

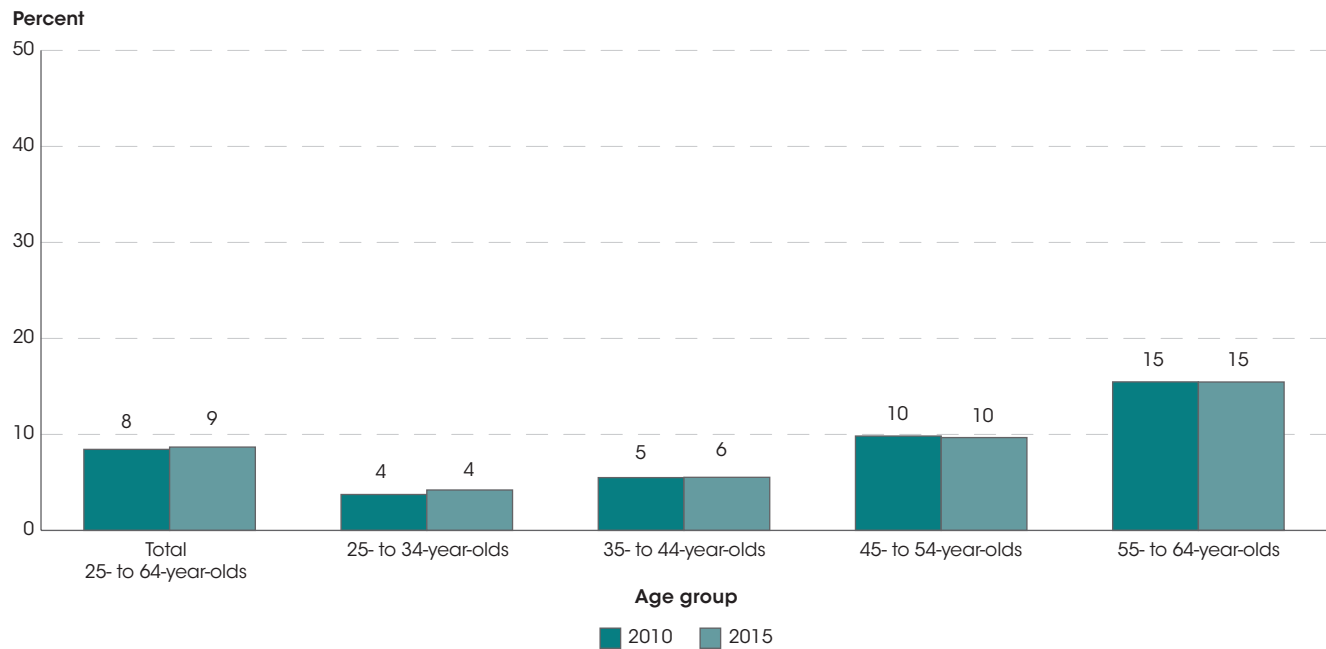
Disability Rates and Employment Status by Educational Attainment

About 16 percent of 25- to 64-year-olds who had not completed high school had one or more disabilities in 2015, compared to 11 percent of those who had completed high school, 10 percent of those who had completed some college, 8 percent of those who had completed an associate's degree, 4 percent of those who had completed a bachelor's degree, and 3 percent of those who had completed a master's or higher degree. Differences in the employment and not-in-labor-force percentages between persons with and without disabilities were substantial, amounting to about 50 percentage points each. Among those who had obtained higher levels of education, the differences were smaller.

Persons with disabilities have lower employment rates than persons without disabilities, according to reports produced by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).¹ For all age groups, BLS found that the 2015 employment-population ratio was lower for persons with disabilities than for those with no disability. This spotlight indicator looks at the employment of persons with disabilities in the context of educational attainment. For the purposes of this analysis, individuals are classified as employed,² unemployed (individuals without jobs who are actively looking for work), or not in the labor force (individuals

without jobs who are not actively looking for work). This indicator finds that, on average, disability rates are higher among persons with lower levels of education and that individuals with disabilities have lower levels of employment than persons who do not have disabilities. The comparatively lower level of employment for persons with disabilities overall reflects both the generally lower level of employment for persons with less education and the lower level of employment for people with disabilities within each level of educational attainment.

Figure 1. Percentage of 25- to 64-year-olds with disabilities, by age group: 2010 and 2015



NOTE: Data are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded estimates.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2010 and 2015. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 104.75.

