

## Philadelphians with Barriers to Employment

The Philadelphia Works strategic plan recognizes that less educated, less skilled job seekers need extra support and education to get on a career pathway. We profile these “Hardest-to-Serve” populations below:

- [adults with limited work histories](#)
- [adults with low education \(a proxy for those with low literacy\)](#)
- [adults with a disability](#)
- [foreign born adults and those speaking English less than well](#)
- [returning citizens \(formerly known as ex-offenders\)](#)
- [young adults not working or enrolled in school](#)

### Summary of Hardest-to-Serve Populations

For working-aged adults in these populations, unemployment rates are almost twice as high as the average adult. The labor force participation rate is significantly lower, especially for adults with disabilities.

### HARDEST TO SERVE POPULATIONS IN PHILADELPHIA – SUMMARY TABLE

Population	Total	Unemp.	Not in Labor Force	Unemp. Rate	Labor Force Part.	% of Total Age Group
Adults 25-64 years old	805,492	77,508	231,176	13.5%	71.3%	
Adults with limited work history	159,774	12,838	146,936	n/a	8.0%	19.8%
Seasonal workers	53,179	14,979	12,714	37.0%	76.1%	6.6%
Adults with low educational attainment	131,686	14,752	70,979	24.3%	46.1%	16.3%
Adults with disabilities	126,104	11,061	86,625	28.0%	31.3%	15.7%
Do not speak English	12,259	1,652	5,450	24.3%	55.5%	1.5%
Young adults 16-24 years old	239,838	35,195	116,975	28.6%	51.2%	
Young adults 16-24 not enrolled or working	45,888	20,964	24,924	n/a	45.7%	19.1%

*Source: Philadelphia works analysis of the 2010-2012 American Community Survey PUMS micro data, 2010-2012 American Community Survey American Fact Finder tables. Numbers and percentages are estimates only and have margins of error. Categories listed overlap. The table does not include returning citizens since data are not available. In the following analysis, Adults with Limited Work History and Seasonal Workers are grouped as Adults with Limited Work Histories.*

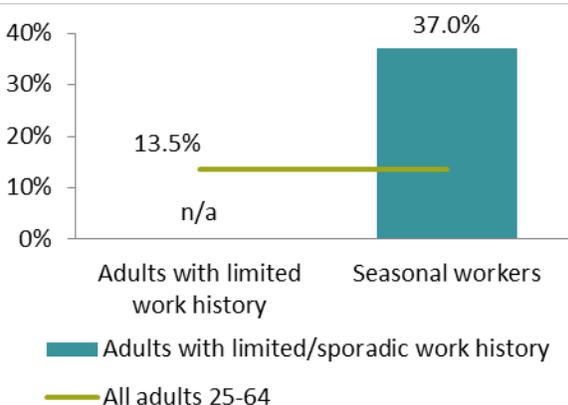
### Adults with Limited Work Histories

Adults with limited and sporadic work history are defined as adults ages 25-64 who last worked more than 5 years ago or never worked, and seasonal workers who worked less than 26 weeks in the previous year. The longer a person is absent from the labor market, the less likely they are to possess the experience and skills employers need.

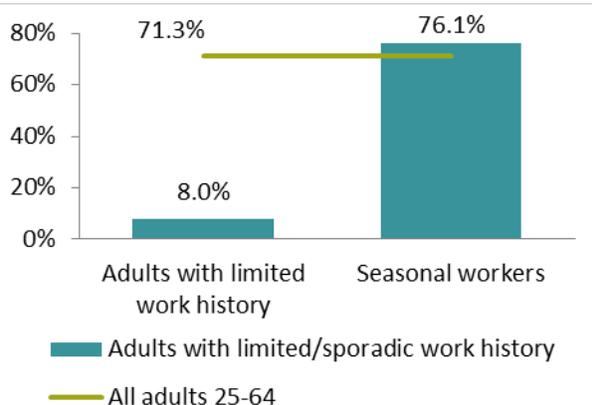
Among all adults in Philadelphia, approximately 160,000 (19.8 percent) had limited work history, almost 55,000 (6.6 percent) were seasonal workers. About 13,000 workers with limited work history and 40,000 seasonal workers were in the labor force. The labor force participation rate for adults who last worked over 5 years ago or ever worked was only 8 percent, compared to 71.1 percent for all adults. While the labor force participation rate for seasonal workers was 4.8 percent higher than all adults, 37 percent of them were unemployed, compared to 13.5 percent of all adults. Together, adults with limited work histories and seasonal workers represent 35.9 percent of all unemployed adults.

