



Projections of the labor force, 2014–24

Increases or decreases in the size of the labor force can significantly affect the growth of the economy. The charts in this article show how the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics \(BLS\)](#) projects the labor force to change between men and women, age groups, racial groups (Asians, Blacks, Whites, and others), and ethnic groups (Hispanic origin and White non-Hispanic).

The labor force is the number of people ages 16 and older who are either working or actively looking for work. It does not include active-duty military personnel or the institutionalized population, such as prison inmates.

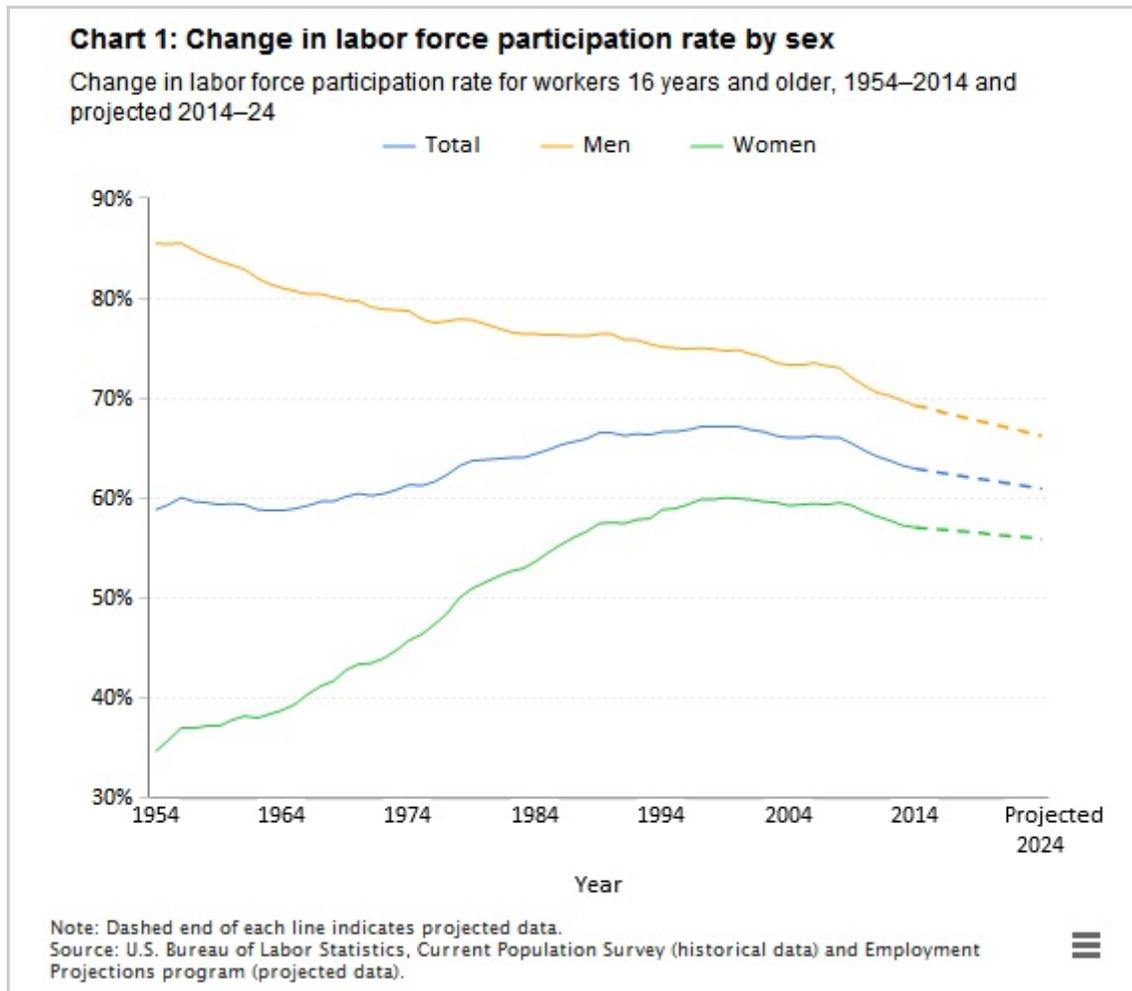
The total labor force is expected to grow about 0.5 percent per year from 2014 to 2024. This average growth rate is shown as a dotted vertical line in [Chart 3](#). As in previous years, the labor force is projected to grow more slowly than the number of jobs, but this does not indicate a labor shortage. Instead, this discrepancy reflects that these two measures are based on different concepts.