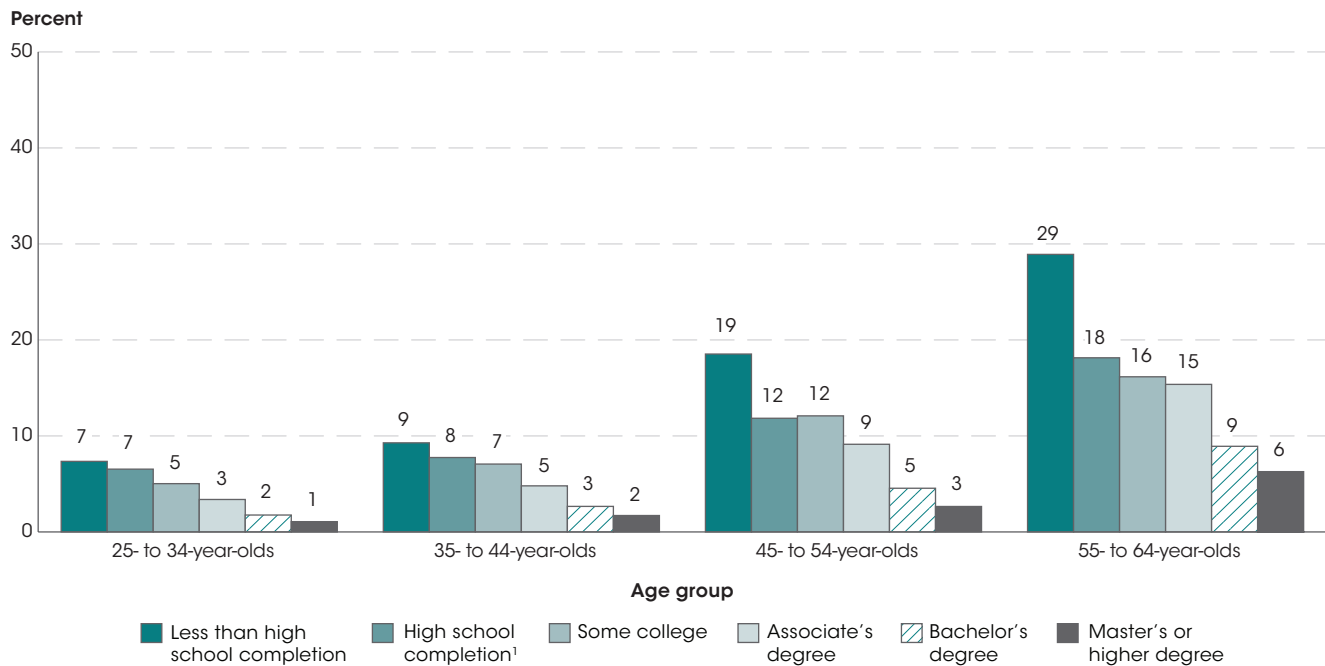
Percentages of persons with disabilities

In this indicator, persons were classified as having one or more disabilities if they reported having any of the following characteristics: deafness or serious difficulty hearing; blindness or serious difficulty seeing even when wearing glasses; serious difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition; serious difficulty walking or climbing stairs; difficulty dressing or bathing; and difficulty doing errands alone such as visiting a doctor’s office or shopping because of a physical, mental, or emotional condition. Overall, 14.4 million, or 9 percent, of the 25- to 64-year-old population reported at least one of these disabilities in 2015. The number of 25- to

64-year-olds with disabilities was higher in 2015 than in 2010 (13.6 million). To some extent, this change reflects population growth between 2010 and 2015, as there was no measurable change over this period in the percentage of persons with disabilities.

A higher percentage of older persons had disabilities compared to younger persons in 2015. For example, the disability rate was 15 percent for 55- to 64-year-olds, compared to 10 percent for 45- to 54-year-olds, 6 percent for 35- to 44-year-olds, and 4 percent for 25- to 34-year-olds. The disability rate for 25- to 34-year-olds was higher in 2015 (4.2 percent) than in 2010 (3.7 percent). For other age groups, the disability rate in 2015 was not measurably different from the rate in 2010.

Figure 2. Percentage of 25- to 64-year-olds with disabilities, by age group and educational attainment: 2015



¹ Includes completion of high school through equivalency programs, such as a GED program.
 NOTE: Data are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded estimates.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2015. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 104.75.

