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EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS — 2016-26

Employment is projected to increase by 11.5 million over the 2016-26 decade, an increase from 156.1 million to 167.6 million, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. This growth—0.7 percent annually—is faster than the 0.5 percent rate of growth during the 2006–16 decade, a period heavily affected by the 2007–09 recession. Health care industries and their associated occupations are expected to account for a large share of new jobs projected through 2026, as the aging population continues to drive demand for health care services. The labor force will continue to grow slowly and to become older and more diverse. The aging population is projected to result in a decline in the overall labor force participation rate over the 2016 to 2026 decade.

Chart 1. Ten fastest growing occupations, projected 2016-26

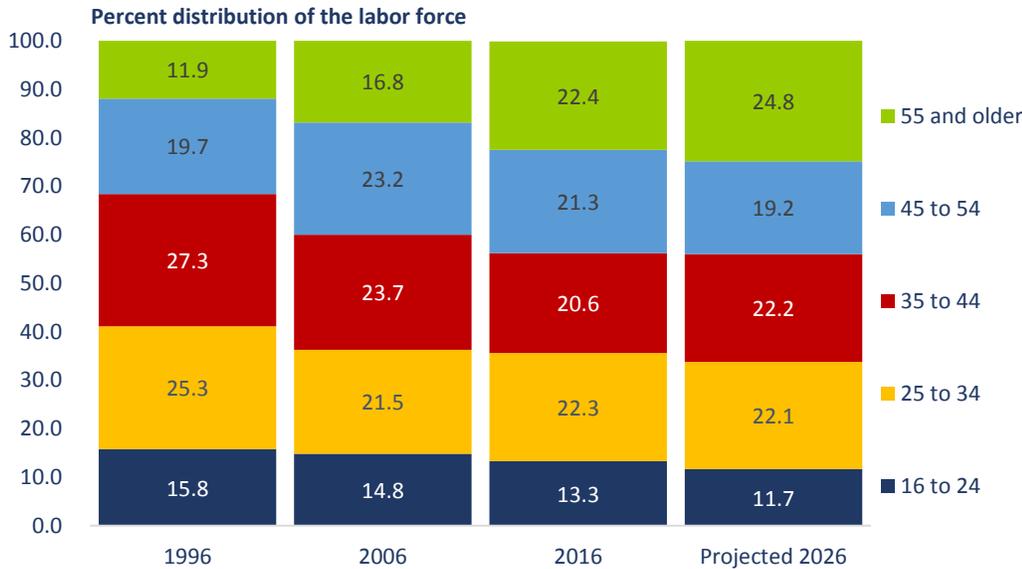
	Percent change, projected 2016-26	Employment change, projected 2016-26 (in thousands)	Median annual wages, May 2016
Solar photovoltaic installers	105.3%	11.9	\$39,240
Wind turbine service technicians	96.1%	5.5	\$52,260
Home health aides	46.7%	425.6	\$22,600
Personal care aides	37.4%	754.0	\$21,920
Physician assistants	37.4%	39.7	\$101,480
Nurse practitioners	36.0%	56.0	\$100,910
Statisticians	33.4%	12.4	\$80,500
Physical therapist assistants	30.8%	27.2	\$56,610
Software developers, applications	30.5%	253.4	\$100,080
Mathematicians	29.4%	0.9	\$105,810

Occupational Outlook Handbook

The projections are the foundation of the BLS *Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)*, one of the nation's most widely used career information resources. The *OOH* reflects BLS employment projections for the 2016–26 decade. The updated *OOH* is available online at www.bls.gov/ooh.

Highlights of the BLS projections for the labor force, macroeconomy, industry employment, and occupational employment are included below.

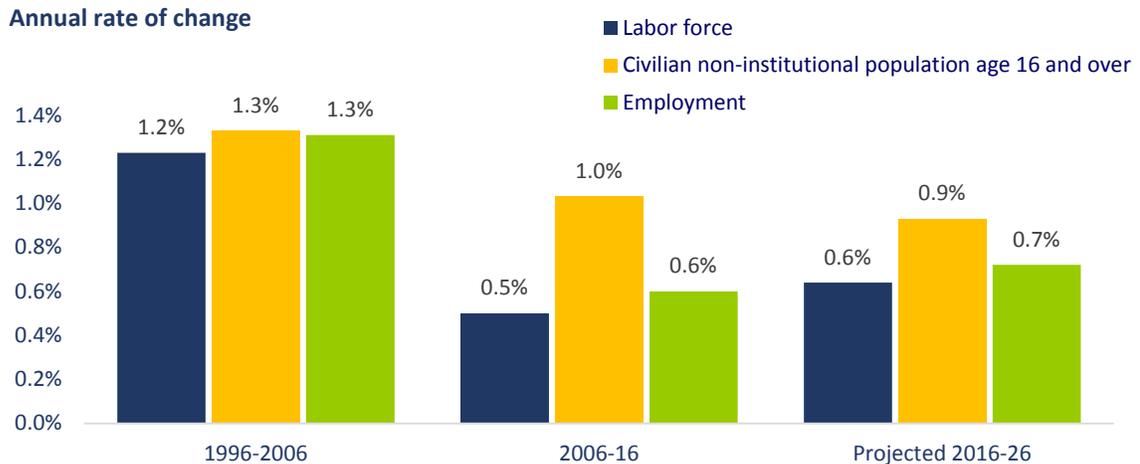
Chart 2. Labor force share, by age group, 1996, 2006, 2016, and projected 2026



