

Indicator 34

Immediate Transition to College

Over the 35-year period between 1975 and 2010, the rate of immediate college enrollment after high school ranged from a low of 49 percent in 1979 and 1980, to a high of 70 percent in 2009. This rate increased most recently from 2001 to 2009.

The *immediate college enrollment rate* is defined as the percentage of high school completers of a given year who enroll in 2- or 4-year colleges in the fall immediately after completing high school. During the period of 1975 through 2010, the immediate college enrollment rate ranged from a low of 49 percent to a high of 70 percent (see table A-34-1). Specifically, this rate increased from 1975 to 1997 (51 to 67 percent), declined from 1997 to 2001 (to 62 percent), then increased from 2001 to 2009 (to 70 percent). There was no measurable difference between the rate for 2009 and that for 2010 (68 percent).

In each year between 1975 and 2010, the immediate college enrollment rates of high school completers from low- and middle-income families were lower than those of high school completers from high-income families. Most recently, in 2010, the immediate college enrollment rate of high school completers from low-income families was 52 percent, 30 percentage points lower than the rate of high school completers from high-income families (82 percent). The immediate college enrollment rate of high school completers from middle-income families (67 percent) was 15 percentage points lower than the rate of their peers from high-income families.

Separate data on Asian high school completers have been collected since 2003. Between 2003 and 2010, immediate college enrollment rates increased for Asian high school completers from 80 to 88 percent (see table A-34-2). Despite some apparent increases, there were no measurable differences over this period in the rates for White, Black, or Hispanic high school completers. During the longer period of 1975 to 2010, immediate college enrollment rates increased for White (51 vs. 70 percent) and Black high school completers (43 vs. 66 percent). After accounting for possible sampling error, there was no measurable difference in Hispanic rates

over this period of time (approximately 60 percent in both years). In each year between 2003 and 2010, the immediate college enrollment rate of Asian high school completers was higher than the rates of White, Black, and Hispanic high school completers. The immediate college enrollment rate of White high school completers was also higher than the rate for Hispanic students in every year during this period and for Black students in every year from 2003 to 2009. In 2010, there was no measurable difference between the rates for Whites and for Blacks.

Overall, the immediate college enrollment rates of high school completers at both 2- and 4-year colleges increased between 1975 and 2010 (see table A-34-3). In 1975, about 18 percent of high school completers enrolled at a 2-year college immediately after high school, while 27 percent did so in 2010. Similarly, in 1975, some 33 percent of high school completers enrolled at a 4-year college immediately after high school, compared with 41 percent in 2010. In each year during this period, immediate college enrollment rates at 2-year colleges were lower than those at 4-year colleges.

Between 1975 and 2010, immediate college enrollment rates increased for both males and females: the rate for males increased from 53 to 63 percent and that for females, from 49 to 74 percent. Thus, the enrollment pattern has shifted over time to higher enrollment rates for females than males. The percentage of male high school completers who enrolled in a 2-year college immediately after high school (29 percent) was not measurably different from the percentage for their female peers (25 percent). In contrast, the percentage of high school completers who enrolled in a 4-year college immediately after high school was lower for males than females (34 vs. 49 percent).