(For more information on how BLS develops the projections, read about our [methodology](#).)

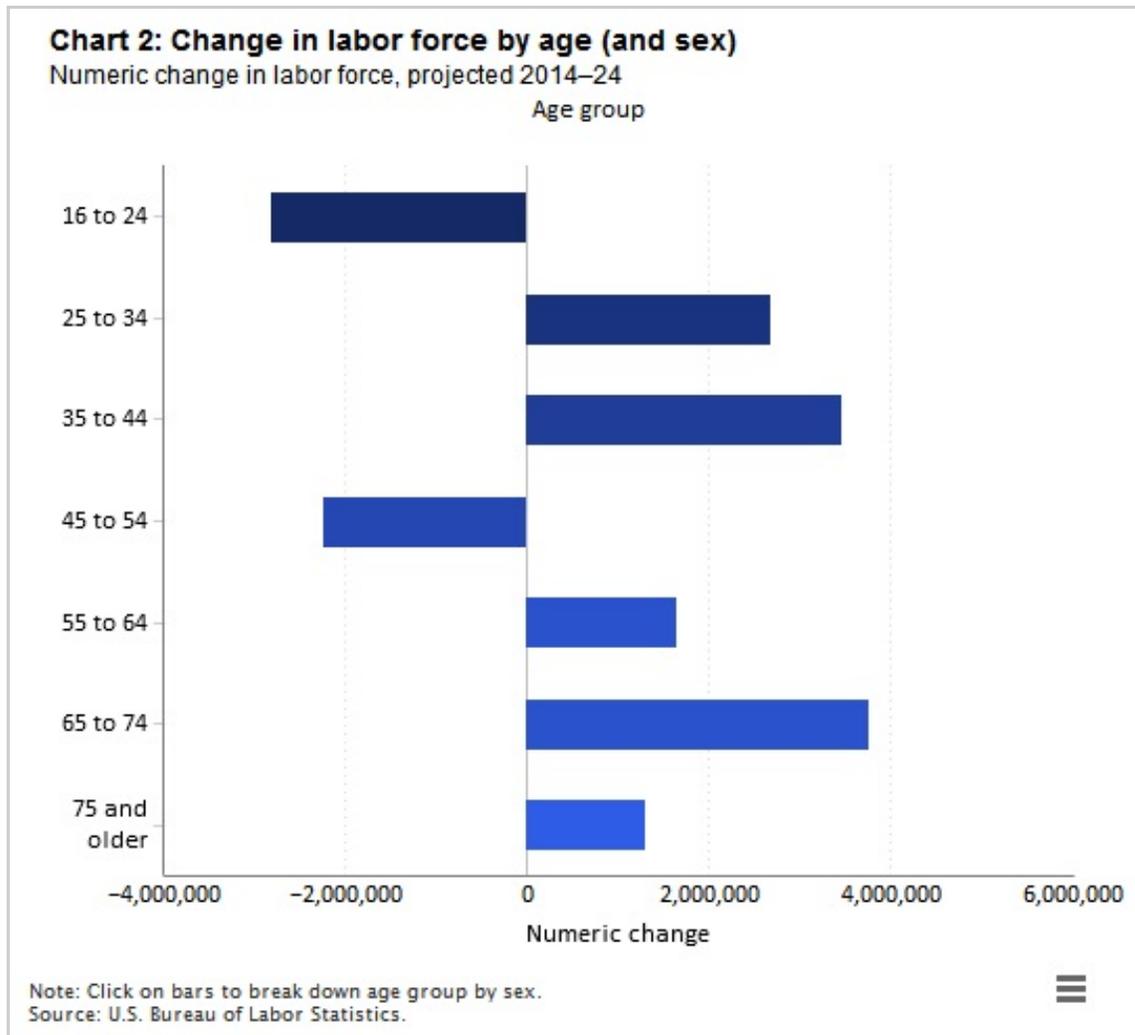


Charting the labor force

