

State of Illinois
JB Pritzker, Governor

Department of Employment Security
Raymond P. Marchiori, Director



Women and Minorities in the Illinois Labor Force

2026 Progress Report



Women and Minorities in the Illinois Labor Force

2026 Progress Report

Illinois Department of Employment Security
115 South LaSalle Street
Chicago, IL 60603

Spring 2026

Prepared by:

Illinois Department of Employment Security
Economic Information & Analysis Division

Marty Johnson, MBA – Illinois Labor Market Information Director

Authors:

Jacob Kepes, PhD, Data Coordinator, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Programs
Harun Ozturkler, PhD, State Labor Demographer
Eric Makela, Labor Market Economist

Design:

Charles Carey, Graphic Designer

In response to the Progress of Women and Minorities in the Workforce Act (PA 87-0405), this report provides a biennial update on the employment progress of women and minorities in the Illinois workforce. This report tracks the status of women and minorities in the state's labor force based on the most currently available data.

The Mission of the Progress of Women and Minorities in the Workforce Program is to promote the material, social and intellectual prosperity of working men and women in Illinois by increasing public education and awareness of workplace equity and diversity and responsibly monitoring the employment progress of women and minorities in the Illinois workforce through accurate, comprehensive and informative reporting.

Note: The information in this report is subject to change at any time.

Contents

Page	Content
2	List of Figures and Tables
3	List of Tables
4	Executive Summary
5	Illinois Snapshot 2025
5	Section I: Profile of Illinois
8	Section II: An Analysis of Women and Minorities in the Illinois Labor Force
8	Population
11	Labor Force Participation
13	Unemployment
17	Union Membership
19	Employment
21	Job Patterns
23	Education
25	Wages
28	Appendix
30	Career Resources
32	Endnotes

List of Figures

Page	Figure
5	Illinois Civilian Labor Force, Monthly Data, 2005-2025
6	Figure 1. Illinois, U.S. Annual Unemployment Rates, 2005-2025
6	Figure 2. Number of People Employed in Illinois, 2005-2025
8	Figure 3. Monthly Illinois Employment Trends by Industry, 2015-2025
9	Figure 4. Illinois Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2024
9	Figure 5. Growth of Black, Hispanic and Asian Populations in Illinois, 2014-2024
10	Figure 6. Growth of American Indian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander Populations in Illinois, 2014-2024
10	Figure 7. Growth of Population Reporting More than One Race/Ethnicity in Illinois, 2014-2024
11	Figure 8. Annual U.S. Labor Force Participation Rate by Gender, 1948-2025
11	Figure 9. Illinois Labor Force Participation Rate by Gender, 2005-2025
12	Figure 10. Labor Force Participation Rate by Race/Ethnicity in U.S. and Illinois, 2025
12	Figure 11. Black Labor Force Participation Rate by Gender in Illinois, 2005-2025

Page	Figure
13	Figure 12. U.S. Labor Force Participation Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2025
13	Figure 13. Illinois Labor Force Participation Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2025
14	Figure 14. Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity in Illinois, 2025
14	Figure 15. Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity in Illinois, 2005-2025
15	Figure 16. Illinois Unemployment Gap by Race/Ethnicity, 2015-2025
16	Figure 17. Unemployment Rate for Women by Race/Ethnicity in Illinois, 2025
17	Figure 18. Annual Union Membership Rate for Illinois and the U.S., 2015-2025
20	Figure 19. Full- and Part-Time Workers by Gender, Age 16 and Older in U.S., 2025
20	Figure 20. Full- and Part-Time Workers by Race/Ethnicity, Age 16 and Older in U.S., 2025
21	Figure 21. Job Patterns of Men and Women in Illinois, 2023
21	Figure 22. Job Patterns of Men and Women in the U.S., 2023
22	Figure 23. EEO Aggregate Report – Illinois Private Sector Employment, 2023
23	Figure 24. EEO Summary Report – Illinois State Government Full-Time Professional Jobs, Held by Minorities, 2025
24	Figure 25. Educational Attainment by Women, Age 25 and Older in Illinois, 2024
25	Figure 26. Percentage of Population Age 25 and Older with Bachelor's Degree or Higher, U.S. and Illinois, 2024
26	Figure 27a. Median Weekly Earnings by Gender, Illinois, 2015-2025
26	Figure 27b. Median Weekly Earnings by Gender, U.S., 2015-2025
26	Figure 28. Women’s Median Weekly Earnings as Percentage of Men’s, Age 16 and Older, 2015-2025
27	Figure 29. U.S. Women’s Median Weekly Earnings as Percentage of White Men’s, 2005-2025
27	Figure 30. U.S. Earnings Gap: Black, Asian, Hispanic vs. White, 2015-2025

List of Tables

Page	Table
7	Table 1. Illinois Annual Average Employment by Sector, 2024-2025
10	Table 2. Origin of Foreign-Born Immigrants in Illinois, 2024
16	Table 3. Illinois Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, Age 16 and Older, 2025
17	Table 4. Union Membership in Illinois and the U.S., 2015-2025
18	Table 5. Union Membership Rates in the U.S. by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, 2024-2025
24	Table 6. Educational Attainment of Civilians by Gender, Age 25 and Older in Illinois, 2024
25	Table 7. Educational Attainment of Population by Race/Ethnicity, Age 25 and Older in Illinois, 2024

Executive Summary

Despite more recent international trade headwinds, the United States economy has posted notable growth in recent years, and new technologies have begun to shift the investment plans of businesses. At the same time, labor market indicators point to ongoing industrial and occupational job reallocation, as rising payrolls in industries such as Hospitals and Transportation-Warehousing-Utilities reflect shifting consumer and business demand. In light of a constantly evolving economy, this report examines how women and minorities in Illinois fared in the labor force in 2024 and 2025 by analyzing their economic status through several economic indicators. The report also describes trends in the Illinois economy and resident population during these years.

In Illinois, the labor force participation rate rose in 2024 along with the overall size of the labor force. In 2025, the Illinois labor force contracted, a trend that countered a growing labor force at the national level. By December 2025, there were just over 6.5 million Illinois residents participating in the labor force. The labor force participation rate of Illinois residents, the number of labor force participants divided by the civilian, non-institutionalized population age 16 and over, swelled to 65.0% in 2024 and contracted -0.8 point in 2025, to 64.2%.

After reaching near-historic lows in 2023, unemployment rates rose slightly in 2024, declined through the first half of 2025, and then increased again in the latter half of the year. Some of the decrease in Illinois unemployment coincides with the labor force contraction that occurred throughout 2025. According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average duration of unemployment in Illinois was nearly the same for men and women in 2025, when the overall average reached 31.7 weeks—the highest level since 2021, when it was 32.4 weeks. In 2025, the average duration of unemployment was 31.9 weeks for men and 31.4 weeks for women. In Illinois and nationwide, women make up a larger share of the workforce in service and clerical jobs but also hold just over half of jobs in professional and technical services positions.

Unemployment rates decreased among the White (-0.6 point) and Hispanic (-2.0 points) populations in 2025 but increased among the Black (+0.9 point) population. Labor force participation rates decreased by over -1.0 percentage point for each of the three mentioned race and ethnic groups. The combined pattern suggests a reduced desirability for labor force participation in 2025, and that the decrease in participation is not directly correlated with race, ethnicity, gender, or job search success rate.

Overall, the job market for Illinoisans in 2024 and 2025 remained robust. Despite softening labor demand in industrial sectors such as Administrative Support and Waste Management, Retail Trade, and Federal Government, there was strong payroll growth among employers in sectors such as Healthcare and Social Assistance. Labor market dynamics and trends of employment and wage outcomes among the women and minority populations in Illinois are discussed in the remainder of this report.

Illinois Snapshot 2025

According to U.S. Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program, Illinois is home to about 4% of the nation's residents and is the 6th most populous state in the U.S. after California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Pennsylvania.



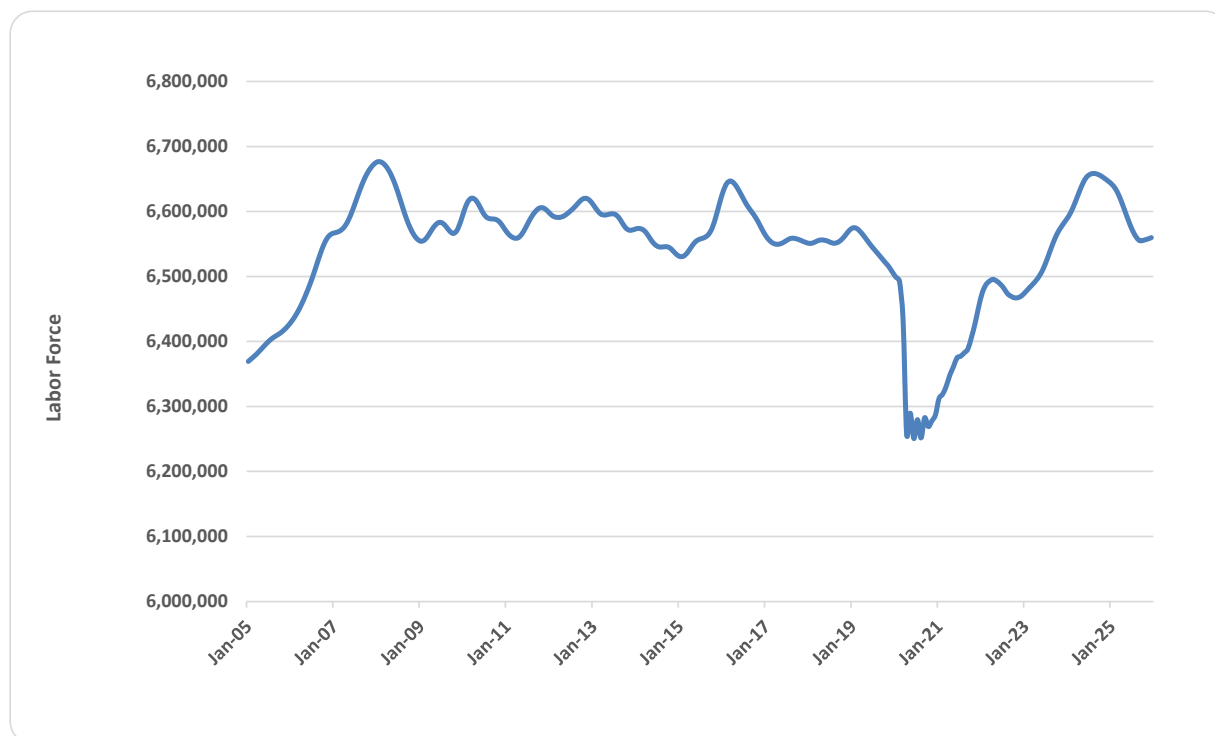
The Illinois population increased +0.1% from 12,703,033 in 2024 to 12,719,141 residents in 2025, for the 3rd year in a row Illinois was ranked 25th among all states in terms of population growth in 2025, with a net increase of +16,108 residents.¹

The Illinois labor force² totaled 6,587,600 individuals in calendar year 2025, compared with 6,638,400 in 2024, reflecting a net decrease of -50,800 individuals.³ During the first three months of the year, the labor force expanded on a year-over-year basis. This trajectory reversed in the remainder of the year, when year-over-year comparisons turned negative.

As of December 2025, 63.9% of Illinois' civilian, non institutional population was in the labor force, a decrease of -1.0 percentage point from the 64.9% participation rate recorded in December 2024.⁴

Illinois Civilian Labor Force, 2005-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Section I: Profile of Illinois

As the State of Illinois and its economy progresses and changes, labor force and demographic indicators also point to a long-term improvement. This section takes a detailed look at Illinois' unemployment, employment, and industry trends.