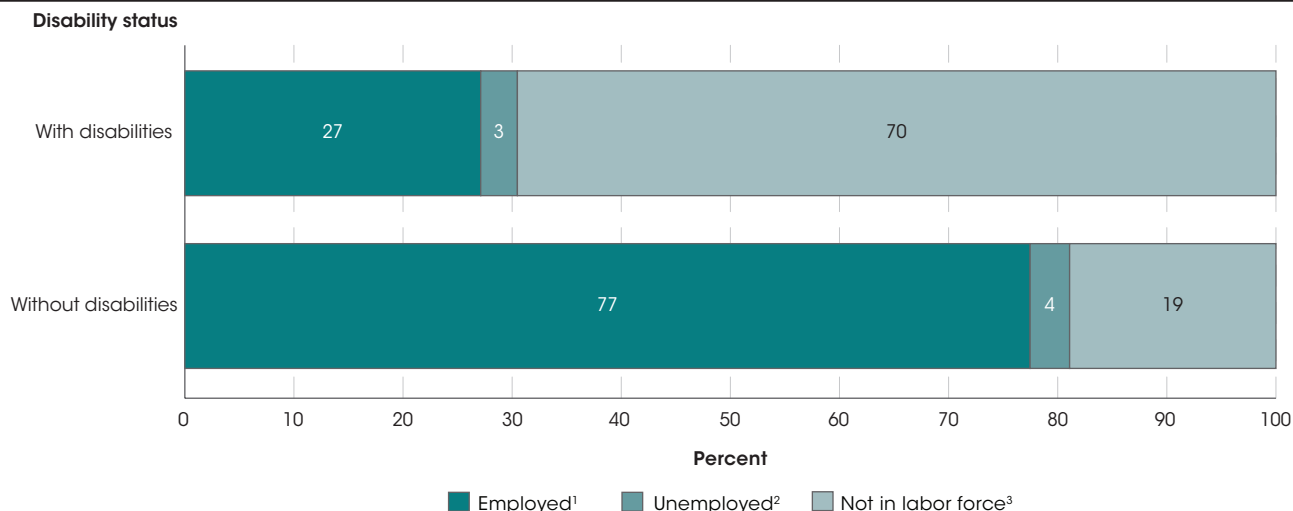
In 2015, the disability rate was higher for persons with less education than for those with higher educational attainment, both overall and within each age group. The disability rate was 16 percent for 25- to 64-year-olds who had not completed high school, compared to 11 percent for those who had completed high school, 10 percent for those who had completed some college, 8 percent for those with an associate’s degree, 4 percent for those with a bachelor’s degree, and 3 percent for those with a master’s or higher degree. These patterns were generally observed within each age group, with few exceptions. For example, among 25- to 34-year-olds, there was no measurable difference between the disability rates for those who had not completed high school and those who had completed high school (both 7 percent), but both were higher than the disability rates for those with more education.

The gap in disability rates between the lowest and highest educational attainment groups is larger for the oldest group (55- to 64-year-olds) than for the youngest group (25- to 34-year-olds). Specifically, among 55- to 64-year-olds, the disability rate was 23 percentage points higher for persons who had not completed high school (29 percent) than for those with a master’s or higher degree (6 percent). In contrast, among 25- to 34-year-

olds, the disability rate was 6 percentage points higher for those who had not completed high school (7 percent) than for those who had completed a master’s or higher degree (1 percent). While disability rates are generally higher for older adults than for younger adults, the gaps by educational attainment within each age group are large enough that the disability rate for 25- to 34-year-olds who had not completed high school was not measurably different from the rate for 55- to 64-year-olds who had completed a master’s degree.

There was no measurable difference between the disability rates for male and female 25- to 64-year-olds in 2015 (both were 9 percent). However, there were differences by race/ethnicity. Among 25- to 64-year-olds, disability rates were lower for those who were Asian (3 percent), Pacific Islander (5 percent), and Hispanic (7 percent) than for those who were White (9 percent), Black (12 percent), of Two or more races (14 percent), and American Indian/ Alaska Native (15 percent). The pattern of higher disability rates for persons who had not completed high school compared to those with a bachelor’s or higher degree was observed across all racial/ethnic groups with available data in 2015 (White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Two or more races).

Figure 3. Percentage distribution of 25- to 64-year-olds with and without disabilities, by labor force status: 2015



¹ Respondents were classified as employed if they worked during any part of the survey week as paid employees. Those who were employed but not at work during the survey week were also included.

² The unemployed population consists of individuals without jobs who are actively looking for work. The unemployment percentages shown in this figure are not comparable to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' unemployment rates, which excludes from the denominator individuals who are not in the labor force.

³ The population not in the labor force consists of persons who are neither employed nor seeking employment.

NOTE: Data are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks.