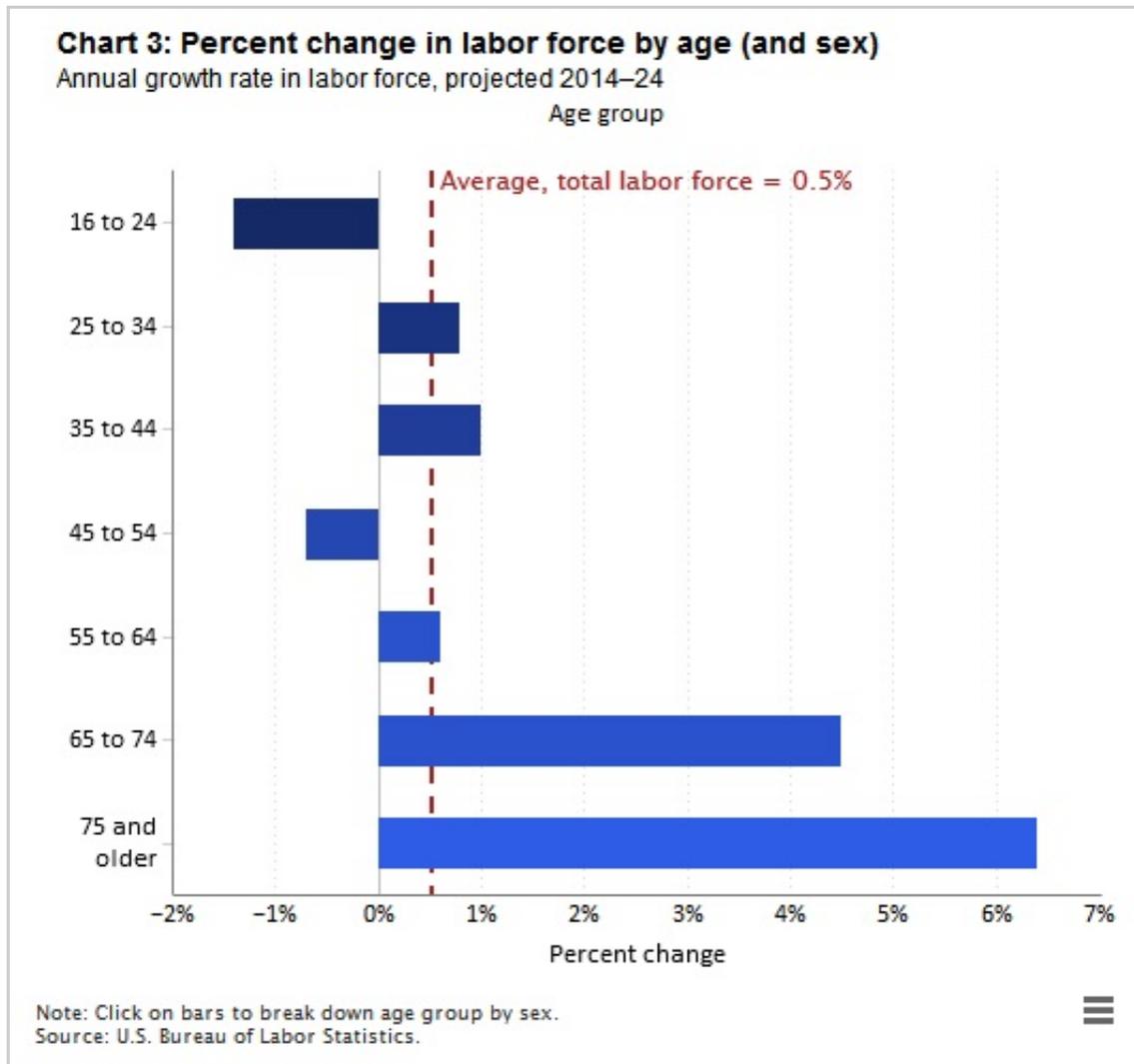
Labor force participation rates are projected to fall slightly for both men and women. (See chart 1.)