Figure 1. Illinois, U.S. Annual Unemployment Rates, 2005-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

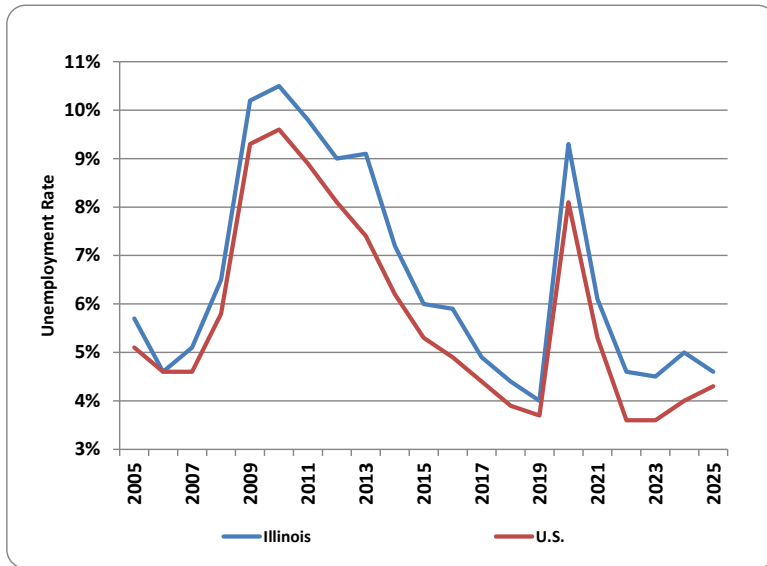
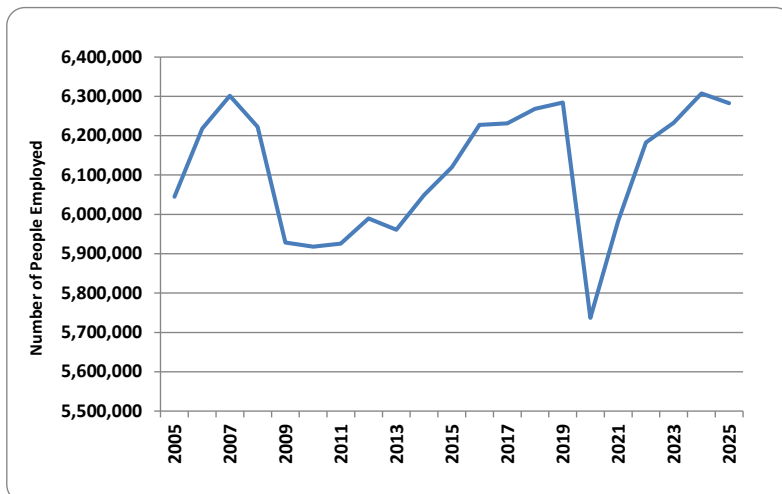


Figure 2. Number of People Employed in Illinois, 2005-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Unemployment

In 2025, the U.S. unemployment rate increased while the Illinois unemployment rate decreased.⁵ The U.S. unemployment rate increased +0.3 percentage point, rising from 4.0% in 2024 to 4.3% in 2025. The Illinois unemployment rate decreased by -0.4 percentage point, falling from 5.0% in 2024 to 4.6% in 2025, the lowest unemployment rate since 2023 when it was 4.5% (See Figure 1). In 2025, the U.S. unemployment rate was -1.0 percentage point lower than it was in 2015 (5.3%), and the Illinois unemployment rate was down -1.4 percentage points from 2015 (6.0%).

Employment

During the past two decades, the number of employed Illinois residents has trended upward, except during economic recessions. The decline in resident employment during the pandemic was the largest ever recorded, and employment did not return to its pre pandemic level until 2024, four years after the height of the pandemic.

Figure 2 shows the following employment facts:⁶

- Illinois' employment reached a series-high of 6,307,100 in 2024 before falling by -24,600 (0.4%) in 2025, when the number of employed residents was 6,282,500.
- The number of employed workers in the state has typically risen during the past 30 years, except during the economic recessions of: January 1980 to July 1980, July 1981 to November 1982, July 1990 to March 1991, March 2001 to November 2001, December 2007 through June 2009, and March to April 2020.

Industry Growth Trends

Employment by Sector:

Table 1 shows the number and proportional distribution of jobs in Illinois across industry super-sectors along with the percentage change in employment (using annual average data) from 2024 to 2025. The industry responsible for the greatest percentage of employment in Illinois is the Trade, Transportation, and Utilities industry super-sector, which employed 19.8% of the workers in the state in 2025. Education and Health Services employed 16.7%, Professional and Business Services employed 14.7%, followed by Government (13.9%), Leisure and Hospitality (9.8%), and Manufacturing (9.2%).

Table 1. Illinois Annual Average Employment by Sector, 2024-2025

Source: Current Employment Statistics (CES), Illinois Department of Employment Security

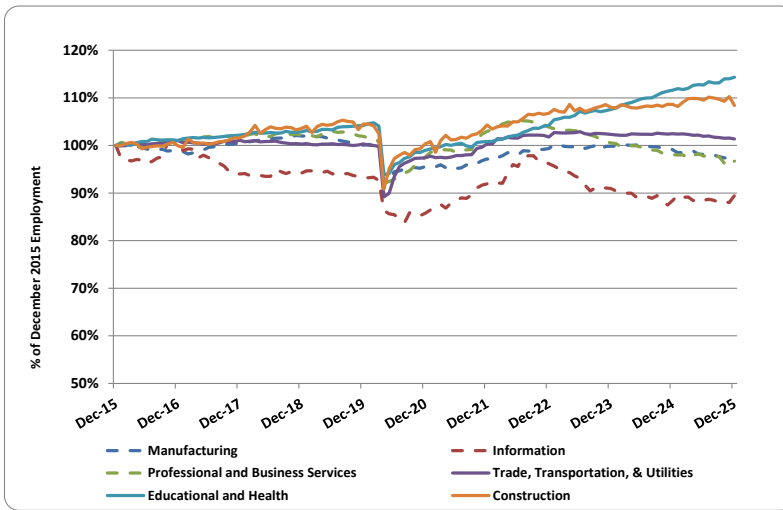
	2024	2025	2024-2025 % Change	Distribution of 2025 Total Jobs
Natural Resources & Mining	7,100	6,900	-2.8%	0.1%
Construction	236,900	239,800	1.2%	3.9%
Manufacturing	578,700	568,500	-1.8%	9.2%
Trade, Transportation, & Utilities	1,225,300	1,219,800	-0.4%	19.8%
Information	90,700	90,300	-0.4%	1.5%
Financial Activities	393,900	392,600	-0.3%	6.4%
Professional and Business Services	923,700	907,100	-1.8%	14.7%
Educational and Health Services	997,000	1,026,300	2.9%	16.7%
Leisure and Hospitality	601,800	604,400	0.4%	9.8%
Other Services	247,400	247,300	0.0%	4.0%
Government	842,400	853,000	1.3%	13.9%
Total Nonfarm	6,144,900	6,155,900	0.2%	100.0%

Employment Trends

Total nonfarm employment in Illinois increased by +150,500 (+2.5%) between December 2015 and December 2025, while national nonfarm employment rose by +15.4 million (+10.7%) over the same period. **Figure 3** documents the three industry super-sectors in Illinois with the most employment growth and largest declines during this period.

Figure 3. Monthly Illinois Employment Trends by Industry, 2015-2025 (Dec. 2015=100%)

Source: Current Employment Statistics (CES), Illinois Department of Employment Security



Note: The monthly employment data referenced in Figure 3 are seasonally-adjusted.

Between December 2015 and December 2025, Education and Health Services recorded the strongest expansion in payroll jobs, rising by +130,100 (+14.3%), followed by solid gains in Government (+32,400; +3.9%), Construction (+18,400; +8.4%) and Trade, Transportation and Utilities (+16,700; +1.4%). More modest growth occurred in Leisure and Hospitality, which added +9,200 jobs (+1.5%) and Financial Activities (+7,600; +2.0%). In contrast, several sectors experienced long-term contraction: Professional and Business Services (-30,400; -3.3%), Manufacturing (-17,300; -3.0%), and Information (-10,700; -10.5%). Declines were more modest in Other Services (-3,800; -1.5%) while Mining posted the largest percentage drop, falling -1,700 jobs (-19.8%) over the period.⁷

Section II: An Analysis of Women and Minorities in the Illinois Labor Force

Population

Between 2014 and 2024, the female population in Illinois declined by -2.7% to 6,427,826. During the same period, the male population fell by -1.2% to 6,282,332, according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s Intercensal Estimates and Population Estimates Program. The total Illinois population fell by -258,747 residents between 2014 and 2024 (the most recent two years for state population by demographic category). This section highlights details about the changes in Illinois’ female and minority populations.⁸

Women’s population growth:⁹

Illinois’ female population grew by +34,056 (+0.5%) between 2023 and 2024 and made up slightly more than half (50.6%) of the state’s residents. During the same period, the male population increased by

+33,843 (+0.5%), and the total Illinois population grew by +67,899 (+0.5%).

Minorities’ population growth:¹⁰

All minorities, except for people who identify as Black, reported net population growth in Illinois in 2024. Minorities are groups of people classified by race, gender, religion, disability or other distinguishing demographic characteristics, who constitute less than one-half of a region, state or country’s population. In July 2024, the Illinois population was 58.0% White (non-Hispanic) and 42.0% minority. People of Hispanic ethnicity represented the largest minority group in Illinois, followed by people who identify as Black (Figure 4).

Figure 5 shows the population change in Illinois’ Black, Hispanic and Asian residents over between July 2014 and July 2024:

- The Hispanic population in Illinois grew by +288,689 (+13.3%) or from 2,175,401 in July 2014 to 2,464,090 in July 2024.
- The Black population declined by -70,771 (-3.9%), or from 1,836,516 in July 2014, to 1,765,745 in July 2024.
- The Asian population reported the largest percentage growth among those reported under a single racial group since 2014, rising by (+24.4%), or from 679,420 in July 2014, to 844,967 in July 2024.

American Indians, Native Hawaiians/ Pacific Islanders and more than one race:¹¹

Figures 6-7 (following page) show population trends for other minority groups, including American Indians, native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders and those who identify themselves by two or more races.

- From July 2014 to July 2024, the American Indian and Alaska Native population was up slightly, increasing by +1,482 people (+8.0%) to 19,973 Illinois residents.

Figure 4. Illinois Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

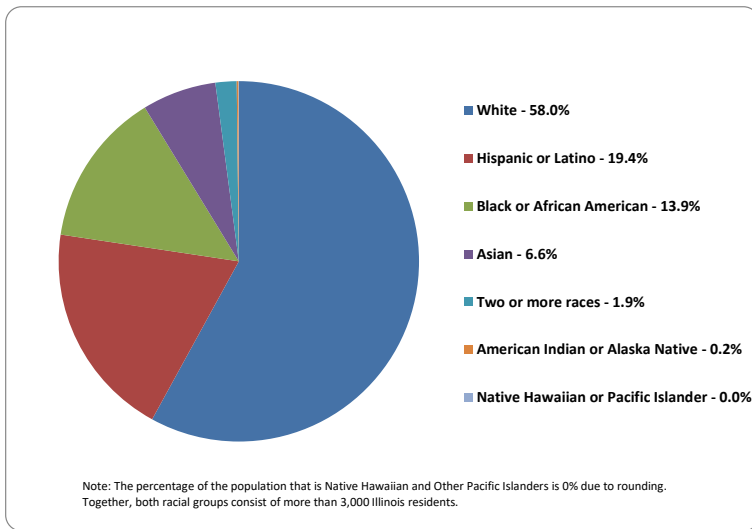


Figure 5. Growth of Black, Hispanic and Asian Populations in Illinois, 2014-2024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

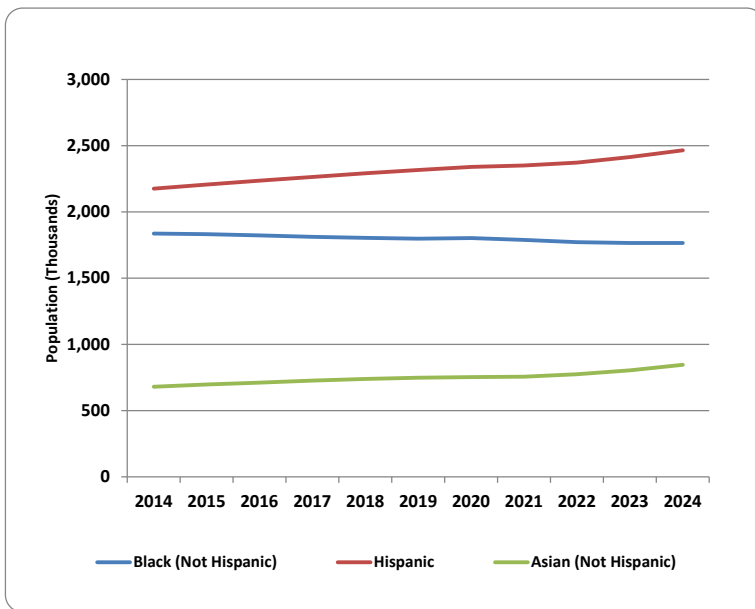


Figure 6. Growth of American Indian and Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander Populations in Illinois, 2014-2024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