Labor Force and Macroeconomy

- The civilian labor force is projected to reach 169.7 million in 2026, growing at an annual rate of 0.6 percent. This growth is slightly faster than the annual rate of growth (0.5 percent) witnessed during the 2006–16 decade, but slower than the annual growth experienced during several decades prior. See www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_301.htm.
- Slow labor force growth is a result, in part, of decelerating growth of the civilian noninstitutional population, which is projected to grow at an annual rate of 0.9 percent from 2016 to 2026. This growth is slower than the rates witnessed during previous decades, 1.0 percent from 2006 to 2016, and 1.3 percent from 1996 to 2006.
- As the labor force continues to get older, the overall labor force participation rate is projected to decrease to 61.0 percent in 2026. This rate is down from 62.8 percent in 2016 and from the peak of 67.1 percent in 2000, prior to the 2007–09 recession. See www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_303.htm.
- As the baby-boom generation ages, the share of workers age 55 and older—a cohort with a low labor force participation rate—is projected to grow to 24.8 percent in 2026. This share is up from 22.4 percent in 2016 and 16.8 percent in 2006. See www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_301.htm.

Chart 3. Annual growth rate of the population, labor force, and employment, by decade, 1996 to projected 2026



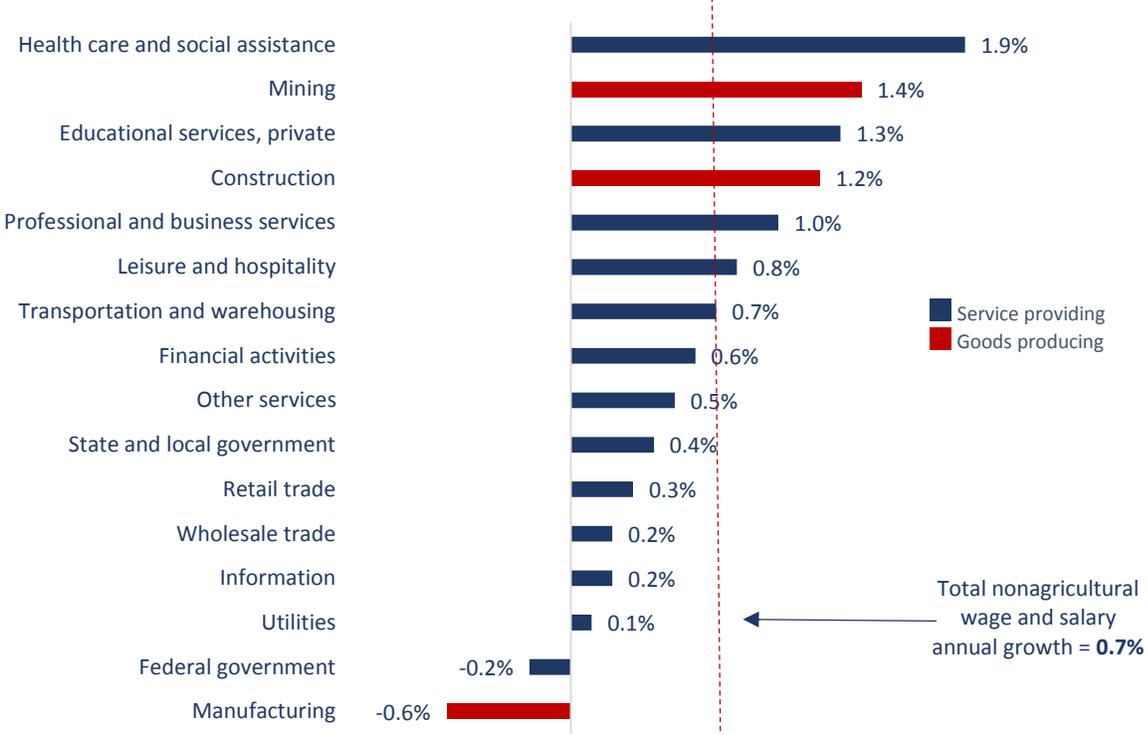
- The labor force will also continue to change in racial and ethnic composition. Two groups of workers—Asians and those of Hispanic origin—are expected to grow much faster than the average annual rate from 2016 to 2026: 2.5 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively. Workers of Hispanic origin are expected to make up about 1 out of 5 workers in 2026. See www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_301.htm.
- Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (2009 chained dollars) is projected to grow at an annual rate of 2.0 percent from 2016 to 2026. Projected GDP growth is faster than the annual rate of 1.4 percent from 2006 to 2016, but slower than the 3.3 percent annual growth achieved from 1996 to 2006. See www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_402.htm.
- Increased labor productivity will contribute to faster GDP growth. Labor productivity is projected to grow 1.6 percent annually from 2016 to 2026: faster than the 1.2 percent annual growth from 2006 to 2016, but slower than the 2.8 percent annual increase from 1996 to 2006. See www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_411.htm.