Tables A-34-1, A-34-2, and A-34-3

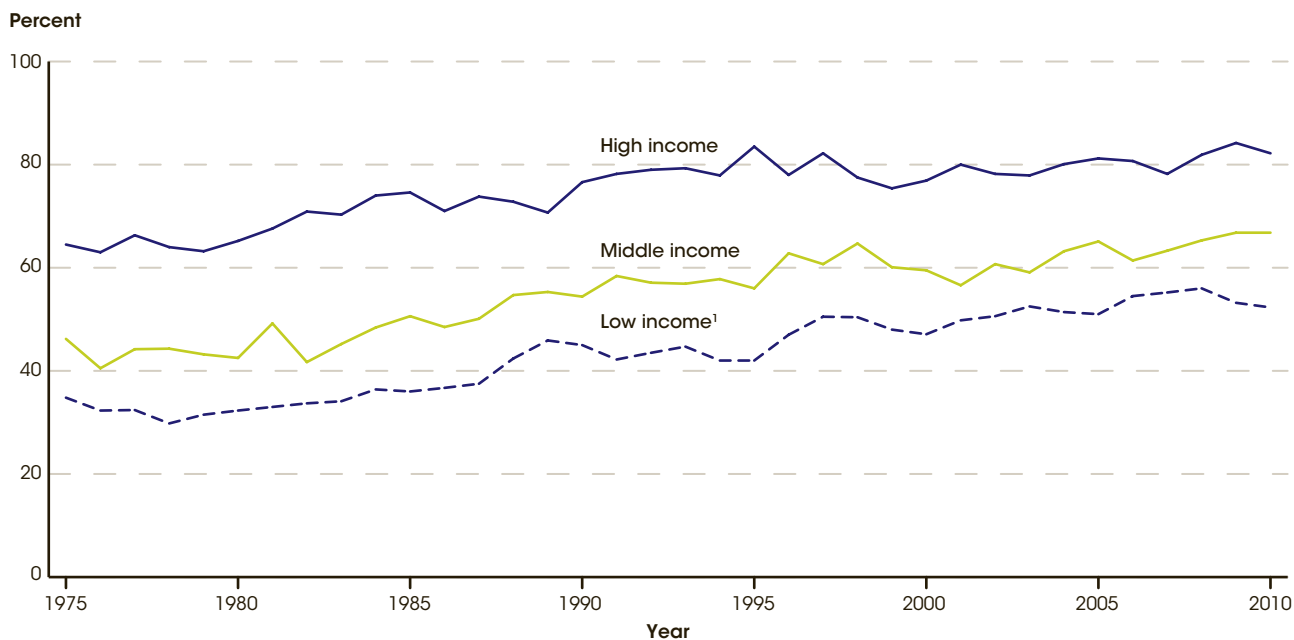
Glossary: *Family income, High school completer*

Technical Notes

This indicator provides data on high school completers ages 16–24, who account for about 98 percent of all high school completers in a given year. Enrollment rates were calculated using data from the Current Population Survey (CPS). Before 1992, *high school completer* referred to those who had completed 12 years of schooling. As of 1992, *high school completer* refers to those who have received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. *Low income* refers to the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes, *high income* refers to the top 20 percent of

all family incomes, and *middle income* refers to the 60 percent in between. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. Estimates for Black, Hispanic, Asian, and low-income categories are based on moving averages, which were calculated due to short-term data fluctuations in some years associated with small sample sizes for these groups. For more information on the CPS, see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*. For more information on educational attainment, family income, and race/ethnicity, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*.

Figure 34-1. Percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in 2- or 4-year colleges the October immediately following high school completion, by family income: 1975–2010