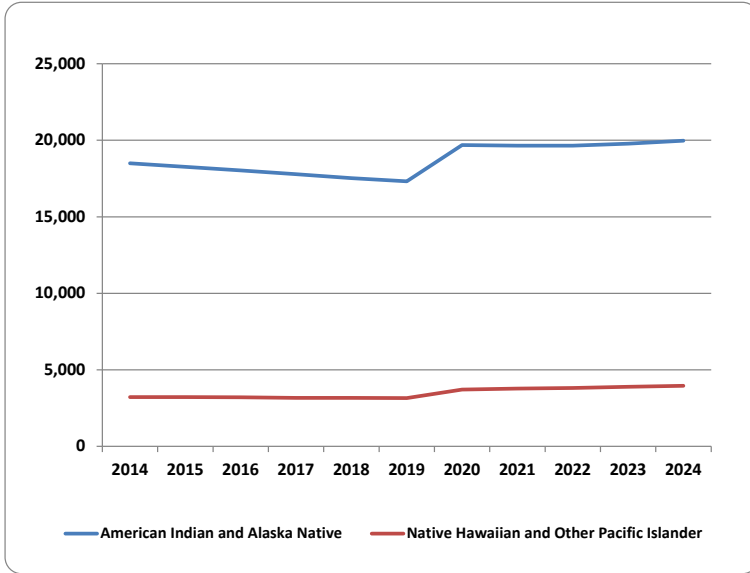
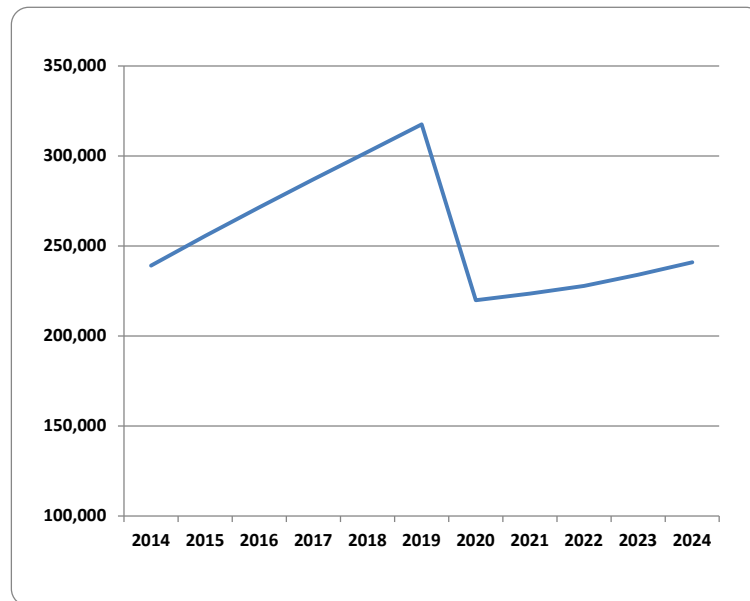


Figure 7. Growth of Population Reporting More than One Race in Illinois, 2014-2024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



- The Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population rose by +730 (+22.7 %) over ten years to reach 3,951 in July 2024.
- The number of people who identify themselves as being two or more races grew from 239,063 people in 2014 to 240,974 in July 2024, an increase of +0.8% or +1,911 people.

Immigrants:¹²

A considerable share of Illinois’s minority population consists of immigrants. In Illinois, 15.4% of the population, or almost 2.0 million people, were born outside of the United States. The United States has a similar percent of foreign-born residents at 14.8%, just -0.6% less than that of Illinois. The share of immigrants as a percentage of all residents in Illinois has grown from 12.6% in 2000.

Table 2 shows more data on foreign-born immigrants in Illinois:

- In 2024, nearly half (44.0%) of the foreign-born population in Illinois was born in Latin America.
- A little more than a quarter (31.1%) of the Illinois foreign-born population was born in Asia, and nearly a fifth (18.8%) was born in Europe.
- The rest of the world accounted for 6.1% of the foreign-born population in Illinois.

Note: The year 2024 is the most current year available for population data.

Table 2. Origin of Foreign-Born Immigrants in Illinois, 2024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

	Number	% of IL Total Pop.	% of IL Foreign Born
Foreign-born population, excluding population born at sea	1,957,482	15.4%	
Latin America	861,146	6.8%	44.0%
Asia	609,083	4.8%	31.1%
Europe	368,209	2.9%	18.8%
Other	119,044	0.9%	6.1%
Total IL population, 2024	12,710,158		

Labor Force Participation

The Illinois labor force dropped to 6,587,600 civilians in 2025, a decrease of -50,800. Also, the percentage of non-institutionalized civilians in the Illinois labor force in 2025 (64.2%) remained below its 2024 percentage (65.0%).¹³

By Gender:¹⁴

The labor force participation rate for women in Illinois dropped -1.3 percentage point to 58.7% in 2025, from 60.0% in 2024. The labor force participation rate for men fell -0.8 percentage point to 69.2% in 2025, from 70.0% in 2024. The historical decline in men’s participation rate is due, in part, to the structural loss of jobs in male-dominated industries, such as manufacturing. Additionally, as baby boomers withdraw from the labor force as they retire, they influence the labor force participation rate for both genders.

Following are more facts about the labor force participation rate for men and women:

Figure 8:¹⁵

- The U.S. labor force participation rate for women was 57.3% in 2025, compared to 57.5% in 2024.
- The U.S. labor force participation rate for men was 67.8% in 2025, compared to 68.0% in 2024.
- The gap between men and women who participate in the U.S. labor force has steadily narrowed since national labor force participation data by gender began to be collected in the late 1940s.

Figures 8-9:

- The U.S. male-female labor force participation percentage gap has narrowed as more women have entered the workforce. The national gender gap in 2025 was 10.5 percentage points.
- The 2025 Illinois women’s labor force participation rate of 58.7% was lower than the men’s rate of 69.2% but higher than the U.S. women’s rate of 57.3%

Figure 8. Annual U.S. Labor Force Participation Rate by Gender, 1948-2025

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

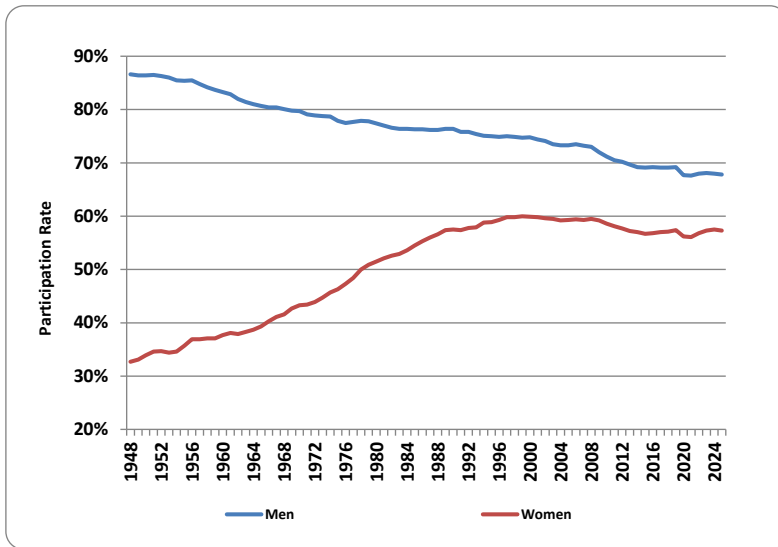
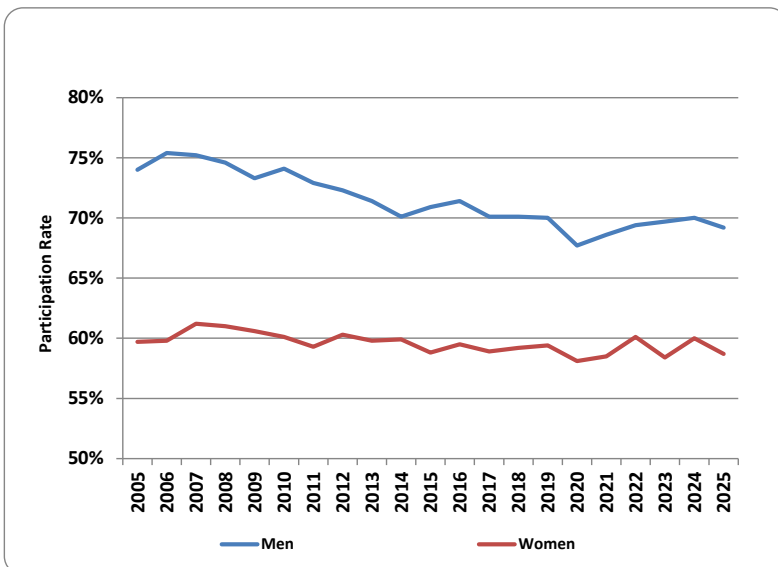


Figure 9. Illinois Labor Force Participation Rate by Gender, 2005-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



- The statewide gender gap increased slightly to 10.5 percentage points in 2025 from 10.0 percentage points in 2024, as women’s labor force participation dropped more steeply than men’s.

By Race:

The next few charts examine labor force participation in Illinois by racial and ethnic group.

Figure 10:¹⁶

- In 2025, the labor force participation rate decreased for all racial/ethnic groups in Illinois. Nationally, the labor force participation also dropped for all racial/ethnic groups.
- In the U.S., people who identify as Black have a greater labor force participation rate than people who identify as White (62.5% and 62.0%), whereas in Illinois, people who identify as Black have a lower labor force participation rate than people who identify as White (60.1% and 64.3%).
- In 2025, people of Hispanic ethnicity had the highest labor force participation rate in both Illinois (69.1%) and the U.S. (67.1%).
- People who identify as Black had the lowest labor force participation rate of all races in Illinois (60.1%) while people who identify as White had the lowest in the U.S. (62.0%).

Figure 11:¹⁷

- For most of the last two decades in Illinois, the labor force participation rate for Black men was higher than the rate for Black women. The exceptions were in 2008, 2012, and 2021. In 2021, the labor force participation rate for Black men dropped below that for Black women and was the lowest on record at 53.1%.
- In 2025, the labor force participation rate was 56.7% for Black women, the lowest rate since 2023. The labor force participation rate for Black men was 64.2%, the second highest since 2006.

Figure 10. Labor Force Participation Rate by Race/Ethnicity in U.S. and Illinois, 2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

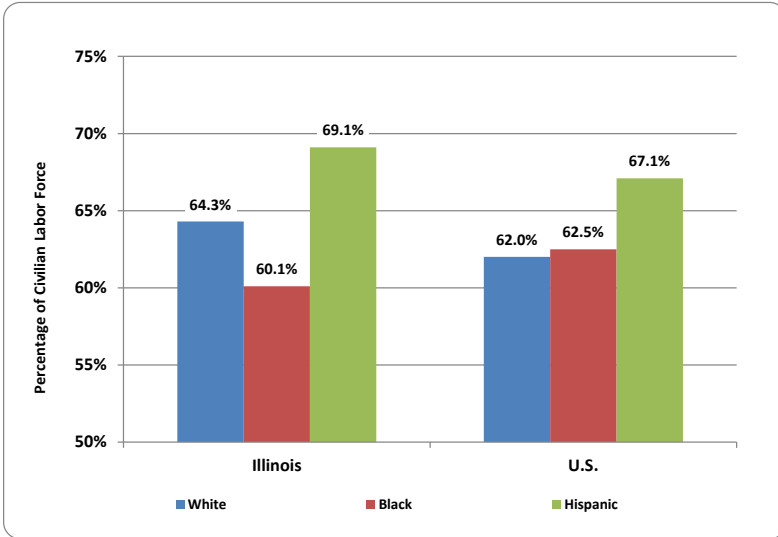


Figure 11. Black Labor Force Participation Rates by Gender in Illinois, 2005-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Figure 12. U.S. Labor Force Participation Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