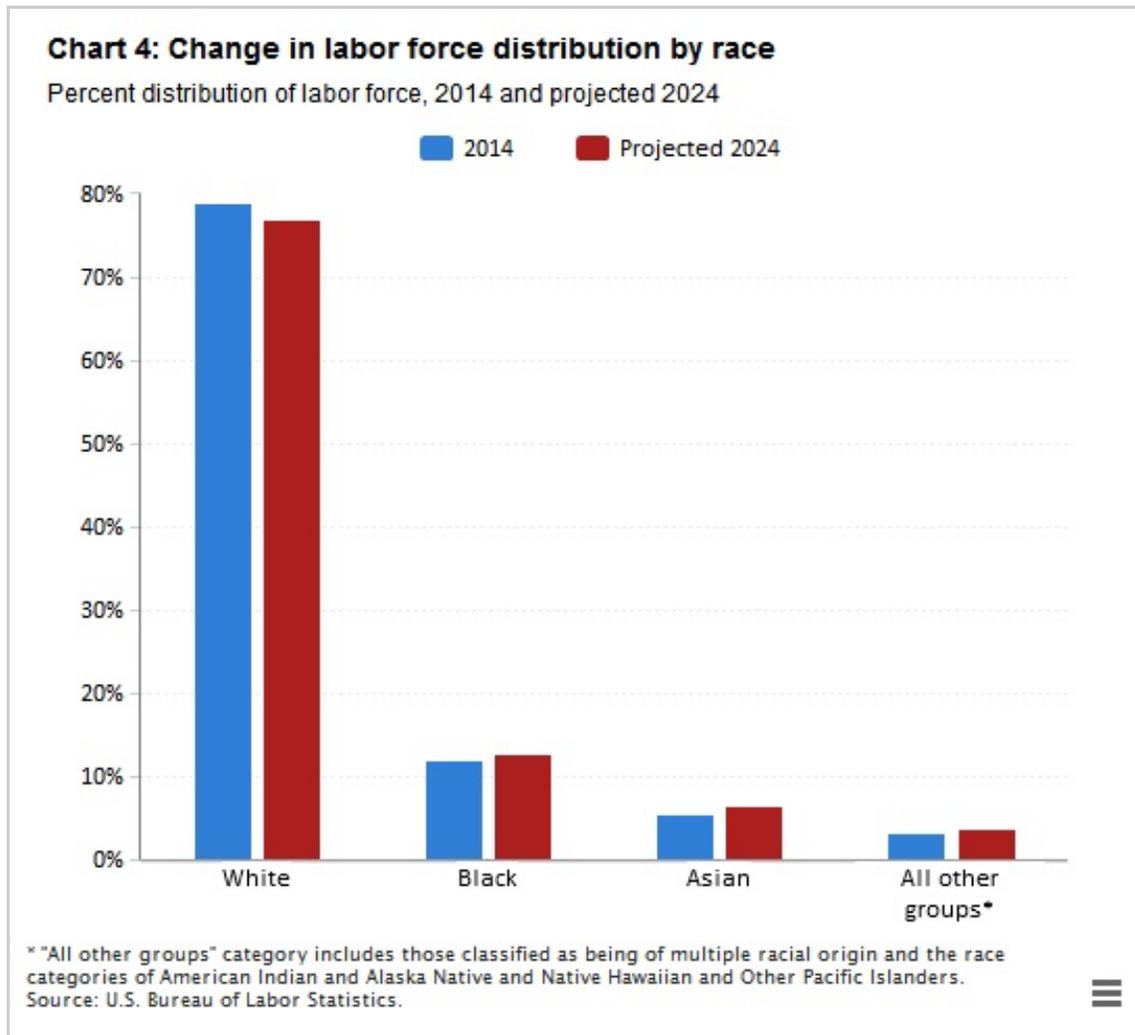
As aging baby boomers continue working, the number of 65- to 74-year-olds in the labor force is projected to increase more than that of workers in other age groups. (See chart 2.)