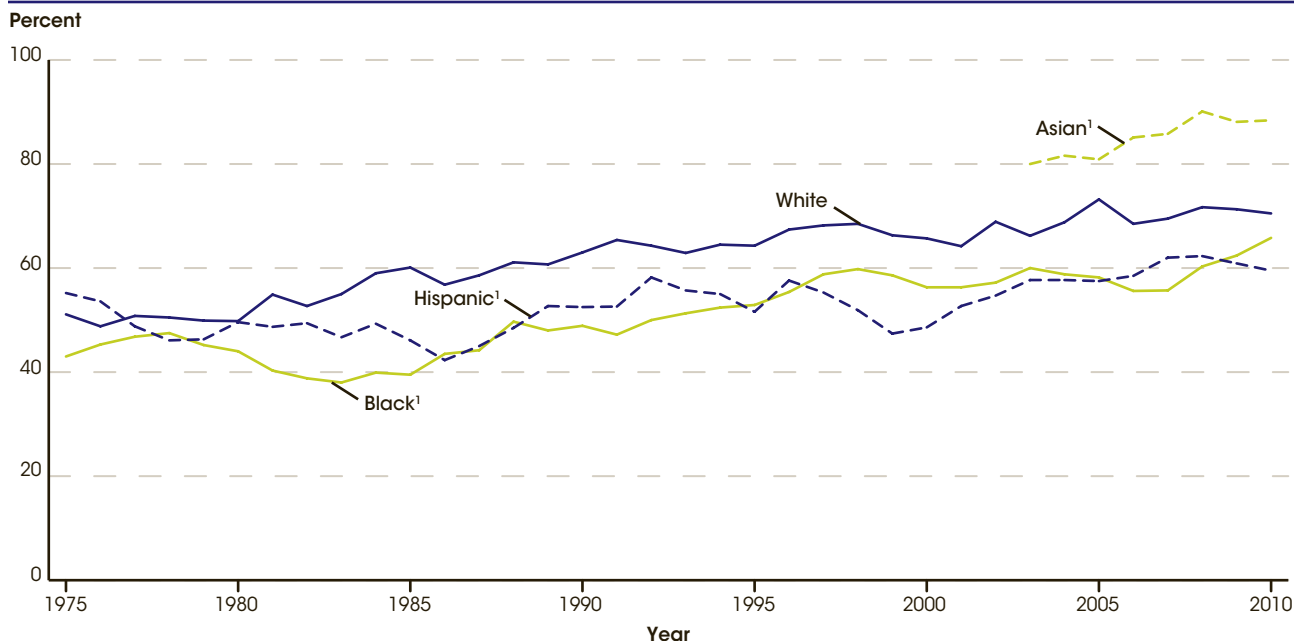


¹ Due to the small sample size for the low-income category, data are subject to relatively large sampling errors. Therefore, moving averages are used to produce more stable estimates. The 3-year moving average is an arithmetic average of the year indicated, the year immediately preceding, and the year immediately following. For 1975 and 2010, a 2-year moving average is used: data for 1975 reflect an average of 1975 and 1976, and data for 2010 reflect an average of 2009 and 2010.

NOTE: Includes high school completers ages 16–24, who account for about 98 percent of all high school completers in a given year. *Low income* refers to the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes, *high income* refers to the top 20 percent of all family incomes, and *middle income* refers to the 60 percent in between. For more information on the Current Population Survey (CPS), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*. For more information on educational attainment and family income, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1975–2010.

Figure 34-2. Percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in 2- or 4-year colleges the October immediately following high school completion, by race/ethnicity: 1975–2010



¹ Due to the small sample sizes for the Black, Hispanic, and Asian categories, data are subject to relatively large sampling errors. Therefore, moving averages are used to produce more stable estimates. The 3-year moving average is an arithmetic average of the year indicated, the year immediately preceding, and the year immediately following. For 1975 and 2010, a 2-year moving average is used: data for 1975 reflect an average of 1975 and 1976, and data for 2010 reflect an average of 2009 and 2010.

NOTE: Includes high school completers ages 16–24, who account for about 98 percent of all high school completers in a given year. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. From 2003 onward, data for Asians and Pacific Islanders were collected separately. Separate data for the Asian category are not available prior to 2003. For more information on the Current Population Survey (CPS), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*. For more information on educational attainment and race/ethnicity, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1975–2010.

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Table A-34-1. Percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in 2- or 4-year colleges the October immediately following high school completion, by family income: 1975-2010