#### INDIVIDUALS 25-64 WITH LIMITED/SPORADIC WORK HISTORY

##### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



##### LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE



Source: Philadelphia works analysis of the 2010-2012 American Community Survey PUMS micro data. Numbers and percentages are estimates only and have margins of error.

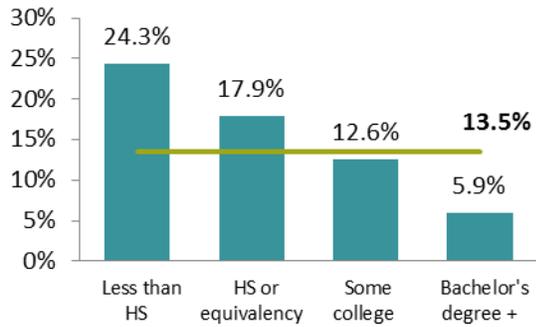
### Adults with Low Education

Individuals with low literacy are estimated using the educational attainment from the 2010-2012 American Community Survey data, due to the unavailability of direct literacy measurement<sup>1</sup>.

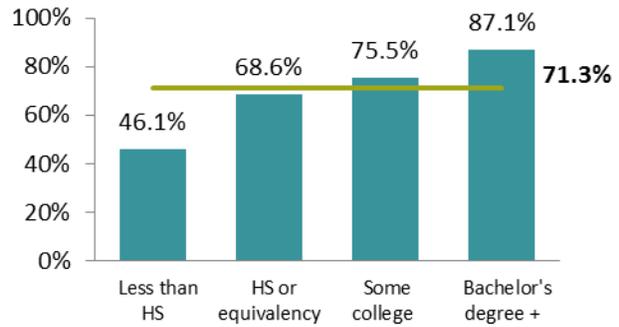
In Philadelphia, approximately 132,000 adults ages 25-64 did not have a high school diploma and about 273,000 adults had a high school diploma only. 24.3 percent and 17.9 percent of adults with education level less than high school and only high school respectively could not find work. Only 46.1 percent of the adults with educational attainment less than high school participated in the labor force, compared with 71.3 percent of all adults.

Low educational attainment predicts difficulty to find better-paying jobs. The median wage of adults in Philadelphia was approximately \$35,000. In contrast, the median wage of adults without a high school diploma was only approximately \$21,000<sup>2</sup>. People without a Bachelor's degree earned less than the self-sufficiency standard for a family with one adult and one preschooler at \$42,691 in Philadelphia<sup>3</sup>.

**LABOR FORCE STATUS BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**  
**UNEMPLOYMENT RATE**



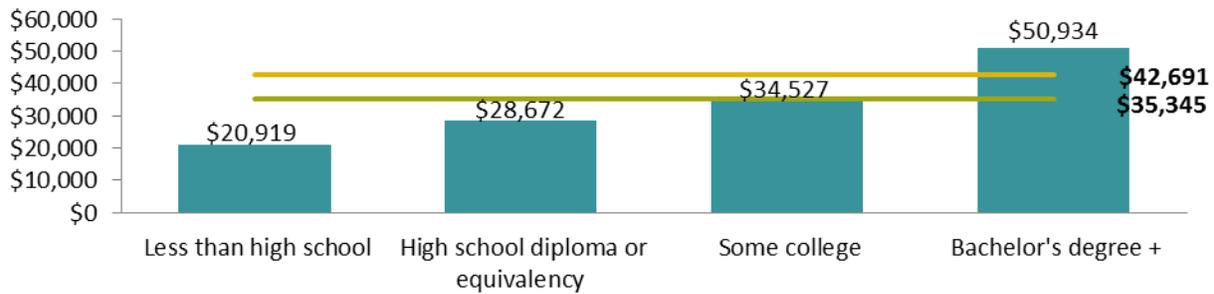
**LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE**



■ Educational attainment — All adults 25-64

Source: the 2010-2012 American Community Survey, American Fact Finder table S2301. Numbers and percentages are estimates only and have margins of error.