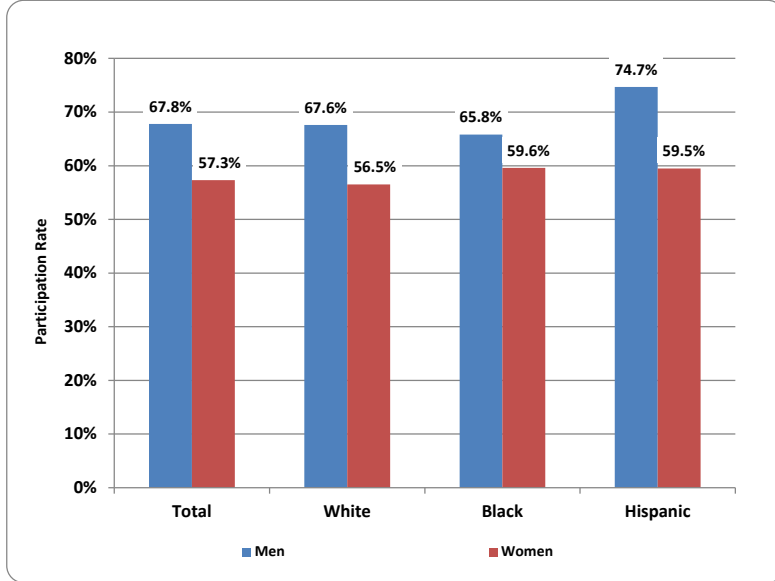
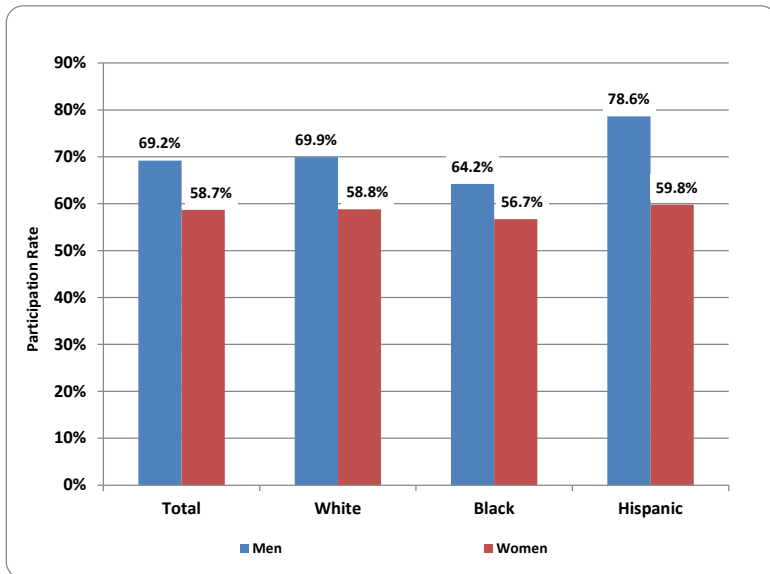


Figure 13. Illinois Labor Force Participation Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, 2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



- As compared to 2024, the labor force participation rate decreased -0.3 percentage point for Black men and fell by -3.1 percentage points for Black women, the largest drop since 2010.

Analysis of gender by race/ethnicity:

Figures 12-13:¹⁸

- Among women in the U.S., Black women had the highest labor force participation rate (59.6%), followed by a tie between Hispanic women (59.5%) and White women (56.5%).
- In Illinois, Hispanic women had the highest labor force participation rate (59.8%), compared to White women (58.8%) and Black women (56.7%).
- Hispanic men (78.6%) had the highest labor force participation rate in Illinois, compared to White men (69.9%) and Black men (64.2%).

Unemployment

In 2025, the Illinois unemployment rate decreased -0.4 percentage point to 4.6%, and the U.S. unemployment rate increased +0.3 percentage point to 4.3%. The Illinois unemployment rate was at its lowest since 2023 when it was 4.5%. The U.S. unemployment rate was at its highest level since 2021 when it was 5.3% (see Figure 1 in Section I).

By Gender:¹⁹

Nationally, the unemployment rate grew for both genders in 2025. In Illinois, the unemployment rate for men decreased while it increased for women in 2025.

In both the U.S. and Illinois, men continued to experience higher unemployment rates than women. Nationwide, the unemployment rate for men was 4.4% in 2025, compared to 4.2% for women. In Illinois, the 2025 unemployment rate for men was 4.7% compared to 4.5% for women.

Following are unemployment facts comparing genders of the same racial or ethnic group:

- Across racial/ethnic minority groups in Illinois, women had higher unemployment rates as compared to men in 2025. The unemployment rate for White women was 3.7%, as compared to a 4.3% unemployment rate for White men. The unemployment rate for Black women was 8.0% vs. 7.8% for Black men. The unemployment rate for Hispanic women was 6.0%, as compared to 4.6% for Hispanic men.

By Race/Ethnicity:²⁰

Nationally, the unemployment rate increased for all racial and ethnic groups except for people of Hispanic ethnicity, which stayed level. Nationwide, the 2025 unemployment rate was 6.9% for people who identify as Black, 5.1% for Hispanic, 3.8% for White, and 3.6% for Asian. In Illinois, the unemployment rate decreased in 2025 for the White, Hispanic, and Asian populations but increased for the Black population. In Illinois, the 2025 unemployment rate was 7.9% for people who identify as Black, 5.2% for Hispanic, 4.0% for White, and 3.8% for Asian (**See Figure 14**). In both Illinois and the U.S., the Black population historically has had the highest unemployment rate among all major racial and ethnic groups.

Figure 15 highlights more unemployment trends for racial groups in Illinois:²¹

- Historically, people who identify as Black have had unemployment rates that are at least double the rate of people who identify as White. There are several exceptions, including 2009, 2010, 2020, 2024, and 2025. In 2024 and 2025, people who identify as Black recorded their lowest unemployment rates on record since race and ethnicity began to be reported in 1981, 7.0% and 7.9% respectively.

Figure 14. Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity in Illinois, 2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

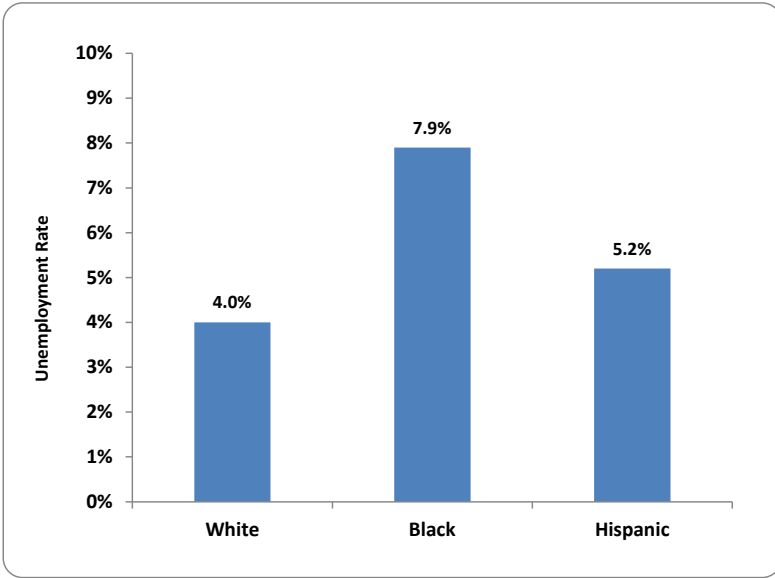
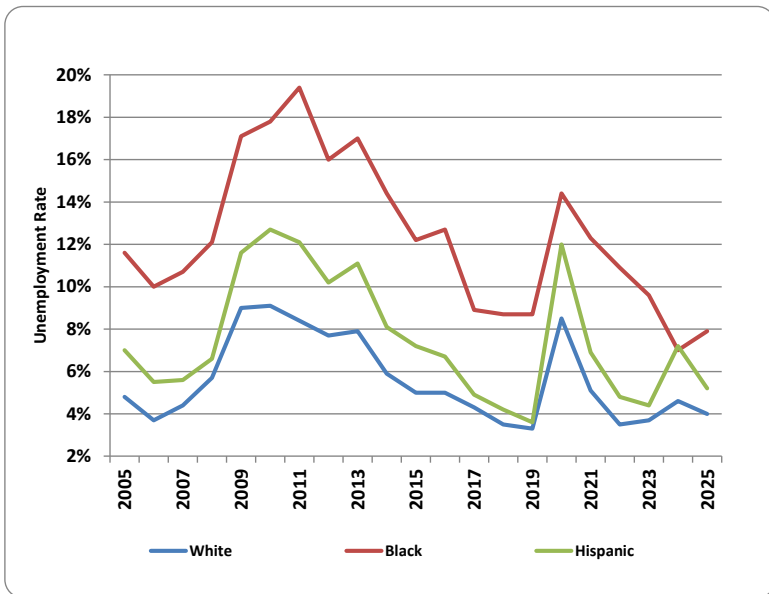


Figure 15. Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity in Illinois, 2005-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



- The unemployment rate for people of Hispanic ethnicity has exceeded the unemployment rate for people who identify as White by at least one percentage point for most years since data by race and ethnicity began to be reported in 1981 except in years 2008, 2017-2019, and 2023.
- People of Hispanic ethnicity have had lower unemployment rates than people who identify as Black since unemployment rates for both races began to be reported in 1981, with 2024 being the only exception.

The “unemployment gap” is the difference in unemployment rates between two groups of people. **Figure 16** shows the unemployment gap between people who identify as Black and White, and people who identify as Hispanic and White.

Figure 16:

- The unemployment gap between people who identify as Black and White was 3.9 percentage points in 2025 and 2.4 percentage points in 2024. These were the smallest gaps on record.
- The unemployment gap between people who identify as Hispanic and White was 1.2 percentage points in 2025.
- Since 1981, when state unemployment rates by race and ethnicity began to be reported, the gap between White and Hispanic unemployment has ranged from 0.3 percentage point in 2019 to 9.3 percentage points in 1982. For people who identify as Black, it has ranged from 2.4 percentage points in 2024 to 17.8 percentage points in 1985.

Analysis of women by race/ethnicity:²²

Also noteworthy are the unemployment rate trends for Illinois women by race and ethnicity between 2024 and 2025. In 2025, the unemployment rate for Black women increased by +2.2 percentage points and fell for Hispanic women -0.9 percentage point. The unemployment rate for White women dropped by -0.3 percentage point.

Figure 16. Illinois Unemployment Gap by Race/Ethnicity, 2015-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

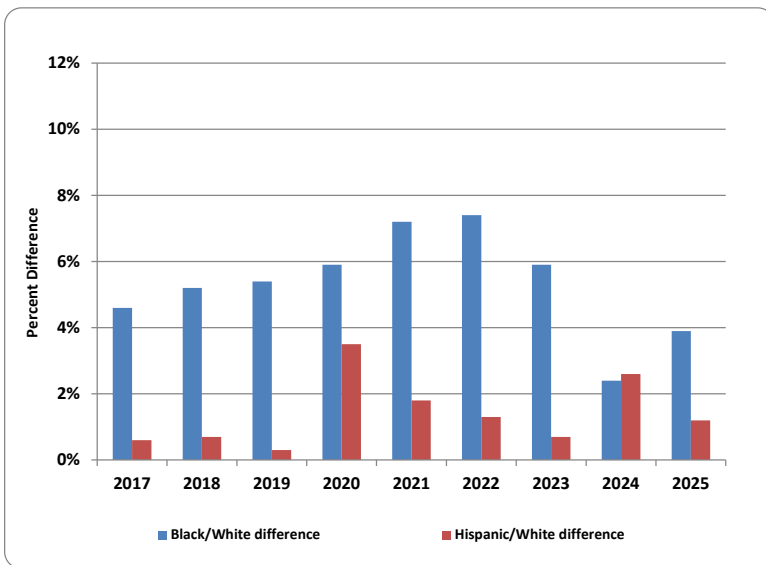


Figure 17. Unemployment Rate for Women by Race/Ethnicity in Illinois, 2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

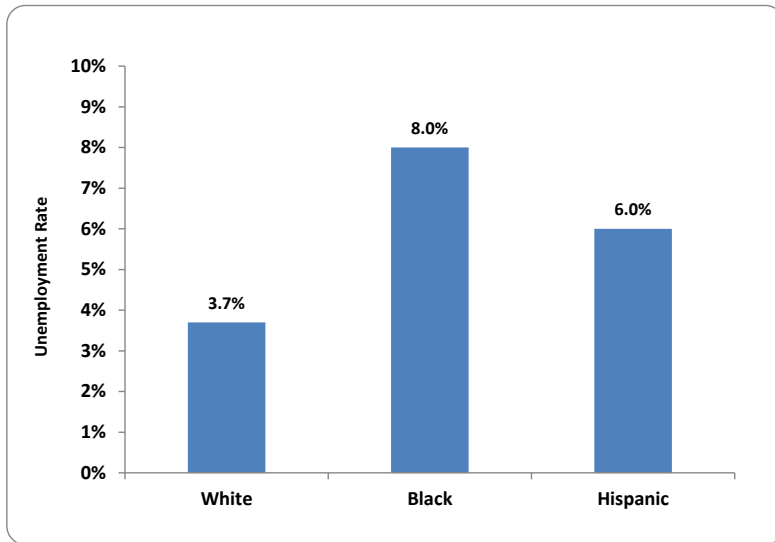


Table 3. Illinois Unemployment Rate by Race/Ethnicity and Gender, Age 16 and Older

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Year	White Men	White Women	Hispanic Men	Hispanic Women	Black Men	Black Women
2025	4.3	3.7	4.6	6.0	7.8	8.0
2023	4.0	3.3	4.1	4.9	9.6	9.6
2021	5.5	4.7	7.0	6.7	13.4	11.4
2019	3.3	3.3	3.9	3.1	9.6	7.8
2017	4.3	4.2	4.6	5.4	10.9	7.2

Figure 17:

- Among women, Black women continued to have the highest unemployment rate in 2025. The unemployment rate for Black women in Illinois was 8.0%, compared to 6.0% for Hispanic women and 3.7% for White women.