Year	Total	Low income		Middle income	High income	Gap between High income and	
		Annual	Moving average ¹			Low income ²	Middle income
1975	50.7	31.2	34.8	46.2	64.5	29.7	18.3
1976	48.8	39.3	32.3	40.5	63.0	30.6	22.5
1977	50.6	27.7	32.4	44.2	66.3	33.8	22.0
1978	50.1	31.4	29.8	44.3	64.0	34.2	19.6
1979	49.3	30.5	31.5	43.2	63.2	31.6	19.9
1980	49.3	32.4	32.3	42.5	65.2	32.9	22.8
1981	53.9	33.9	33.0	49.2	67.6	34.6	18.4
1982	50.6	32.8	33.7	41.7	70.9	37.1	29.2
1983	52.7	34.6	34.1	45.2	70.3	36.3	25.1
1984	55.2	34.7	36.4	48.4	74.0	37.6	25.6
1985	57.7	40.2	36.0	50.6	74.6	38.5	24.0
1986	53.8	33.9	36.7	48.5	71.0	34.3	22.6
1987	56.8	36.8	37.5	50.1	73.8	36.3	23.8
1988	58.9	42.5	42.4	54.7	72.8	30.4	18.1
1989	59.6	48.5	45.9	55.3	70.7	24.8	15.3
1990	60.1	46.9	45.0	54.4	76.6	31.6	22.2
1991	62.5	39.5	42.2	58.4	78.2	36.0	19.8
1992	61.9	40.8	43.5	57.1	79.0	35.5	22.0
1993	62.6	50.4	44.7	56.9	79.3	34.6	22.4
1994	61.9	43.3	42.0	57.8	77.9	35.9	20.1
1995	61.9	34.2	42.0	56.0	83.5	41.4	27.4
1996	65.0	48.3	47.0	62.8	78.0	31.0	15.2
1997	67.0	57.0	50.5	60.7	82.2	31.7	21.5
1998	65.6	46.4	50.4	64.7	77.5	27.0	12.8
1999	62.9	48.0	48.0	60.1	75.4	27.4	15.3
2000	63.3	49.7	47.1	59.5	76.9	29.8	17.4
2001	61.8	43.5	48.5	56.6	80.0	31.5	23.5
2002	65.2	52.3	49.2	61.9	78.8	29.5	16.9
2003	63.9	52.0	51.1	59.1	77.9	26.9	18.9
2004	66.7	48.5	51.4	63.2	80.1	28.8	17.0
2005	68.6	53.5	51.0	65.1	81.2	30.2	16.1
2006	66.0	50.9	54.5	61.4	80.7	26.2	19.3
2007	67.2	58.4	55.2	63.3	78.2	23.0	14.8
2008	68.6	55.5	56.0	65.3	81.9	25.9	16.6
2009	70.1	54.1	53.2	66.8	84.2	31.0	17.4
2010	68.1	50.6	52.3	66.8	82.2	29.9	15.5

¹ Due to the small sample size for the low-income category, data are subject to relatively large sampling errors. Therefore, moving averages are used to produce more stable estimates. The 3-year moving average is an arithmetic average of the year indicated, the year immediately preceding, and the year immediately following. For 1975 and 2010, a 2-year moving average is used: data for 1975 reflect an average of 1975 and 1976, and data for 2010 reflect an average of 2009 and 2010.

² Refers to the moving average rates for the low-income category.

NOTE: Includes high school completers ages 16-24, who account for about 98 percent of all high school completers in a given year. Before 1992, *high school completer* referred to those who had completed 12 years of schooling. As of 1992, high school completer refers to those who have received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. *Low income* refers to the bottom 20 percent of all family incomes, *high income* refers to the top 20 percent of all family incomes, and *middle income* refers to the 60 percent in between. For more information on the Current Population Survey (CPS), see Appendix B - *Guide to Sources*. For more information on educational attainment and family income, see Appendix C - *Commonly Used Measures*. SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1975-2010.

Table A-34-2. Percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in 2- or 4-year colleges the October immediately following high school completion, by race/ethnicity: 1975–2010