**MEDIAN INCOME BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT**



■ Median wage by educational attainment — Median wage of adults 25-64  
— Self-sufficiency

Source: Philadelphia Works analysis of the 2010-2012 American Community Survey PUMS micro data. Numbers and percentages are estimates only and have margins of error.

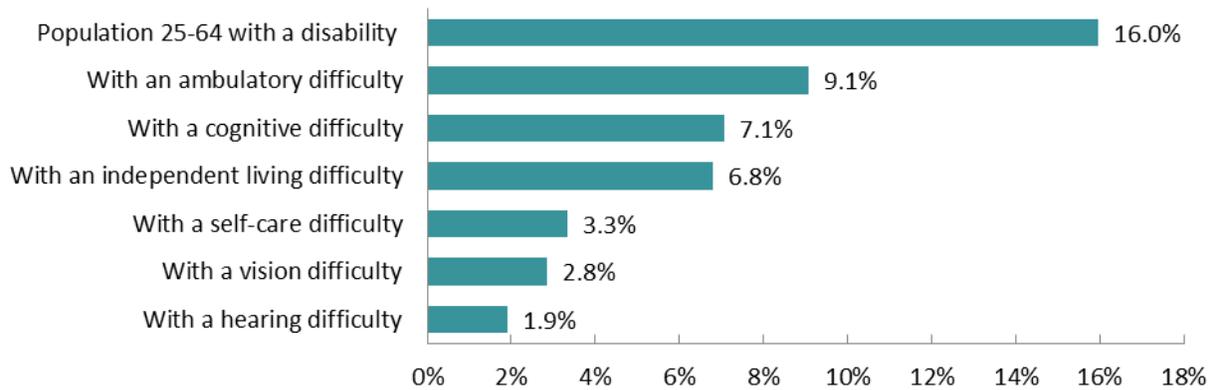
**Adults with a Disability**

Approximately 126,000 (16 percent) of adults living in households<sup>4</sup> ages 25-64 in Philadelphia identified themselves as having a disability. Only 31.3 percent of people with a disability were participating in the labor force, compared to 71.3 percent for all adults ages 25-64; 28 percent of them were unemployed, 14.5 percentage points higher than all adults.

For all adults ages 25-64, ambulatory disability was the most prevalent disability type at 9.1 percent of the population. About 7.1 percent of the population had a cognitive difficulty, 6.8 percent had an independent living difficulty<sup>5</sup>.

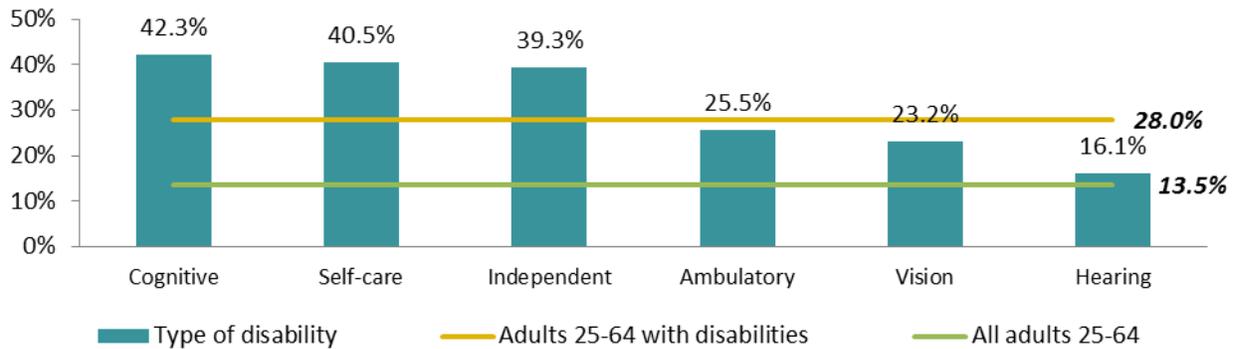
People with cognitive difficulties had the highest unemployment rate at 42.3 percent, followed by people with self-care difficulties at 40.5 percent. People with independent living difficulties had the lowest labor force participation rate at 17.0 percent. 46.2 percent of people with hearing difficulties participated in the labor force, the highest among all types of disabilities.