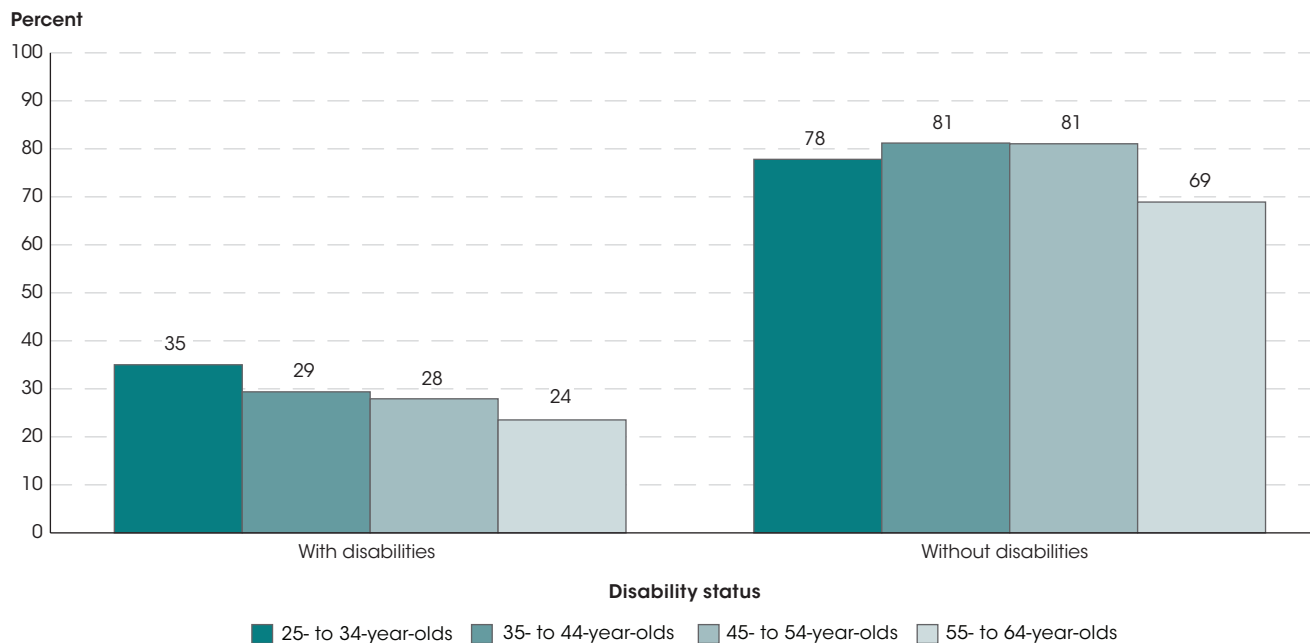
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2015. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 501.35.

Employment of 25- to 64-year-olds with and without disabilities

Studies by BLS have found that persons with disabilities participate in the labor force at lower rates than persons without disabilities.¹ The analysis below builds on those findings by examining patterns in labor force outcomes (percentages of individuals who were employed, unemployed, or not in the labor force) by educational attainment. Overall, 27 percent of 25- to 64-year-olds with disabilities were employed in 2015, compared to

77 percent of those without disabilities. On the other hand, 70 percent of those with disabilities were not in the labor force, compared to 19 percent of those without disabilities. There was no measurable difference between the overall unemployment percentages for individuals with and without disabilities (3 and 4 percent, respectively). Note that the unemployment percentage presented here is not comparable to unemployment rates produced by BLS, which exclude individuals not in the labor force.

Figure 4. Employment percentage of 25- to 64-year-olds with and without disabilities, by age group: 2015