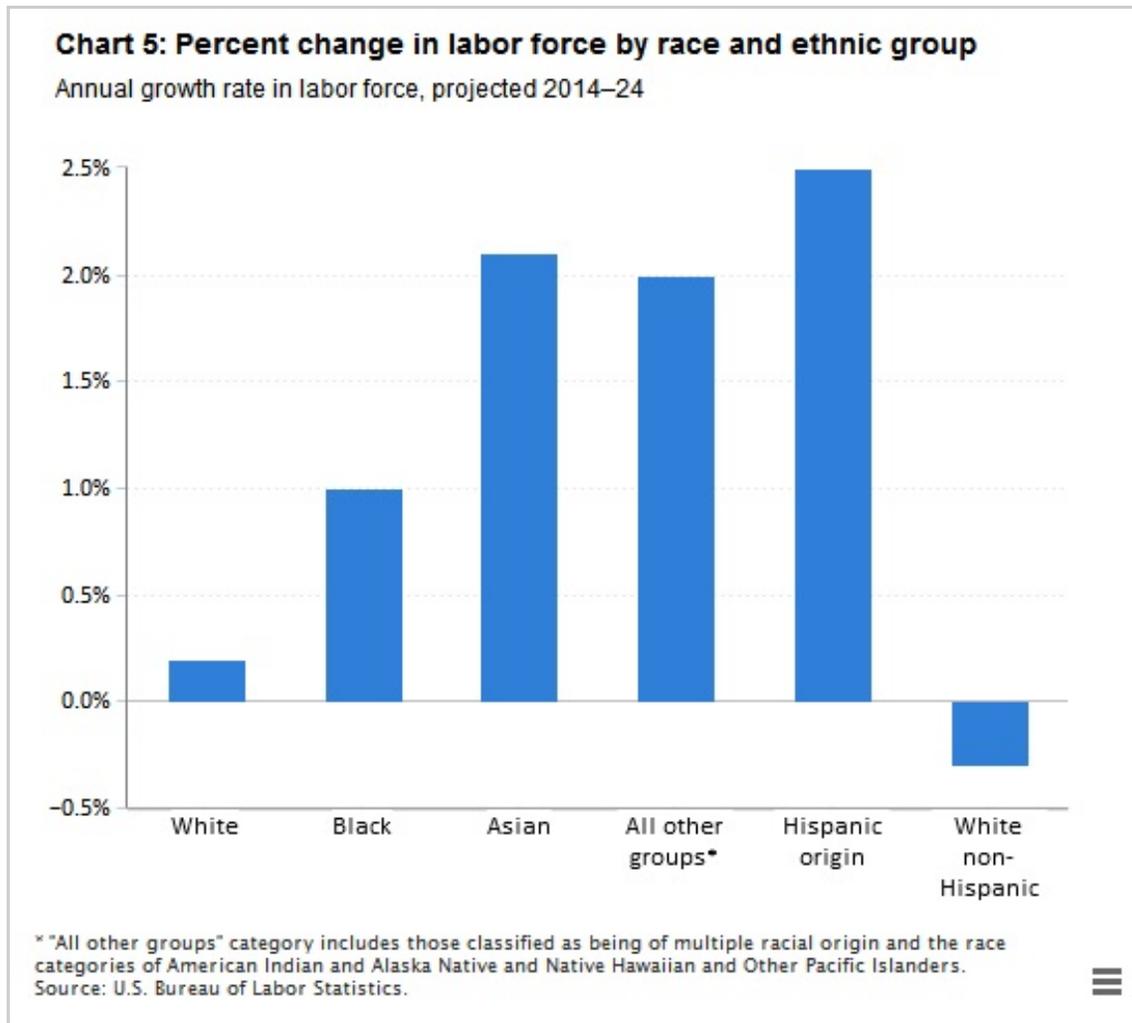
Workers ages 75 and older are expected to have the fastest rate of growth. (See chart 3.)



The labor force will continue to become more diverse. For example, as chart 4 shows, Whites' share of the labor force is projected to decline and Blacks' and Asians' shares are projected to rise over the decade.



Hispanics are projected to have the fastest rate of growth. (See chart 5.)



SUGGESTED CITATION:

"Projections of the labor force, 2014–24," *Career Outlook*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, December 2015.

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