### DISABILITY STATUS AND TYPE FOR ADULTS 25-64 IN PHILADELPHIA



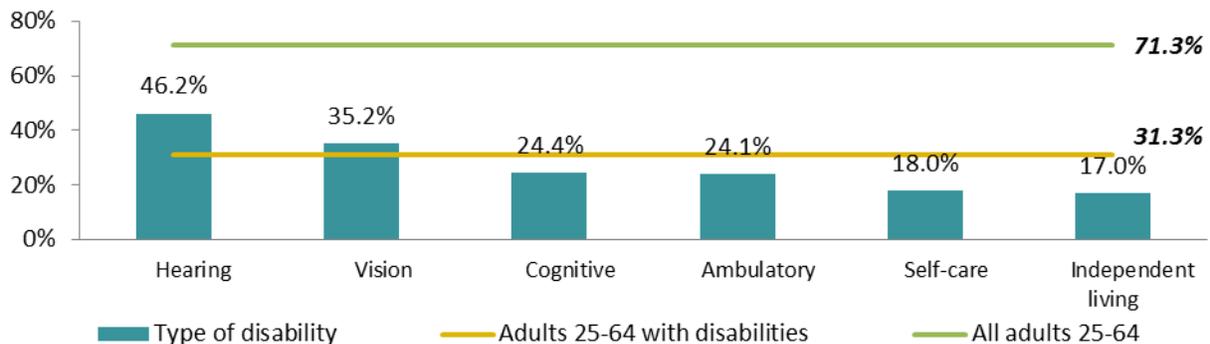
Source: Philadelphia works analysis of the 2010-2012 American Community Survey, American Fact Finder table S1810. Numbers and percentages are estimates only and have margins of error.

### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE FOR ADULTS 25-64 WITH DISABILITIES



Source: the 2010-2012 American Community Survey, American Fact Finder table S2301. Percentages are estimates only and have margins of error.

### LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE FOR ADULTS 25-64 WITH DISABILITIES



Source: the 2010-2012 American Community Survey, American Fact Finder table S2301. Numbers and percentages are estimates only and have margins of error.

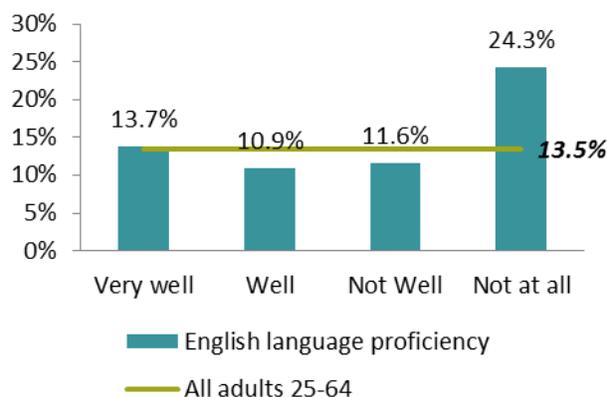
### Foreign Born Adults and Those Speaking English Less Than Well

Immigrants face multiple challenges finding work. Lack of English proficiency presents the most fundamental employment barriers to immigrants, refugees and limited English speakers. Other barriers include limited work experience in their home country, lack of transportation, insufficient work experience in the U.S. job market, and childcare burdens.