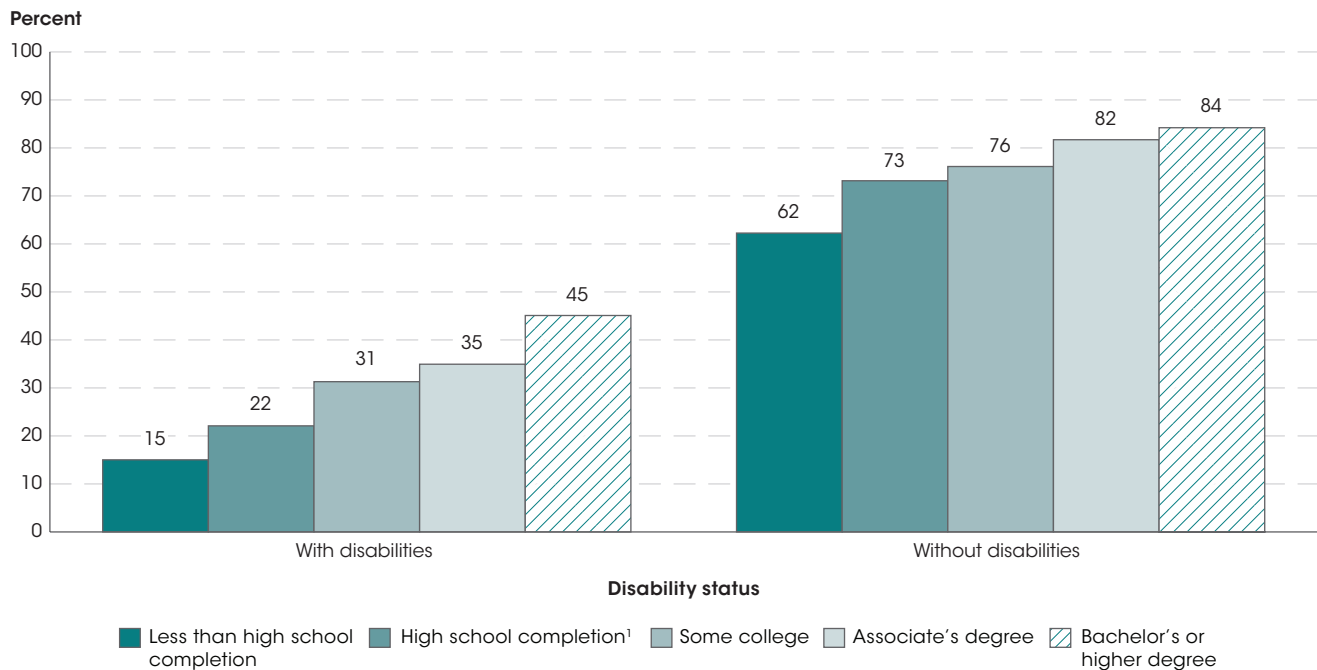


NOTE: Respondents were classified as employed if they worked during any part of the survey week as paid employees. Those who were employed but not at work during the survey week were also included. Data are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded estimates.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2015. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 501.35.

In 2015, among each age group examined in this indicator, employment percentages were higher for persons without disabilities than for those with disabilities. The gap ranged from 43 percentage points for 25- to 34-year-olds to 53 percentage points for 45- to 54-year-olds. Among persons with disabilities, a higher percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds were employed (35 percent) than of 35- to 44-year-olds (29 percent), 45- to 54-year-olds

(28 percent), and 55- to 64-year-olds (24 percent). The pattern of employment by age group was somewhat different for persons without disabilities. Although the percentage of 25- to 34-year-olds who were employed (78 percent) was higher than the percentage for 55- to 64-year-olds (69 percent), it was lower than the percentages for 35- to 44-year-olds and 45- to 54-year-olds (both 81 percent).

Figure 5. Employment percentage of 25- to 64-year-olds with and without disabilities, by educational attainment: 2015



¹ Includes completion of high school through equivalency programs, such as a GED program.