Analysis of men by race/ethnicity:²³

Following are comparisons of 2025 unemployment rates for Illinois men by race and ethnicity:

Table 3:

- In 2025, the Illinois annual average unemployment rate was 7.8% for Black men, 4.6% for Hispanic men and 4.3% for White men.
- Black men in Illinois have reported the highest unemployment rate among all racial groups and both genders since data on gender, race and ethnicity began to be reported in 1981, with the exception of three years, 1984, 1998, 2023—when Black men and women were tied for highest unemployment rate—and 2025, when Black women had the highest unemployment rate.

Union Membership

Labor union membership in Illinois increased while the percentage of Illinois workers in unions increased in 2025. The percentage of Illinois employed who were members of unions remained unchanged at 13.1% in 2025. Nationally, union membership grew in 2025, as did the percentage of employed in unions (See **Figure 18 and Table 4**).

Union membership has shown a long-term trend of decline in both Illinois and the U.S. In the early 1980s, the union membership rate for Illinois employed was nearly 25%, and, in the U.S. about 20%. In the past ten years, the percentage of Illinois employed who were members of unions has fallen -2.1 percentage points. Nationally, union membership has decreased -1.1 percentage points since 2015.

Most of the historical losses in union membership have been in the private sector. In the past decade, U.S. private sector union membership rate dropped from 6.7% in 2015 to 5.9% in 2025. Historically, across the nation, more than one-third of those employed in the public sector are members of unions, but it has remained below one-third since 2022. The public sector union membership has also experienced declines in membership rates, decreasing from 35.2% in 2015 to 32.9% in 2025.

Figure 18. Annual Union Membership Rate for Illinois and the U.S., 2015-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

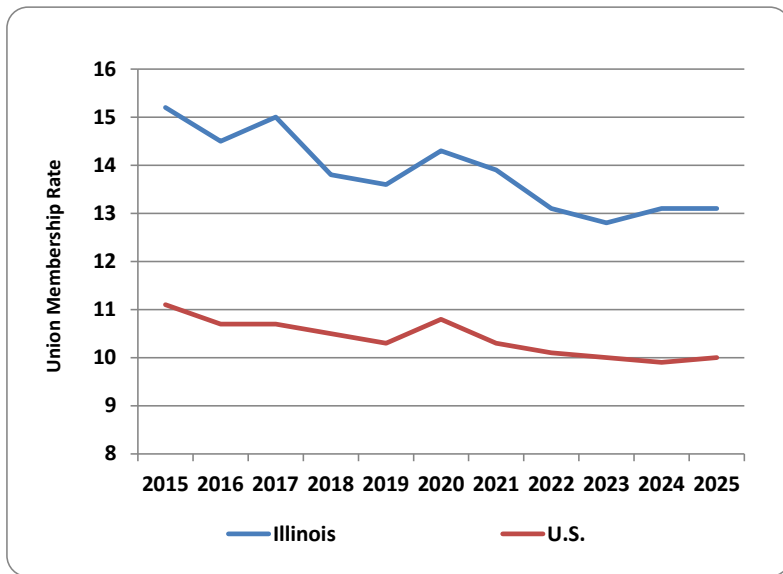


Table 4. Union Membership in Illinois and the U.S., 2015-2025

Membership levels displayed in thousands

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Year	ILLINOIS		UNITED STATES		
	Union Members	% of Employed	Union Members	% of Employed	% Private Sector Employed
2015	847	15.2	14,795	11.1	6.7
2016	812	14.5	14,555	10.7	6.4
2017	827	15.0	14,817	10.7	6.5
2018	786	13.8	14,744	10.5	6.4
2019	771	13.6	14,574	10.3	6.2
2020	739	14.3	14,253	10.8	6.3
2021	752	13.9	14,012	10.3	6.1
2022	735	13.1	14,285	10.1	6.0
2023	708	12.8	14,424	10.0	6.0
2024	734	13.1	14,255	9.9	5.9
2025	758	13.1	14,655	10.0	5.9

Union Membership by Gender and Race/ Ethnicity:²⁴

Table 5:

Nationally, union membership rates continued to be slightly higher for men than for women. In 2025, 10.4% of men employed were members of unions as compared to 9.6% of women. Both men (+0.2 percentage point) and women (+0.1 percentage point) reported an increase in their union membership rates in 2025.

Among racial groups, the highest union membership rates were found among people who identify as Black (11.4%), while the lowest membership rates were found among people who identify as Asian (8.7%). People who identify as Black saw the only decrease in union membership in 2025, with their membership rate falling -0.4 percentage point. People of Hispanic ethnicity reported the largest increase, with their membership rate growing +0.4 percentage point, followed by White (+0.3 percentage point) and Asian (+0.2 percentage point).

Table 5. Union Membership Rates in the U.S. by Gender, Race/Ethnicity, 2024-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

	2024	2025	Annual Change
Total	9.9	10.0	0.1
Men, all races, ethnicities	10.2	10.4	0.2
Women, all races, ethnicities	9.5	9.6	0.1
White	9.6	9.9	0.3
Men	10.0	10.3	0.3
Women	9.2	9.3	0.1
Black or African American	11.8	11.4	-0.4
Men	12.8	12.4	-0.4
Women	10.9	10.5	-0.4
Asian	8.5	8.7	0.2
Men	8.0	7.8	-0.2
Women	9.1	9.8	0.7
Hispanic or Latino ethnicity	8.5	8.9	0.4
Men	8.3	8.7	0.4
Women	8.9	9.0	0.1

Employment

In 2025, the number of employed Illinois residents declined by -24,600 (0.4%) from 2024, falling to 6,282,500.²⁵

In Illinois, the employment participation rate in December 2025 was 60.9%, down by -0.9 percentage point from December 2024.²⁶ The employment participation rate is the percentage of the non-institutional working age population (age 16 and older) who are employed. The employment participation rate for women was 56.1% in 2025, down -1.3 percentage point from 57.4% in 2024. The employment participation rate for men in 2025 was 65.9%, down -0.3 percentage point from 66.2% in 2024. Employment participation rates in Illinois decreased for people who identify as White (-0.7 percentage point), Hispanic (-0.2 percentage point), and Black (-2.3 percentage points) between 2024 and 2025. People of Hispanic ethnicity reported the highest employment participation rates in 2025 (65.5%), followed by people who identify as White (61.7%) and Black (55.3%).²⁷

Part-Time vs. Full-Time Work: ²⁸

In the years immediately following the 2007-2009 recession, there had been a decline in the percentage of people employed full-time and a corresponding increase in the percentage of people employed part-time. Part-time employment is defined as having a work week usually consisting of less than 35 hours. But over the past decade, the percentage of employed working full-time in the U.S. has rebounded, climbing to 83.8% in 2022. Nearly 28.6 million U.S. residents worked part-time in 2025, about 580,000 more than in 2024. The number of full-time workers in the U.S. in 2025 was 134.9 million, as compared to 133.4 million in 2024. Illinois full-time and part-time employment data by both gender and race are published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Figure 19. Full- and Part-time Workers by Gender, Age 16 and Older in U.S., 2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

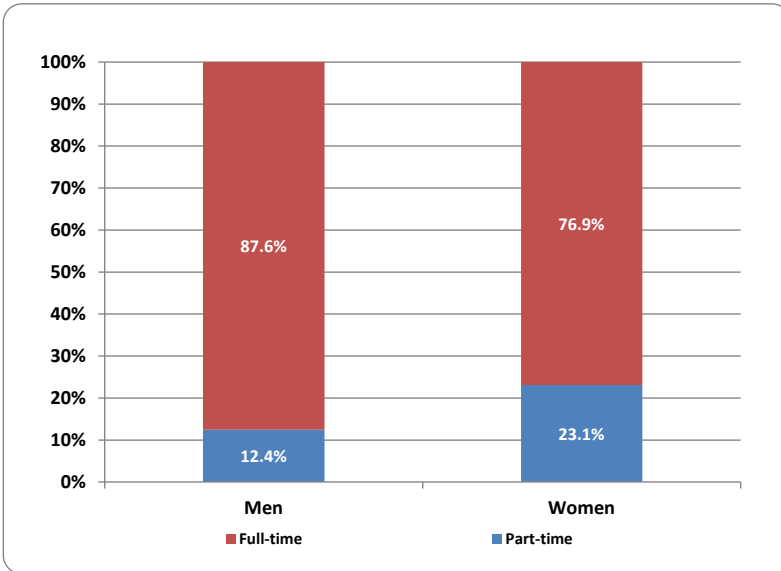
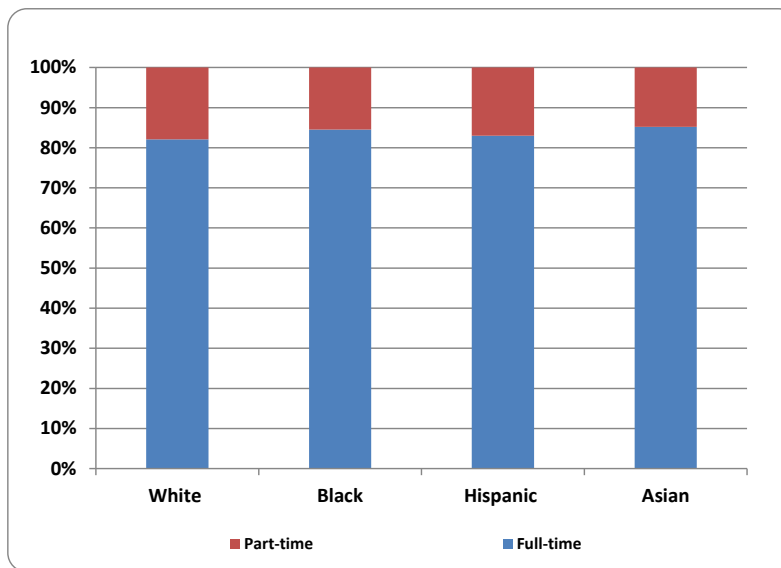


Figure 20. Full- and Part-time Workers by Race/Ethnicity, Age 16 and Older in U.S., 2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



By Gender:

Figure 19:

Time use surveys and other person-level data suggest women historically have spent a smaller portion of their time than men each year participating in the formal labor market, and a larger portion of their time on informal activities such as direct caregiving and household production.²⁹ Of the nearly 77 million employed women in the U.S., 23.1% worked part-time in 2025, unchanged from 2024. The percentage of men employed part-time in 2025 was 12.4%, up +0.1 percentage point from 12.3% in 2024. Nationally, there were approximately 7.0 million more women working part-time in 2025 than men.³⁰

By Race/Ethnicity:

Figure 20:³¹

The percentage of workers employed part-time nationwide in 2025 grew for all racial groups, except for people who identify as Asian, which saw their percentage of workers employed part-time decrease -0.7%.