Year	Black			Hispanic		Asian		Gap between White and		
	White	Annual	Moving average ¹	Annual	Moving average ¹	Annual	Moving average ¹	Black ²	Hispanic ²	Asian ²
1975	51.1	41.7	43.0	58.0	55.2	—	—	8.1!	‡	—
1976	48.8	44.4	45.3	52.7	53.6	—	—	‡	‡	—
1977	50.8	49.5	46.8	50.8	48.8	—	—	‡	‡	—
1978	50.5	46.4	47.5	42.0	46.1	—	—	‡	‡	—
1979	49.9	46.7	45.2	45.0	46.3	—	—	‡	‡	—
1980	49.8	42.7	44.0	52.3	49.6	—	—	‡	‡	—
1981	54.9	42.7	40.3	52.1	48.7	—	—	14.6	‡	—
1982	52.7	35.8	38.8	43.2	49.4	—	—	13.9	‡	—
1983	55.0	38.2	38.0	54.2	46.7	—	—	17.1	‡	—
1984	59.0	39.8	39.9	44.3	49.3	—	—	19.1	‡	—
1985	60.1	42.2	39.5	51.0	46.1	—	—	20.5	13.9!	—
1986	56.8	36.9	43.5	44.0	42.3	—	—	13.3	14.5!	—
1987	58.6	52.2	44.2	33.5	45.0	—	—	14.4	13.6!	—
1988	61.1	44.4	49.7	57.1	48.5	—	—	11.4!	12.6!	—
1989	60.7	53.4	48.0	55.1	52.7	—	—	12.7	‡	—
1990	63.0	46.8	48.9	42.7	52.5	—	—	14.1	‡	—
1991	65.4	46.4	47.2	57.2	52.6	—	—	18.2	12.8!	—
1992	64.3	48.2	50.0	55.0	58.2	—	—	14.3	‡	—
1993	62.9	55.6	51.3	62.2	55.7	—	—	11.6!	‡	—
1994	64.5	50.8	52.4	49.1	55.0	—	—	12.1	9.5!	—
1995	64.3	51.2	52.9	53.7	51.6	—	—	11.4	12.7	—
1996	67.4	56.0	55.4	50.8	57.6	—	—	12.1	9.8!	—
1997	68.2	58.5	58.8	65.6	55.3	—	—	9.4!	12.9	—
1998	68.5	61.9	59.8	47.4	51.9	—	—	8.8!	16.6	—
1999	66.3	58.9	58.6	42.3	47.4	—	—	7.7!	18.9	—
2000	65.7	54.9	56.4	52.9	48.6	—	—	9.3!	17.1	—
2001	64.3	55.0	56.4	51.7	52.8	—	—	7.9!	11.4	—
2002	69.1	59.4	57.3	53.6	54.8	—	—	11.8	14.3	—
2003	66.2	57.5	59.9	58.6	57.7	84.1	80.0	6.2!	8.4!	-13.8!
2004	68.8	62.5	58.8	61.8	57.7	75.6	81.6	10.0	11.1	-12.8
2005	73.2	55.7	58.2	54.0	57.5	86.7	80.9	15.0	15.7	-7.7!
2006	68.5	55.5	55.6	57.9	58.5	82.3	85.1	12.9	10.0	-16.6
2007	69.5	55.7	55.7	64.0	62.0	88.8	85.8	13.9	7.5!	-16.3
2008	71.7	55.7	60.3	63.9	62.3	88.4	90.1	11.4	9.4	-18.4
2009	71.3	69.5	62.4	59.3	60.9	92.1	88.1	8.9	10.4	-16.8
2010	70.5	62.0	65.8	59.7	59.5	84.7	88.4	‡	11.0!	-17.9

— Not available.

! Interpret with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is 30 percent or greater.

‡ Reporting standards not met. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is 50 percent or greater.

¹ Due to the small sample sizes for the Black, Hispanic, and Asian categories, data are subject to relatively large sampling errors. Therefore, moving averages are used to produce more stable estimates. The 3-year moving average is an arithmetic average of the year indicated, the year immediately preceding, and the year immediately following. For 1975 and 2010, a 2-year moving average is used: data for 1975 reflect an average of 1975 and 1976, and data for 2010 reflect an average of 2009 and 2010.

² Refers to the moving average rates for the Black, Hispanic, and Asian categories.

NOTE: Includes high school completers ages 16–24, who account for about 98 percent of all high school completers in a given year. Before 1992, *high school completer* referred to those who had completed 12 years of schooling. As of 1992, *high school completer* refers to those who have received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. Race categories exclude persons of Hispanic ethnicity. From 2003 onward, data for Asians and Pacific Islanders were collected separately. Separate data for the Asian category are not available prior to 2003. For more information on the Current Population Survey (CPS), see Appendix B – *Guide to Sources*. For more information on educational attainment and race/ethnicity, see Appendix C – *Commonly Used Measures*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1975–2010.