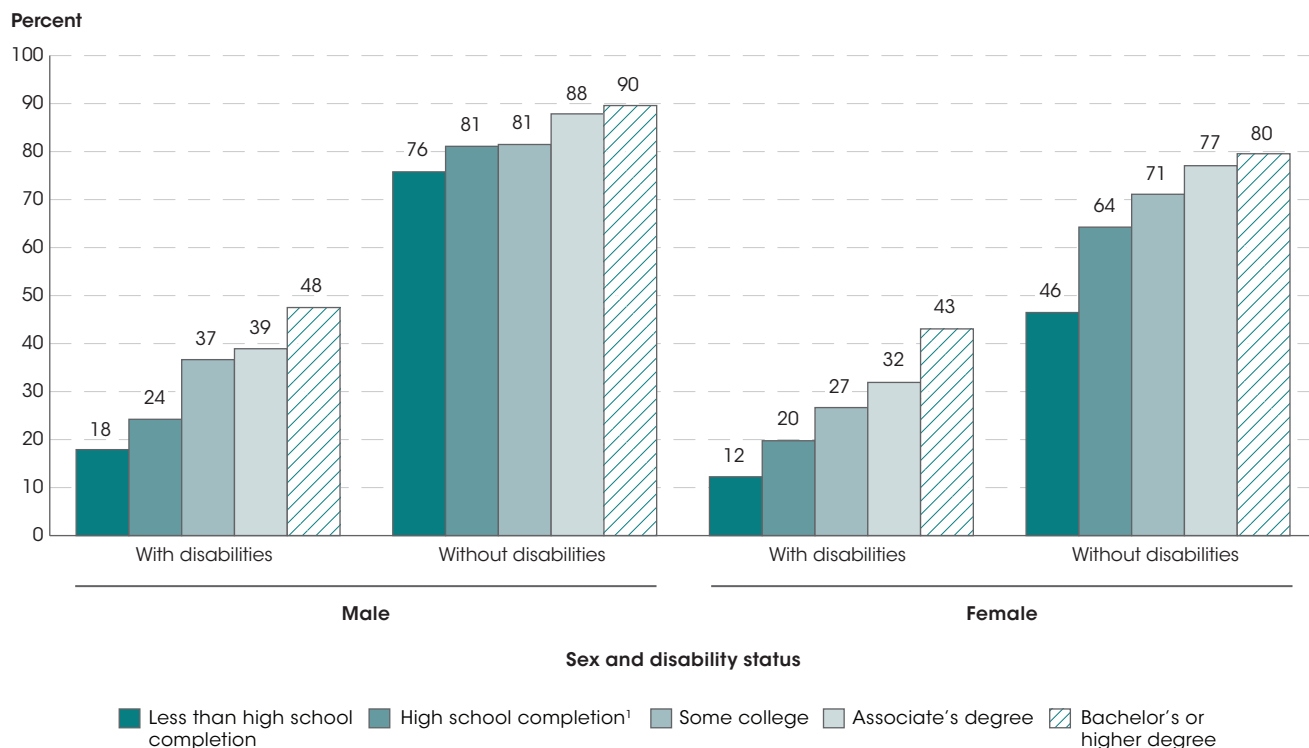
NOTE: Respondents were classified as employed if they worked during any part of the survey week as paid employees. Those who were employed but not at work during the survey week were also included. Data are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2015. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 501.35.

In 2015, lower levels of educational attainment were associated with lower employment percentages both for persons with and without disabilities. Among 25- to 64-year-olds with disabilities, employment percentages for those who had not completed high school (15 percent) or had completed only high school (22 percent) were lower than for those who had completed some college (31 percent), an associate's degree (35 percent), or a bachelor's or higher degree (45 percent). Similarly, among those without disabilities, employment percentages for those who had not completed high school (62 percent)

or had completed only high school (73 percent) were lower than for those who had completed some college (76 percent), an associate's degree (82 percent), or a bachelor's or higher degree (84 percent). The gap in employment percentages between those with and without disabilities was smaller for those with a bachelor's or higher degree (39 percentage points) than for those with an associate's degree (47 percentage points), those with a high school credential (51 percentage points), and those who had not completed high school (47 percentage points).

Figure 6. Employment percentage of 25- to 64-year-olds with and without disabilities, by sex and educational attainment: 2015