- People who identify as Asian had the lowest percentage of part-time workers in the U.S. in 2025, at 14.8%. At 17.9%, people who identify as White had the highest percentage of part-time workers, followed by people who identify as Hispanic (17.0%) and Black (15.5%).
- The percentage of full-time workers in the U.S. decreased in 2025 for people who identify as White, Black and Hispanic, but increased for people who identify as Asian.
- People who identify as Asian (85.2%) had the highest percentage of full-time workers, followed by people who identify as Black (84.5%), Hispanic (83.0%) and White (82.1%).

Job Patterns

By Gender:

In Illinois and nationwide, women make up a larger share of the workforce in service and clerical jobs that tend to offer lower pay. Men, in contrast, have a higher proportion of employment in occupational categories, such as craft workers and managers, which tend to have higher wages. **Figures 21 and 22**, on the following page, show the percentage of men and women employed in various private sector job classifications in Illinois and the nation in 2023, the latest tabulations provided through the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.³²

Figures 21-22:³³

Job patterns in Illinois are similar to national job patterns. In 2023, women held 75.9% of office and clerical jobs in the state and 62.3% of service jobs. The corresponding national numbers were 75.5% and 61.0% respectively.

- The largest differences between Illinois and U.S. employment patterns among women are observed in the following occupational groups, where women are more highly represented in the Illinois labor force than nationally: First/Mid Level Management, Technicians, Laborers, Service Workers.
- In 2023, only 7.4% of craft jobs in Illinois, and 7.5% of craft jobs nationally, were held by women.
- In both the U.S. and Illinois, women held more than half of jobs in these occupational categories: professional, technician, and sales.

Figure 21. Job Patterns of Men and Women in Illinois, 2023
Source: U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

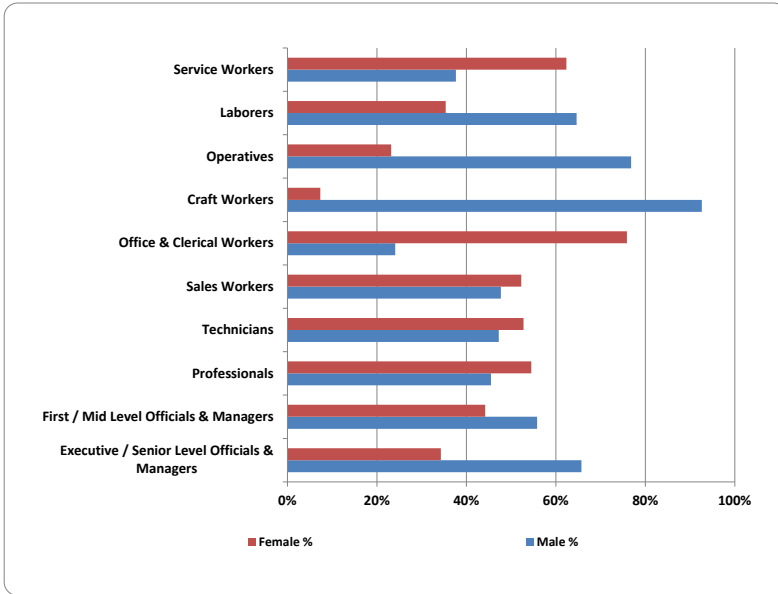
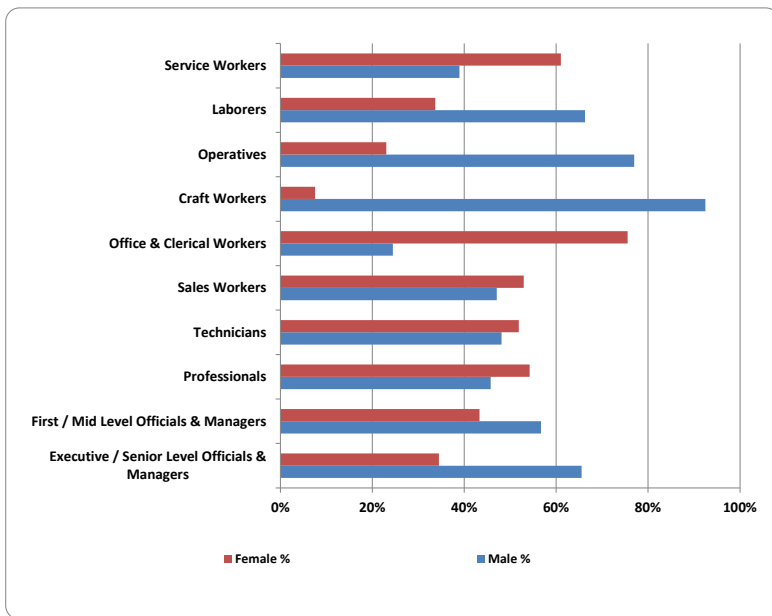


Figure 22. Job Patterns of Men and Women in the U.S., 2023
Source: U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)



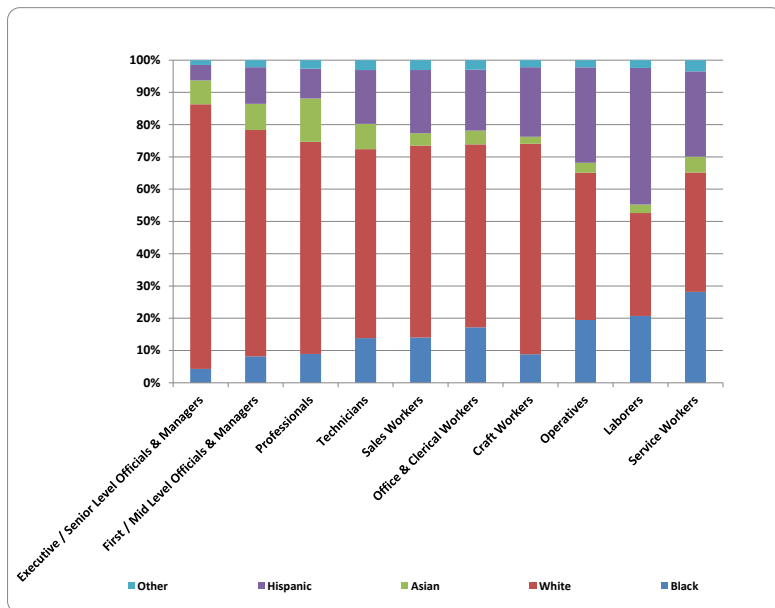
By Race/Ethnicity:

Many racial and ethnic minority workers also are employed in occupational categories that tend to pay lower wages. **Figure 23** shows that people who identify as Hispanic or Black both have high levels of employment in the occupational categories of operatives, laborers, and service workers during 2023. Asian Illinois residents, however, have their highest concentration of employment in the categories of professionals and technicians, which tend to have higher pay. **Figure 23** reports the percentage of workers in each occupational category which were members of each racial/ethnic group in 2023.

Figure 23:³⁴

Figure 23. EEO Aggregate Report - Illinois Private Sector Employment, 2023

Source: U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)



- In 2023, people who identify as Black in Illinois had a high proportion of employment as service workers (28.2%), laborers (20.7%), operatives (19.4%), and office and clerical workers (17.2%).
- People of Hispanic ethnicity had their highest rates of employment in Illinois as laborers (42.3%), operatives (29.5%), service workers (26.5%), and craft workers (21.5%).
- People who identify as White had the highest rates of employment in management, professional and craft jobs, filling 82.0% of executive/senior officials and managers positions, 70.2% of first/mid-level officials and managers jobs, 65.7% of professional jobs, and 65.2% of craft jobs.
- People who identify as Asian in Illinois were mostly concentrated in professional, technical and management jobs, filling 13.5% of professional jobs, 8.1% of first/mid-level officials and managerial jobs, and 7.8% of technician jobs in 2023.

Data for **Figures 21 through 23** primarily cover large employers (100+ employees) in the private sector. In the Illinois public sector, people who identify as Black lead other minority groups in professional and management jobs. Asian and

Hispanic representation in these positions is low relative to their proportion of the total population. **Figure 24** highlights employment trends among jobholders in coded managerial and professional jobs in Illinois state government, according to data provided by Illinois Central Management Services.³⁵

Figure 24. EEO Summary Report - Illinois State Government Full-Time Professional Jobs, Held by Minorities, 2025
 Source: Illinois Central Management Services (CMS)

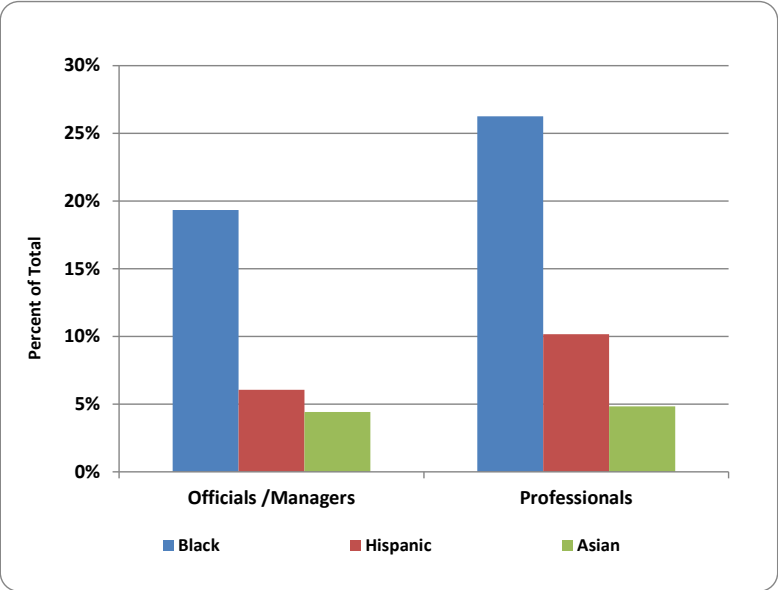


Figure 24:

- In 2025, people who identify as Black had the highest proportions of employment among minority groups in management and professional positions for Illinois state government, holding 19.3% of management jobs and 26.2% of professional jobs.
- People of Hispanic ethnicity were employed in 6.0% of management positions and 10.2% of professional positions, while people who identify as Asian held 4.4% of management positions and 4.8% of professional jobs.

Education

In general, Illinois residents are well educated, with college graduation rates above the national average, according to 2024 American Community Survey data. Illinois women and men ages 25 and older have attained a relatively equal level of education. People who identify as Asian and White have the highest rates of post-secondary educational attainment.

Gender Trends:³⁶

The proportion of women ages 25 years and older in Illinois with a college (associates, bachelor’s or graduate) degree was 50.2% in 2024, compared to 45.3% of men. This proportion has continued to grow over time, as it was just 31.1% as recently as of 2000. In addition, women in the U.S. are more likely than men to have a college degree. In Illinois, 68.5% of Illinois women ages 25 and older have acquired at least some college education, while

Figure 25. Educational Attainment by Women, Age 25 and Older in Illinois, 2024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

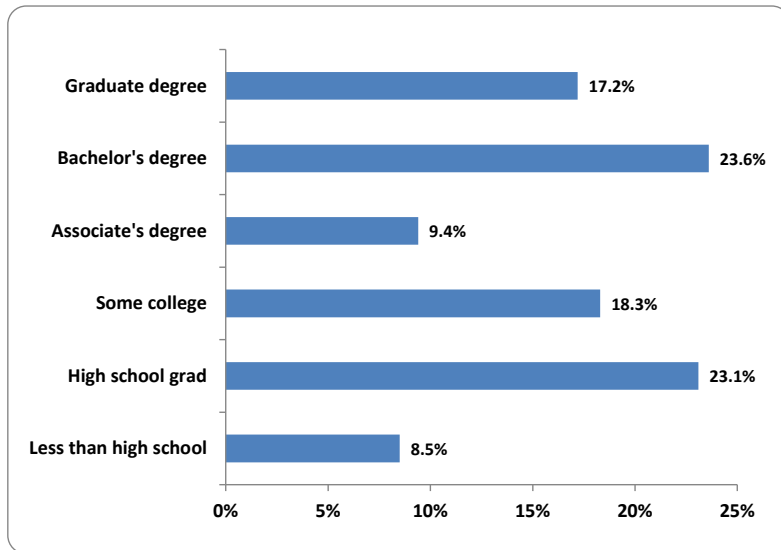


Table 6. Educational Attainment of Illinois Civilians by Gender, Age 25 and Older, 2024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

	Male	Female
Less than 9th grade	4.7%	4.4%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	5.4%	4.1%
High school graduate	26.2%	23.1%
Some college, no degree	18.3%	18.3%
Associate's degree	7.7%	9.4%
Bachelor's degree	23.0%	23.6%
Graduate degree	14.6%	17.2%

only 8.5% of women have less than a high school education. (See Figure 25).