Indicator 34

Immediate Transition to College

Table A-34-3. Percentage of high school completers who were enrolled in 2- or 4-year colleges the October immediately following high school completion, by sex and level of institution: 1975-2010

Year	Total		Male			Female		
	2-year ¹	4-year ¹	Total	2-year ¹	4-year ¹	Total	2-year ¹	4-year ¹
1975	18.2	32.6	52.6	19.0	33.6	49.0	17.4	31.6
1976	15.6	33.3	47.2	14.5	32.7	50.3	16.6	33.8
1977	17.5	33.1	52.1	17.2	35.0	49.3	17.8	31.5
1978	17.0	33.1	51.1	15.6	35.5	49.3	18.3	31.0
1979	17.5	31.8	50.4	16.9	33.5	48.4	18.1	30.3
1980	19.4	29.9	46.7	17.1	29.7	51.8	21.6	30.2
1981	20.5	33.5	54.8	20.9	33.9	53.1	20.1	33.0
1982	19.1	31.5	49.1	17.5	31.6	52.0	20.6	31.4
1983	19.2	33.5	51.9	20.2	31.7	53.4	18.4	35.1
1984	19.4	35.8	56.0	17.7	38.4	54.5	21.0	33.5
1985	19.6	38.1	58.6	19.9	38.8	56.8	19.3	37.5
1986	19.3	34.5	55.8	21.3	34.5	51.9	17.3	34.6
1987	18.9	37.9	58.3	17.3	41.0	55.3	20.3	35.0
1988	21.9	37.1	57.1	21.3	35.8	60.7	22.4	38.3
1989	20.7	38.9	57.6	18.3	39.3	61.6	23.1	38.5
1990	20.1	40.0	58.0	19.6	38.4	62.2	20.6	41.6
1991	24.9	37.7	57.9	22.9	35.0	67.1	26.8	40.3
1992	23.0	38.9	60.0	22.1	37.8	63.8	23.9	40.0
1993	22.8	39.8	59.9	22.9	37.0	65.2	22.8	42.4
1994	21.0	40.9	60.6	23.0	37.5	63.2	19.1	44.1
1995	21.5	40.4	62.6	25.3	37.4	61.3	18.1	43.2
1996	23.1	41.9	60.1	21.5	38.5	69.7	24.6	45.1
1997	22.8	44.3	63.6	21.4	42.2	70.3	24.1	46.2
1998	24.4	41.3	62.4	24.4	38.0	69.1	24.3	44.8
1999	21.0	41.9	61.4	21.0	40.5	64.4	21.1	43.3
2000	21.4	41.9	59.9	23.1	36.8	66.2	20.0	46.2
2001	19.6	42.1	60.1	18.6	41.4	63.5	20.6	42.8
2002	21.6	43.6	62.1	20.4	41.7	68.4	22.8	45.6
2003	21.5	42.5	61.2	21.9	39.3	66.5	21.0	45.5
2004	22.4	44.2	61.4	21.8	39.6	71.5	23.1	48.5
2005	24.0	44.6	66.5	24.7	41.8	70.4	23.4	47.0
2006	24.7	41.3	65.8	24.9	40.9	66.1	24.5	41.7
2007	24.1	43.1	66.1	22.7	43.4	68.3	25.5	42.8
2008	27.7	40.9	65.9	24.9	41.0	71.6	30.6	40.9
2009	27.7	42.4	66.0	25.1	40.9	73.8	30.1	43.8
2010	26.7	41.4	62.8	28.5	34.3	74.0	24.6	49.5

¹ From 1975 through 1986, due to a skip pattern in the Current Population Survey (CPS), about 3-9 percent of high school completers ages 16-24 who immediately enrolled in college were not asked the question about the level of institution attended. Such respondents were assumed to have had the same probability of enrolling in a 2- or 4-year institution as those who were asked the question.

NOTE: Includes high school completers ages 16-24, who account for about 98 percent of all high school completers in each year. Before 1992, *high school completer* referred to those who had completed 12 years of schooling. As of 1992, *high school completer* refers to those who have received a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. For more information on the Current Population Survey (CPS), see Appendix B - *Guide to Sources*. For more information on educational attainment, see Appendix C - *Commonly Used Measures*. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), October Supplement, 1975-2010.

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