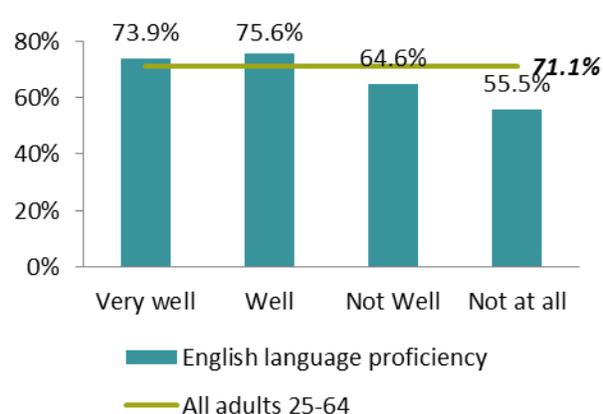
About 160,000 (20.3 percent) of Philadelphians were foreign born; 7.6 percent of them entered the U.S. after 2000. Approximately 12,000 people identified themselves as “does not speak English at all”; 96.4 percent of them were foreign born. The unemployment rate of adults who do not speak English was 24.3 percent, much higher than their native English speaker counterparts. Also, compared with native speakers, while a higher percent of foreign born individuals had a Bachelor’s degree or higher, a larger share of them did not have a high school diploma.

#### LABOR FORCE STATUS BY ABILITY TO SPEAK ENGLISH

##### UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

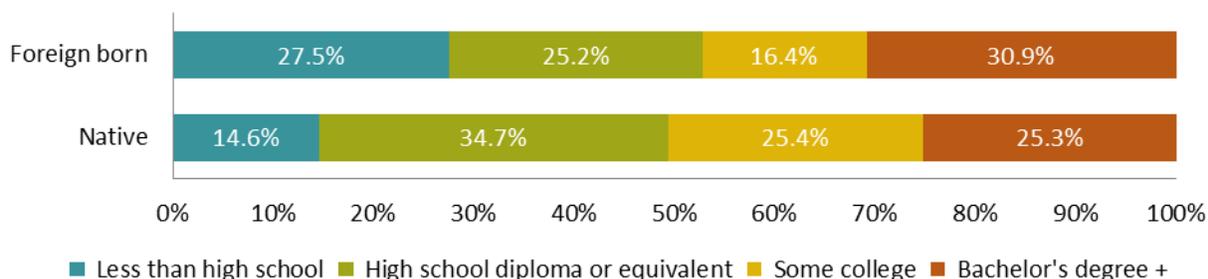


##### LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE



Source: Philadelphia works analysis of the 2010-2012 American Community Survey PUMS micro data. Numbers and percentages are estimates only and have margins of error.

#### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF ADULTS 25-64 BY NATIVITY



Source: Philadelphia Works analysis of the 2010-2012 American Community Survey PUMS micro data. Numbers and percentages are estimates only and have margins of error.

### Returning Citizens

According to the Countywide Blueprint produced by The Philadelphia Reentry Coalition<sup>6</sup>, every year, around 35,000 inmates from local jails and state and federal prisons are released back into the County of Philadelphia, contributing to the population of nearly 50,000 parolees and probationers living within the county in any given year.

Within the Philadelphia Prison System, 89 percent of the inmate population are men. African American and Hispanic account for 68 percent and 18 percent of the total inmate population, respectively. The average age of this population is only 22 years old.

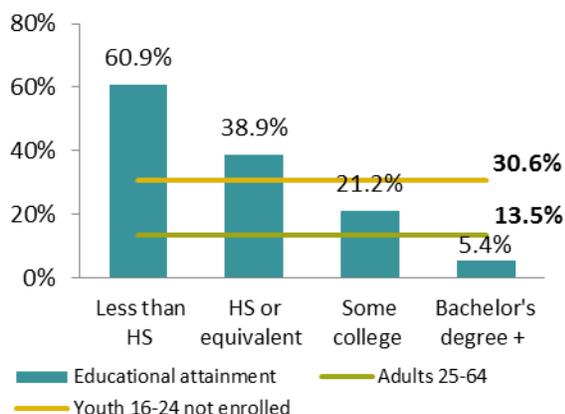
Low educational attainment and literacy rates make it harder for returning citizens to be eligible for work. The average offender in a Philadelphia area prison will have a 10th grade education at the time of their incarceration and the majority will only be able to read at a 7th grade level. Inmates in Philadelphia have a 55 percent high school dropout rate. Also, 60 percent of those who were formerly incarcerated remain unemployed up to a year after reentering into the community. In Philadelphia, returning citizens can expect to make 11 percent less than people with same educational attainment but not incarceration histories.