Table 6 shows data on the similar levels of educational attainment for men and women in Illinois:

- Illinois women have a narrow lead over men (17.2% vs. 14.6%) when comparing graduate degree attainment between the genders.
- The percentage of women and men in Illinois attaining bachelor's degrees as their highest educational attainment was nearly the same in 2024 (23.0% for men and 23.6% for women).
- Summary percentages across attainment levels show that more Illinois women (68.5%) than men (63.6%) who were at least 25 years old had attended at least some college.
- A slightly higher percentage of men (26.2%) than women (23.1%) had attained a high school diploma as their highest level of education.

Racial/Ethnic Trends:³⁷

Of the Illinois population age 25 and older, people who identify as Asian attained the greatest percentages of bachelor's degrees, while people who identify as White reported the highest percentage of high school diplomas. People of Hispanic ethnicity have the lowest percentage of college degrees and high school diplomas of all racial/ethnic groups.

Here are more specifics, as reflected in Table 7 (see following page):

- White and Asian residents of Illinois earned high school diplomas at the highest rates, followed Black (90.1%) and Hispanic (72.9%) Illinoisians.
- The gap between people who identify as White and Hispanic with high school diplomas was nearly 22 percentage points, whereas the gap between people who identify Black and White is a slightly less than 5 percentage points.

Table 7. Educational Attainment of Population by Race/ Ethnicity, Age 25 and Older, in Illinois 2024

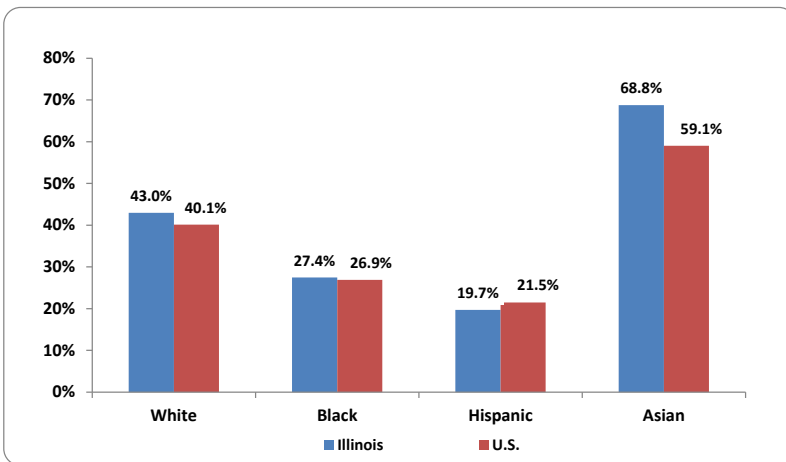
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Education Level	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
High school graduate (includes equivalency) or higher	94.8%	90.1%	72.9%	92.0%
Some college or associates degree (or higher)	70.7%	60.9%	43.0%	82.6%
Bachelor's degree or higher	43.0%	27.4%	19.7%	68.8%

- 68.8% of Asian residents in Illinois have a bachelor’s degree or higher, compared to 43.0% of people who identify as White, 27.4% of Black and 19.7% of Hispanic.
- The gap between people who identify as Asian and White having a bachelor’s degree or higher is 25.8 percentage points, whereas people who identify as White and Asian have similar proportions with a high school diploma or higher.

Figure 26. Percentage of Population with Bachelor’s Degree or Higher, Age 25 and Older, in U.S. and Illinois, 2024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau



National education trends among racial groups are similar to Illinois trends. However, as reflected in **Figure 26**, Illinois has a higher proportion of its population with bachelor’s degrees or higher than the nation. A much greater percentage of people who identify as Asian in Illinois have a bachelor’s degree or higher than in the U.S. (68.8% vs. 59.1%). Meanwhile, a higher proportion of people of Hispanic ethnicity have a bachelor’s degree or higher at the national level than in Illinois (21.5% vs. 19.7%).

Wages

Investment in human capital through education leads to higher future wages for all workers, including women and minorities. Women who earn graduate or professional degrees see substantial increases in their earnings. In Illinois in 2024, women with graduate or professional degrees had a median annual income of \$79,793, compared with \$62,266 for women with a bachelor’s degree — a **28.1% increase**. Illinois men with graduate or professional degrees earned \$105,848, meaning women at the same education level earned **75.4% of men’s median income**.³⁸

Figure 27a. Median Weekly Earnings by Gender, Illinois, 2015-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

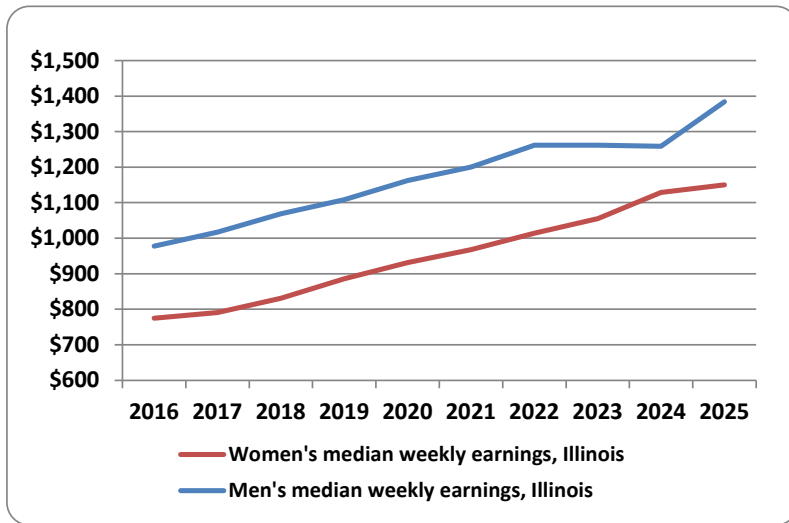


Figure 27b. Median Weekly Earnings by Gender, U.S., 2015-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

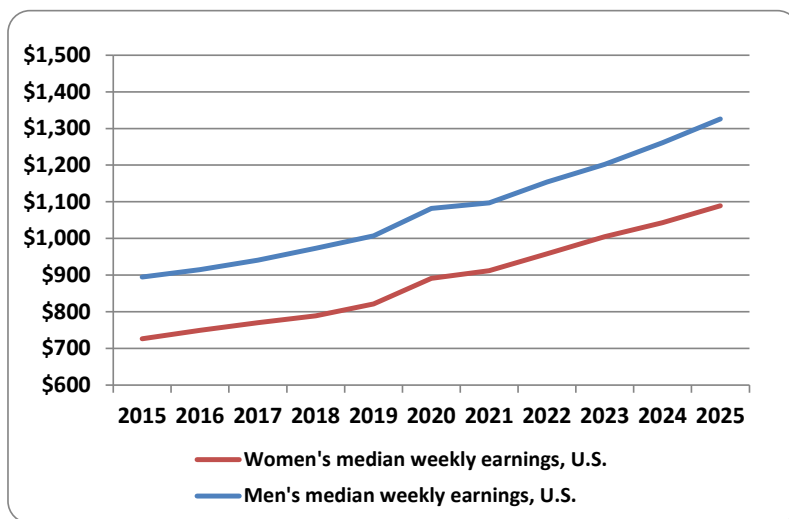
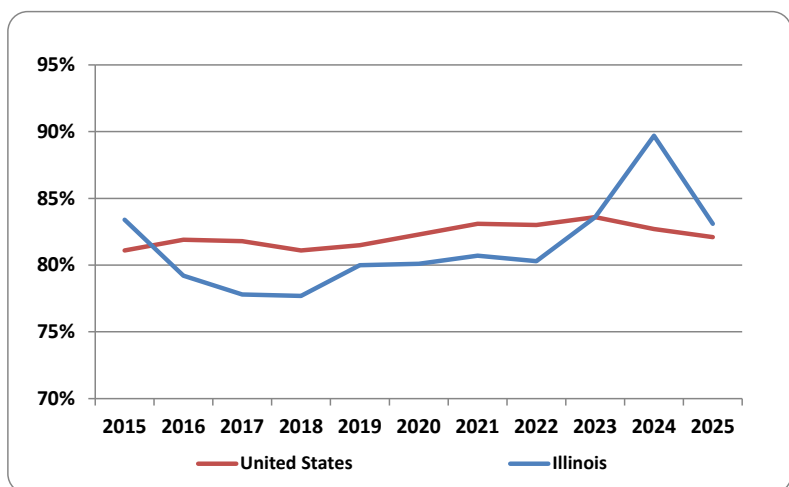


Figure 28. Women's Median Weekly Earnings as Percentage of Men's, Age 16 and Older, 2015-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics



Wage Trends by Gender:³⁹

As women have moved into traditionally male dominated occupations, including management and professional roles, their employment opportunities have broadened significantly. Structural shifts in the economy, particularly the expansion of computer based work, digital services, and technology driven industries, have opened additional career pathways. The rapid adoption of modern technologies, including automation, data centric roles, and AI enabled tools, has further diversified the types of jobs available and increased the demand for analytical, technical, and hybrid skill sets. These developments, combined with women's rising levels of educational attainment, have contributed to steady growth in women's wages.

Figures 27a and 27b compare median wages for full-time workers by gender in Illinois and the U.S.:

- Women's earnings grew faster than men's over the previous two years, but in 2025 the growth rate for women fell significantly behind that of men. Nationally, the earnings growth rate for women has also remained below that of men for the past two years.
- Illinois' median weekly earnings for women were \$1,150 in 2025, up from \$1,129 in 2024.
- The weekly median earnings for men in Illinois were \$1,384 in 2024, up from \$1,259 in 2023.

Figure 28 shows that from 2016 to 2023, the ratio of women's to men's weekly median earnings in Illinois remained below the national average. However, following the upward trend that began after 2018, Illinois exceeded the national average in 2024. Although there was a slight decline in 2025, the ratio remained above the national average:

- The Illinois ratio of women's earnings to men's earnings was 83.1% in 2025 compared to the U.S. ratio of 82.1%.

Wage Trends by Race/Ethnicity:

Figure 29 shows a clear gender wage gap by race/ethnicity (relative to White men) in the United States.

Note: Statewide wage data by racial group are not published.

Women’s wage comparisons to White men:⁴⁰

- In 2025, the U.S. median weekly wage for women as a percentage of White men’s median wages was 81.8% for White women, 69.6% for Black women, 103.0% for Asian women, and 65.7% for Hispanic women.
- White women’s wage ratio reached 80% and, except for the 2007 and 2009 period, remained above that level throughout the series. Black women’s ratio rose to 70% in 2010, declined to 65.3% in 2018, increased to a high of 72.6% in 2023, and then eased back to 70% in 2025. Asian women’s ratio increased steadily from 2004 onward, surpassing 100% in 2020 and remaining above 100% thereafter, reaching a high of 106.0% in 2023. For Hispanic women, the ratio reached 60% in 2007, increased gradually over time, and reached 65.7% in 2025.