Industry Employment

- Total employment is projected to grow by 11.5 million jobs over the 2016–26 decade, reaching 167.6 million jobs in 2026. See www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_201.htm.
- Industry employment is projected to grow at a rate of 0.7 percent per year from 2016 to 2026, faster than the 0.5 percent annual rate from 2006 to 2016 but much slower than rates seen during the decades leading up to the 2007–09 recession.
- About 9 out of 10 new jobs are projected to be added in the service-providing sector from 2016 to 2026, resulting in more than 10.5 million new jobs, or 0.8 percent annual growth. The goods-producing sector is expected to increase by 219,000 jobs, growing at a rate of 0.1 percent per year over the projections decade.

Chart 4. Projected percent change in industry employment, 2016-26

Annual rate of change for wage and salary employment, projected 2016-26

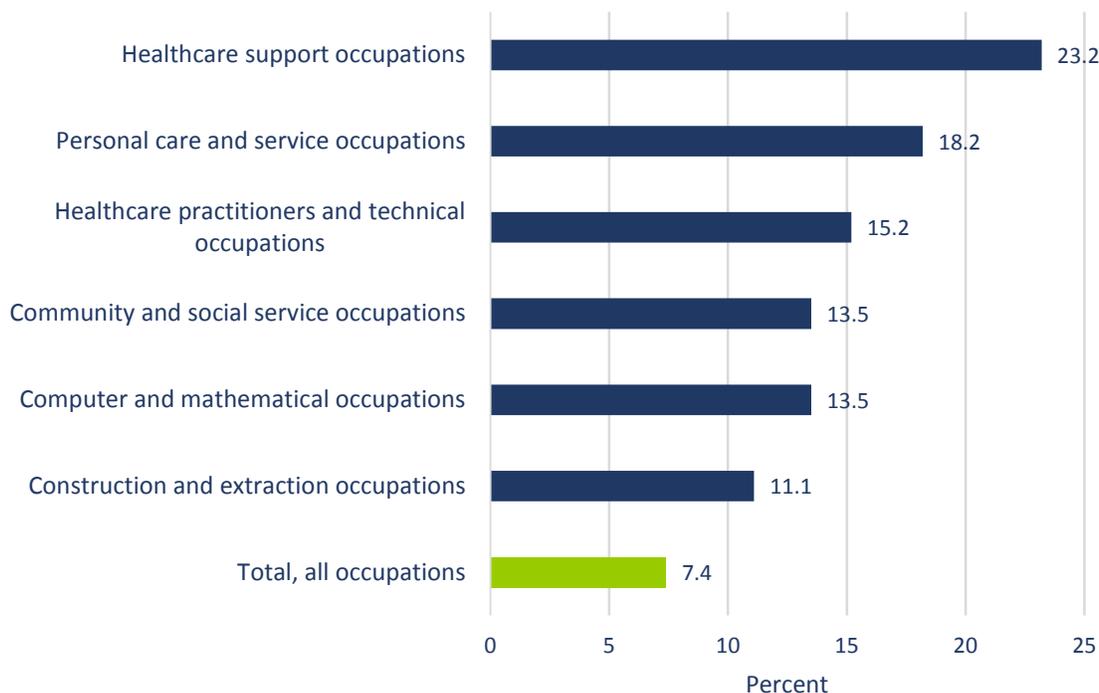


- Employment in the health care and social assistance sector is projected to add nearly 4.0 million jobs by 2026, about one-third of all new jobs. The share of health care and social assistance employment is projected to increase from 12.2 percent in 2016 to 13.8 percent in 2026, becoming the largest major sector in 2026.