### Young Adults not Working or Enrolled in School

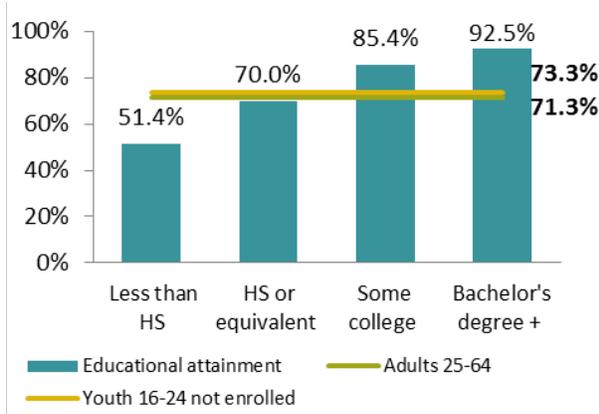
Among the 240,000 young adults ages 16-24, approximately 93,000 were not enrolled in school; almost 46,000 (49.1 percent) were not enrolled or working. The unemployment rate for youth not enrolled was 30.6 percent, 17.1 percentage points higher than adults ages 25-64; the labor force participation rate was 73.3 percent, 2 percentage points higher than adults.

Youth with less education are less likely to participate in the labor force and have higher unemployment rates compared to youth with more education. 27.8 percent of youth not enrolled nor working did not have a high school diploma; 50.9 percent of them had a high school diploma only.

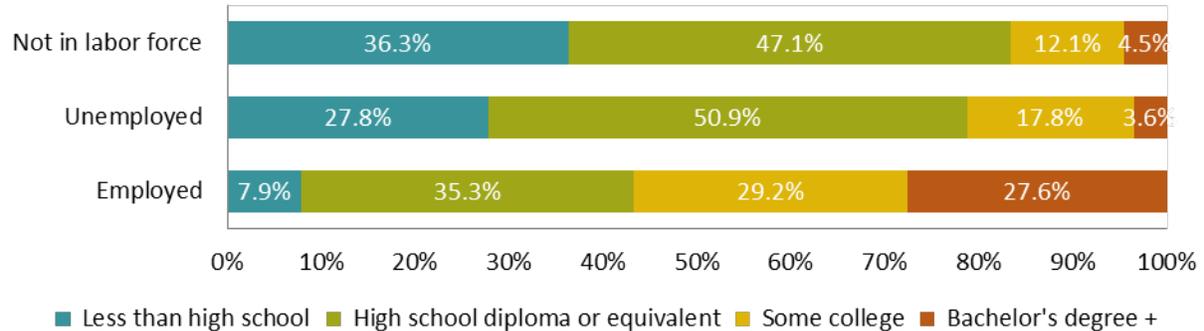
#### YOUTH 16-24 NOT ENROLLED IN SCHOOL UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



#### LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE



## LABOR FORCE STATUS OF YOUTH 16-24 YEARS OLD NOT ENROLLED IN SCHOOL BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



Source: Philadelphia Works analysis of the 2010-2012 American Community Survey PUMS micro data. Numbers and percentages are estimates only and have margins of error.

<sup>1</sup>Please visit [The Literacy Proficiencies of the Working-Age Residents of Philadelphia City, Help Wanted](#), and [A Tale of Two Cities](#) for more information on the literacy proficiencies and skill gaps in Philadelphia.

<sup>2</sup>The dollar amounts of income are inflation-adjusted to 2012 dollar. This calculation only reflects income from wages, salary, commissions, bonuses, or tips from all jobs. The amounts are before deductions for taxes, bonds, dues, or other items.

<sup>3</sup>[Overlooked and Undercounted: How the Great Recession Impacted Household Self-Sufficiency in Pennsylvania](#), Pathways PA, 2012.

<sup>4</sup>Data are for civilian population in households. This excludes people in correctional facilities, nursing homes, other institutions, and the armed forces.

<sup>5</sup>Disability types are not mutually exclusive. Detailed definition of each group can be found here: <https://www.census.gov/people/disability/methodology/acs.html>

<sup>6</sup>The Philadelphia Reentry Coalition: Countywide Blueprint, October 2013