How Much Do Black Men Work?

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Abstract

The purpose of this poster is to demonstrate ways that selected current and historical data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Spotlight on Statistics report entitled Blacks in the Labor Force may be used to project trends in labor force participation among African American men.

Highlights

♦ Blacks made up 19.6 million (or 12 percent) from a total of 159.2 million people in the labor force. BLS projects the Black labor force will reach 21.6 million (12.7 percent) from a total of 169.7 by 2026.

♦ In 1972, Black men made up 55.3 percent of the Black labor force, and Black women made up 44.7 percent. In the last four decades, the share of Black men in the labor force has declined, while the share of Black women has increased.

♦ The labor force participation rate of Black men was at its peak in 1972, at 73.6 percent. Since then, the rate for Black men has declined, specifically after the 2007–09 recession.

♦ The labor force participation rates for all men and Black men have been declining in the past four decades. Historically, the labor force participation rate of Black men has been consistently lower than the rate for all men.

♦ The labor force participation rates of men in most race and ethnic groups have declined steadily in the past several decades.