Occupational Employment

- Occupational employment is expected to increase by 7.4 percent between 2016 and 2026. All occupational groups are expected to add jobs over the projections decade except for the production occupations group, which is projected to decline by 4.1 percent. See www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_101.htm.
- Healthcare support occupations (23.2 percent) and healthcare practitioners and technical occupations (15.2 percent) are projected to be among the fastest growing occupational groups during the 2016–26 projections decade. These two occupational groups—which account for 14 of the 30 fastest growing occupations from 2016 to 2026—are projected to contribute about one-fifth of all new jobs by 2026. Factors such as the aging baby-boom population, longer life expectancies, and growing rates of chronic conditions will drive continued demand for healthcare services.

Chart 5. Projected percent change, by select occupational groups, 2016-26



- Several other occupational groups are projected to experience faster than average employment growth, including personal care and service occupations (18.2 percent), community and social service occupations (13.5 percent), and computer and mathematical occupations (13.5 percent).
- Of the 30 fastest growing detailed occupations, 19 typically require some level of postsecondary education for entry. See www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_103.htm.
- Employment in 654 detailed occupations is projected to grow, while employment in 163 detailed occupations is projected to decline. See www.bls.gov/emp/ep_table_102.htm.

More Information

- The *Occupational Outlook Handbook (OOH)* includes information about 575 detailed occupations in 325 occupational profiles, covering about 4 out of 5 jobs in the economy. Each profile features the 2016–26 projections, along with assessments of the job outlook, work activities, wages, education and training requirements, and more.
- Select profiles in the *OOH* now include career videos produced by U.S. Department of Labor’s CareerOneStop. Links to videos appear on the Summary tab of profiles to the right of the Quick Facts box. In addition, the wage information in the *OOH* is now updated on an annual basis. The *OOH* reflects May 2016 wages from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) program, and will be updated with May 2017 wages in the spring of 2018. See www.bls.gov/oes/.
- The *OOH* is available online at www.bls.gov/ooh.

- A graphic representation of projections highlights appears in the *Career Outlook* online, available at www.bls.gov/careeroutlook.
- Detailed information on the 2016–26 projections appears in the *Monthly Labor Review*, at www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/2017/article/projections-overview-and-highlights-2016-26.htm.
- Tables with detailed, comprehensive projections are available online at www.bls.gov/emp/tables.htm.
- Definitions for terms used in this news release are available in the BLS Glossary at www.bls.gov/bls/glossary.htm.

Information from this news release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Services: (800) 877-8339.

Technical Note

Every 2 years, BLS publishes projections for the labor force, macroeconomy, industry employment, and occupational employment. More information is available online:

- Labor force:
www.bls.gov/emp/ep_data_labor_force.htm
- Macroeconomy:
www.bls.gov/emp/ep_data_aggregate_economy.htm
- Industry employment:
www.bls.gov/emp/ep_data_industry_out_and_emp.htm
- Occupational Employment:
www.bls.gov/emp/ep_data_occupational_data.htm

The projections data provide an overview of expected changes in the economy over a 10-year period. The projections are focused on long-term structural trends of the economy and do not try to anticipate future business cycle activity. To meet this objective, specific assumptions are made about the labor force, macroeconomy, industry employment, and occupational employment. Critical to the production of these projections is the assumption of full employment for the economy in the projected year. The projections are not intended to be a forecast of what the future will be but instead are a description of what would be expected to happen under these specific assumptions and circumstances. When these assumptions are not realized, actual values will differ from projections.

The difference between projected changes in the labor force and in employment does not necessarily imply a labor shortage or surplus. The BLS projections assume labor market equilibrium; that is, one in which labor supply meets

labor demand except for some level of frictional unemployment. In addition, the employment and labor force measures use different definitional and statistical concepts. For example, employment is a count of jobs, and one person may hold more than one job. Labor force is a count of employed people, and a person is counted only once regardless of how many jobs he or she holds.

For more information, visit the Employment Projections Methodology page online at www.bls.gov/emp/ep_projections_methods.htm.

Frequently asked questions about the employment projections are online at www.bls.gov/emp/ep_fa_001.htm.

Users and Uses

The BLS projections are used by high school and college students, their teachers and parents, jobseekers, career counselors, and guidance specialists to determine jobs in demand. The projections also are used by state workforce agencies to prepare state and area projections that, together with the national projections, are widely used by policymakers to make decisions about education and training, funding allocations, and program offerings. These projections of jobs in demand help improve the alignment between education and training and the hiring demands of business. In addition, other federal agencies, researchers, and academics use the projections to understand trends in the economy and labor market.

Projections of industry and occupational employment are prepared by each state, using input from the BLS national projections. State projections data are available at Projections Central www.projectionscentral.com.