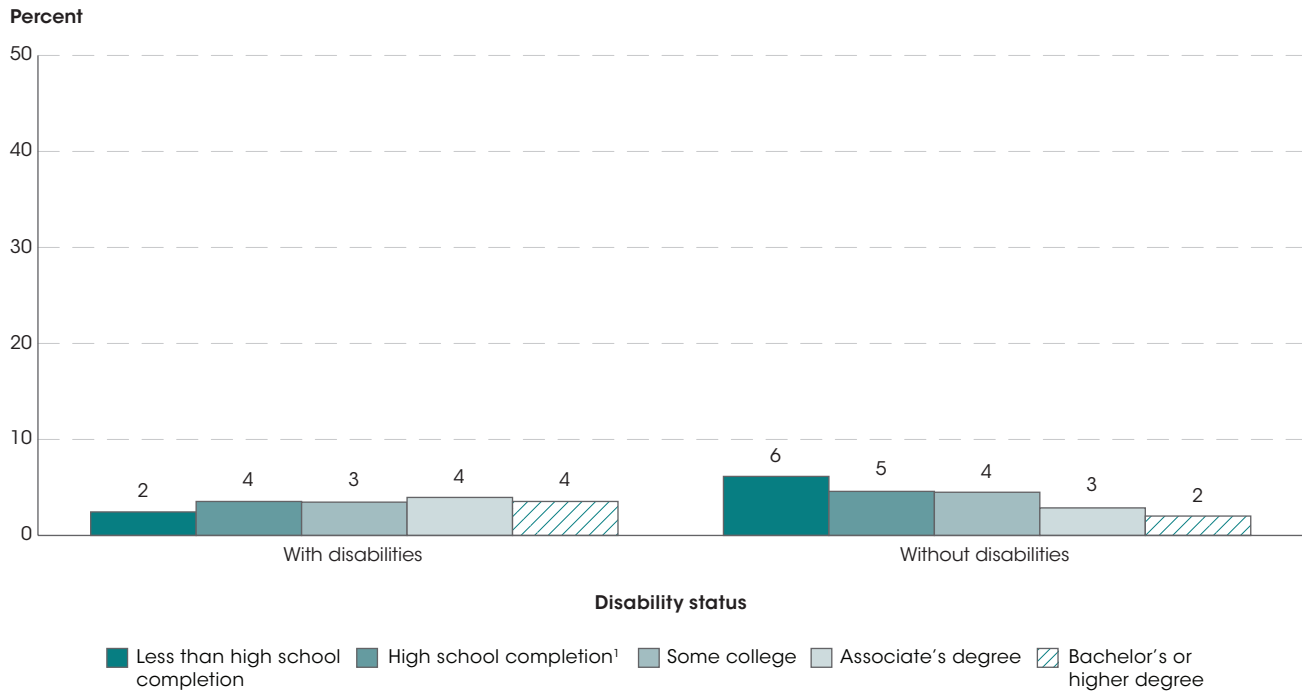


¹ Includes completion of high school through equivalency programs, such as a GED program.
 NOTE: Respondents were classified as employed if they worked during any part of the survey week as paid employees. Those who were employed but not at work during the survey week were also included. Data are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded estimates.
 SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2015. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 501.35.

Among 25- to 64-year-olds in 2015, the employment percentage for males was higher than for females, regardless of disability status. The male-female gap in employment percentages was smaller for persons with disabilities (5 percentage points) than for those without disabilities (13 percentage points). This pattern was also

observed among those who had not completed high school and those who had a high school credential. For example, among persons who had not completed high school, the male-female gap in employment percentages was 6 percentage points for those with disabilities and 29 percentage points for those without disabilities.

Figure 7. Unemployment percentage of 25- to 64-year-olds with and without disabilities, by educational attainment: 2015



¹ Includes completion of high school through equivalency programs, such as a GED program.

NOTE: The unemployed population consists of individuals without jobs who are actively looking for work. The percentages shown in this figure are not comparable to the Bureau of Labor Statistics' unemployment rates, which exclude from the denominator individuals who are not in the labor force. Data are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks. Although rounded numbers are displayed, the figures are based on unrounded estimates.

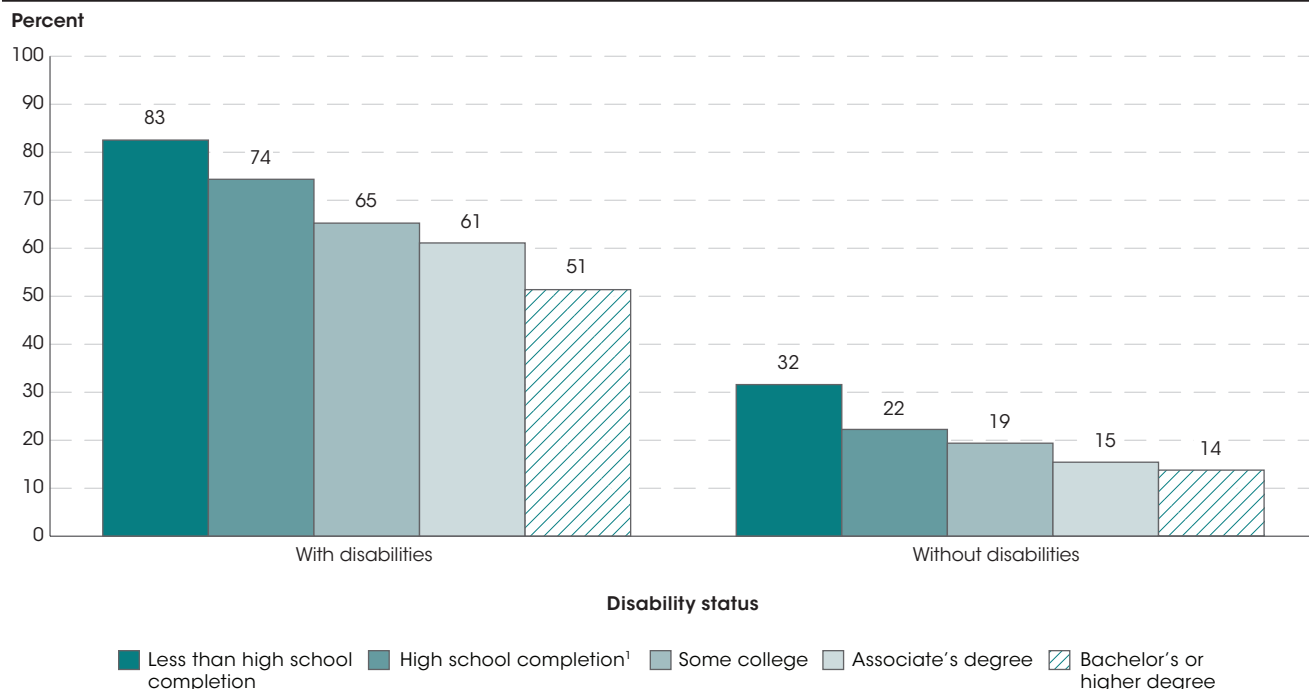
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2015. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 501.35.