Figure 29. U.S. Women’s Median Weekly Earnings as Percentage of White Men’s, 2005-2025

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

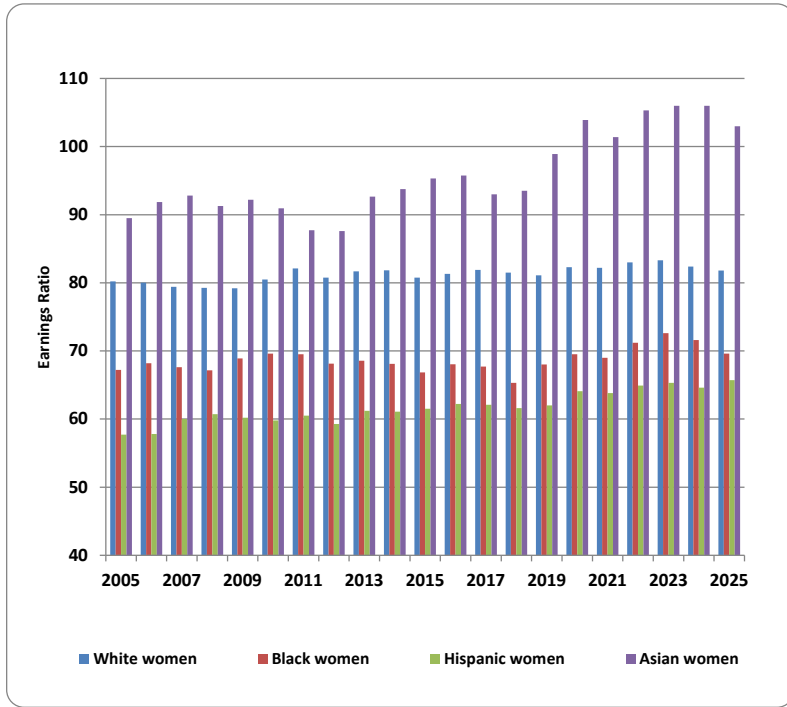
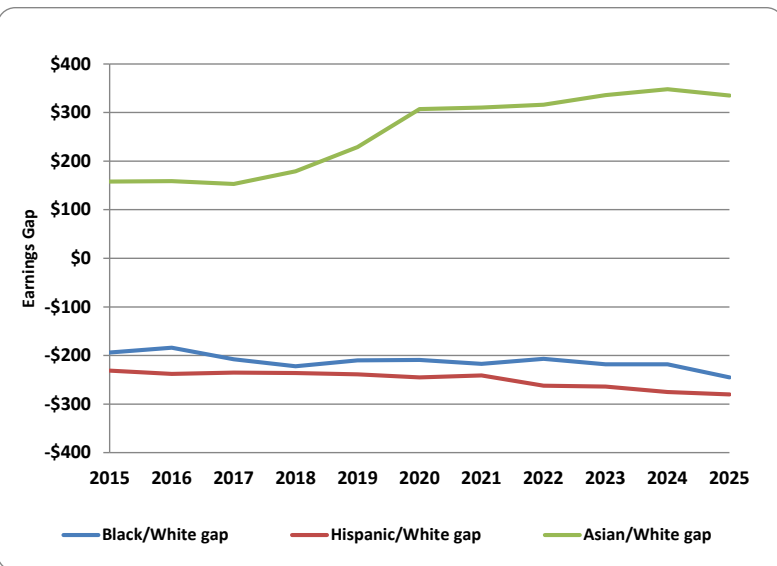


Figure 30. U.S. Weekly Earnings Gap: Black, Asian, Hispanic vs. White 2015-2025

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics



Minorities’ wages in comparison to people who identify as White:⁴¹

Figure 30 shows the earnings gap for minority groups in comparison to people who identify as White in the U.S.:

- The 2025 median weekly earnings for full-time employment in the United States were \$1,566 for people who identify as Asian, \$1,231 for White, \$986 for Black, and \$951 for Hispanic.
- People who identify as Asian have a higher median wage than do people who identify as White, a gap measured at +\$335 per week in 2025.
- The weekly wage gap between people who identify as Black and White was -\$245 for 2025.
- The weekly wage gap between people who identify Hispanic and White was -\$280 for 2025.

Appendix

Terms and Definitions

Some workforce terms such as earnings and income are uniquely defined by state agencies, federal agencies and research organizations. They may even be defined differently by the same organization when used for different purposes. In addition, not all research organizations will define terms such as race, ethnicity, employed, unemployed, and labor force the same. Given their variability, it is important to define the terms as they are used in this report. Caution should be used when comparing numbers in this report to those in other sources because of this inconsistency. This appendix provides detail on the key labor market concepts addressed in this report.

Race and Ethnicity

Beginning with the 2000 Census, race and ethnicity became two distinct concepts in federal workforce reporting. According to this new paradigm, each person now has two attributes, his or her race (or races), and whether or not he or she is Hispanic. The 2000 Census also established six racial categories: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, White, and “Some Other Race.” Respondents for the first time were allowed to select more than one race. The two ethnicity categories are “Hispanic origin” and “not of Hispanic origin.” Given this substantial change in the race and ethnicity categories, which introduces the likelihood of overlap of race and Hispanic origin, the Census Bureau cautions against making direct comparisons between the 2000 Census and previous years.

The race/ethnicity population reporting in this report follows standards used by the U.S. Census Bureau and other federal agencies. Race and Hispanic origin are sometimes expressed as conceptually different. Data on the population, labor force participation, and employment rates of Illinois’s residents is from the American Community Survey. Specific definitions and data collection documentation are available on the ACS web portal, at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>.

In this report, data for the racial categories “White” and “Black or African American” does not include White persons or Black persons who report Hispanic ethnicity. However, data for the Hispanic ethnic category includes data for all racial groups, including people of Hispanic ethnicity who are White, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. The population data in this report are from the U.S. Census Bureau. The Census data and population estimates are intended to include all persons currently residing in Illinois and the United States.

Labor Force Concepts and Definitions

Employed: Persons are classified as employed if they performed any work for pay or profit, worked at least 15 unpaid hours in a family-owned enterprise, or were temporarily away from work due to reasons such as vacation, illness or labor dispute. Workers who are temporarily absent from work due to labor disputes, childcare, or other personal reasons, but are under agreement to return to their previous jobs. The employed totals include both farm workers and the self-employed.

Unemployed: Persons are classified as unemployed if they do not have a job, have actively looked for work in the prior four weeks, and are currently available for work. The unemployed do not include “discouraged” workers — those who have become disappointed with the job hunt and have stopped actively looking for work.

Actively looking for work may consist of any of the following activities:

- Contacting any of the following regarding job opportunities:
 - An employer
 - An employment agency
 - Friends or relatives
 - A school or university employment center
- Sending out resumes or filling out applications
- Placing or answering classified advertisements
- Checking union or professional registers

Workers expecting to be recalled from layoff are counted as unemployed, whether or not they have engaged in a specific job seeking activity. But in all other cases, the individual must be actively engaged in some job search activity and available for work (except for temporary illness).

Job: The number of jobs is a measure of total jobs, meaning the collective number of persons on the payrolls of employers. A job can only be occupied by one person, whereas a person can hold multiple jobs.

Labor Force: The labor force equals the sum of employed and unemployed persons. Those considered to be not in the labor force are neither employed nor unemployed.

Unemployment Rate: The unemployment rate is the percentage of the labor force that is unemployed (available and looking for work but currently not working).

Civilian Non-institutional Population: The civilian non-institutional population includes anyone age 16 and older who does not reside in an institution, such as a prison or mental hospital, or who is not on active duty in the Armed Forces.

Labor Force Participation Rate: The labor force participation rate is the percentage of the civilian non-institutional population that is in the labor force (either employed or unemployed).

Employment Participation Rate: The employment participation rate is defined as the percentage of civilian non-institutional population that is employed.

Full-time and part-time: Full-time workers are those who usually work 35 or more hours per week, whereas part-time workers are those who work fewer than 35 hours per week.

To summarize:

Employed persons consist of:

Employed persons are:

- All persons who did any work for pay or profit during the U.S. Census Bureau's household survey week, which is usually the week including the 12th of each month.
- All persons who did at least 15 hours of unpaid work in a family-operated enterprise.
- All persons who were temporarily absent from their regular jobs because of illness, vacation, bad weather, industrial labor dispute or various personal reasons, whether or not they were paid for the time off.

Unemployed persons are:

- All persons who did not have a job during the household survey week, but made active efforts to find a job during the prior four weeks, and were available for work (unless temporarily ill).

For more information, visit the U.S. Department of Labor's website, "How the Government Measures Employment," at http://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_htgm.htm.

Career Resources

The Illinois Department of Employment Security offers a variety of online resources to assist Illinoisans in their career exploration, job search, education, certification, and training goals, and much more.

Illinois JobLink

Illinois JobLink (IJL) is a free, online job matching service with 100,000+ job postings where job seekers can create or upload a resume and look for jobs and learn more about employers and training providers.

Visit IJL at [IllinoisJobLink.com](https://www.illinoisjoblink.com)

Career Information System

The Career Information System (CIS) is a self-directed, no cost, internet-based system that combines a wealth of career, education/training, and labor market information into one comprehensive, easy-to-use resource tool. The CIS portal encourages self-reflection, exploration, research, goal setting, and decision making for lifelong learning. Read about the four site types listed below and select the one that works for you.

Visit CIS at <https://portal.ilcis.intocareers.org/>

CIS360 Job Seeker/Adult

Focus: Career transitions, employment skills, and exploring career options.

Recommended for career explorers and career changers, CIS360 Job Seeker/Adult is for the person who wants to explore current job market trends, change careers, seek new opportunities, and more. This version features extensive job search resources, certification, training and retraining options, labor market trends, and offers career-planning guidance.

CIS360 College

Focus: Launching careers, exploring goals and interests, and researching options.

Recommended for potential, current, and former college students and adults. CIS360 College encourages college and university students to set career and educational goals, connect majors to the world of work, locate scholarships, prepare to transfer to another institution, and find graduate schools.

CIS360 High School

Focus: High school self-discovery and ownership over career and education plans.

This site supports high school students in their lifelong career-planning and promotes self-awareness, self-reliance, and self-worth. Tools in this site include self-assessments, exploration, research, goal setting, and decision making. It provides comprehensive career information for students developing and updating their future educational and career plans.

CIS360 Junior

Focus: Middle school exploration of careers, goals, interests, and values.

This site, suitable for grades 5-8, includes activities that match a student's interests to hundreds of occupations like scientist, video game designer, and teacher. It helps students answer questions like: What are my strengths, interests, and talents? How do I make decisions and plans? And how do my school and community activities help me reach my goals?

Illinois High School 2 Career

ILHighSchool2Career provides the opportunity for students, parents, and educators to review a wide range of information on Illinois public high school seniors and their pathways after high school, including post-secondary education choices as well as their career outcomes.

This information is made possible through a data sharing partnership between the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

Visit www.ILHighSchool2Career.com to get started.

Illinois College 2 Career

ILCollege2Career provides an opportunity for students, parents, and educators to review a wide range of information on Illinois two-year and four-year schools and universities that includes career outcomes of graduates from a particular academic area of study at a specific post-secondary institution. Results include many categories such as job stability, earnings growth, and earnings potential in Illinois.

This information is made possible through a data sharing partnership between the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC), Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), and the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB).

Visit www.ILCollege2Career.com to get started.

Endnotes

1. U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, <http://www.census.gov/popest/>.
2. The labor force includes all persons in the civilian, non-institutional population classified as either employed or unemployed. In general, as the population continues to grow, so does the pool of available workers.
3. Illinois Department of Employment Security, Economic Information and Analysis Division, Annual Data. <https://ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/laus.html>.
4. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, <http://www.bls.gov/cps/#data>.
5. Illinois Department of Employment Security, Economic Information and Analysis Division, Annual Data. <https://ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/laus.html>.
6. Ibid.
7. Illinois Department of Employment Security, Economic Information and Analysis Division, CES Not Seasonally Adjusted Reports. <https://ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/ces.html>.
8. U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates, <http://www.census.gov/popest/>.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (S0501, S0503, S0505, S0506), data.census.gov.
13. Illinois Department of Employment Security, Economic Information and Analysis Division, Annual Data. <https://ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/laus.html>.
14. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, <http://www.bls.gov/cps/#data>.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid. The comparison excludes Asian women, whose labor force participation was estimated to fluctuate rapidly over the last 10 years, in part due to the relatively smaller sample size.
19. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, <http://www.bls.gov/cps/#data>.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, “Union Members Summary”, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/union2.nr0.htm>.
25. Illinois Department of Employment Security, Economic Information and Analysis Division, Annual Data. <https://ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/laus.html>.
26. Illinois Department of Employment Security, Economic Information and Analysis Division, Current Data. <https://ides.illinois.gov/resources/labor-market-information/laus.html>.
27. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, <http://www.bls.gov/cps/#data>.
28. Ibid.
29. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/tus/>.
30. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, <http://www.bls.gov/cps/#data>.

31. Ibid.
32. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, “2023 EEO-1”, www.eeoc.gov.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid. Data also include federal contractors with 50 or more employees.
35. State of Illinois, Central Management Services, Report ANR003-A. Data cover coded workers employed between October 1 and December 31, 2025.
36. U.S. Census Bureau, 2024 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates (Tables S1501, B15002A, B15002B, B15002D, B15002I), data.census.gov.
37. Ibid.
38. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, “Highlights of women’s earnings in 2024.” <https://www.bls.gov/opub/reports/womens-earnings/2024/>
39. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, <http://www.bls.gov/cps/#data>.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.