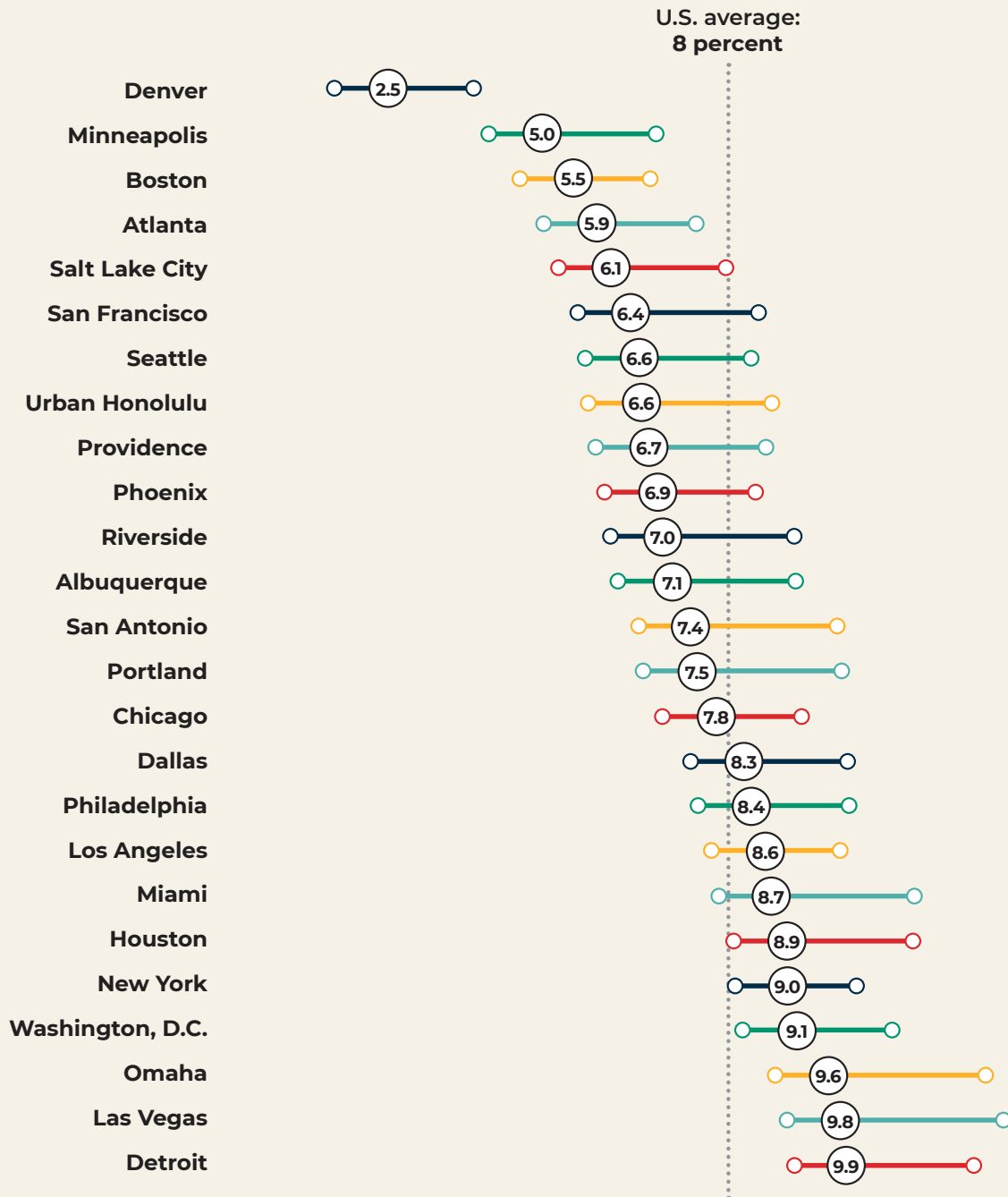
Source: Mathematica compilation based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' monthly Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey (<https://www.bls.gov/cps/data.htm>).

Notes: Estimates are based on household data and do not account for potential seasonal patterns. The unemployment rate is calculated as the percentage of people who are unemployed as a share of the labor force. We defined unemployed workers as people who were either looking for work (job seekers) or had been temporarily separated from work (people on layoff). Those who do not meet these criteria and are not employed, such as discouraged workers, are considered out of the labor force and therefore do not contribute to the unemployment rate. People who define their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino may be of any race.

Youth unemployment in large metropolitan areas

July–December 2019

Among selected large metropolitan areas, youth unemployment rates (for those ages 16 to 24) ranged from 2.5 percent to 9.9 percent in the second half of 2019. Metropolitan areas in which youth unemployment rates were above the national average for youth—8 percent—were geographically spread across the country. The three metropolitan areas with the highest youth unemployment rates were Detroit (9.9 percent), Las Vegas (9.8 percent), and Omaha (9.6 percent). The three metropolitan areas with the lowest youth unemployment rates were Denver (2.5 percent), Minneapolis (5.0 percent), and Boston (5.5 percent).



Notes: These estimates were calculated by Mathematica using the monthly Current Population Survey, and are based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' definition of unemployed and civil labor force. Margins of error, presented as horizontal lines, are based on a 90 percent level of confidence. Estimates do not account for potential seasonal patterns. Metropolitan areas are defined as Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). For example, Dallas refers to Dallas–Fort Worth–Arlington, Texas MSA. Metropolitan areas that are presented were selected based on the size of the youth labor force in the sample and the margin of error around the point estimate.