Unemployment percentages for 25- to 64-year-olds with and without disabilities

In 2015, the percentage of 25- to 64-year-olds with disabilities who were unemployed (3.4 percent) was not measurably different from the unemployment percentage of those without disabilities (3.6 percent); however, there were differences by educational attainment. It is important to keep in mind when interpreting these unemployment percentages that the employment percentage is lower for 25- to 64-year-olds with disabilities than for those without disabilities. Thus, the number of unemployed persons relative to employed persons (i.e., the unemployment rate as defined by BLS) is higher for 25- to 64-year-olds with disabilities (11.0 percent) than for those without disabilities (4.5 percent).¹

For persons without disabilities, higher educational attainment was often associated with lower unemployment percentages. For example, those who had completed an associate's degree and those who had completed a bachelor's or higher degree had lower unemployment percentages than those who had not completed high school. Among those who had not completed high school, the unemployment percentage for persons with disabilities (2.4 percent) was lower than for persons without disabilities (6.1 percent). In contrast, among those who had completed a bachelor's or higher degree, the unemployment percentage was higher for persons with disabilities (3.5 percent) than for those without disabilities (2.0 percent).

Figure 8. Not-in-labor-force percentage of 25- to 64-year-olds with and without disabilities, by educational attainment: 2015



¹ Includes completion of high school through equivalency programs, such as a GED program.

NOTE: The population not in the labor force consists of persons who are neither employed nor seeking employment. Data are based on sample surveys of the noninstitutionalized population, which excludes persons living in institutions (e.g., prisons or nursing facilities); data include military personnel who live in households with civilians, but exclude those who live in military barracks.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2015. See *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, table 501.35.

Not-in-labor-force percentages for 25- to 64-year-olds with and without disabilities

Since there was no measurable overall difference in unemployment percentages in 2015 between those with and without disabilities, the differences in not-in-labor-force percentages between persons with and without disabilities largely reflected the relative percentages of persons employed. The percentage of 25- to 64-year-olds with disabilities who were not in the labor force (70 percent) was higher than the percentage for those without disabilities (19 percent).

While higher percentages of persons with disabilities were not participating in the labor force for all educational attainment groups in 2015, the largest differences were observed among those with lower levels of educational attainment. For example, among those who had not completed high school, the percentage of persons with disabilities not in the labor force (83 percent) was

51 percentage points higher than the percentage for those without disabilities (32 percent). The differences in the percentages for those not participating in the labor force were smaller at higher levels of educational attainment. For example, among those who had completed a bachelor's or higher degree, the not-in-labor force percentage for persons with disabilities (51 percent) was 38 percentage points higher than the percentage for those without disabilities (14 percent).

In summary, this indicator finds that in 2015, higher percentages of 25- to 64-year-olds with lower levels of education had disabilities compared to those with higher levels of education. Differences in the employment and not-in-labor-force percentages between persons with and without disabilities are substantial, amounting to about 50 percentage points each. Among those who had obtained higher levels of education, the differences were smaller.

Endnotes:

¹ U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2016). *Persons With a Disability: Labor Force Characteristics—2015*. Washington, DC: Author. Retrieved March 17, 2017, from <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/disabl.pdf>.

² Respondents were classified as employed if they worked during any part of the survey week as paid employees. Those who were employed but not at work during the survey week were also included.

Reference tables: *Digest of Education Statistics 2016*, tables 104.75 and 501.35

Related indicators and resources: Educational Attainment of Young Adults, Employment and Unemployment Rates by Educational Attainment, Children and Youth With Disabilities

Glossary: Associate's degree, Bachelor's degree, College, Educational attainment (Current Population Survey), Employment status, Gap, High school completer, High school diploma, Master's degree, Racial/ethnic group