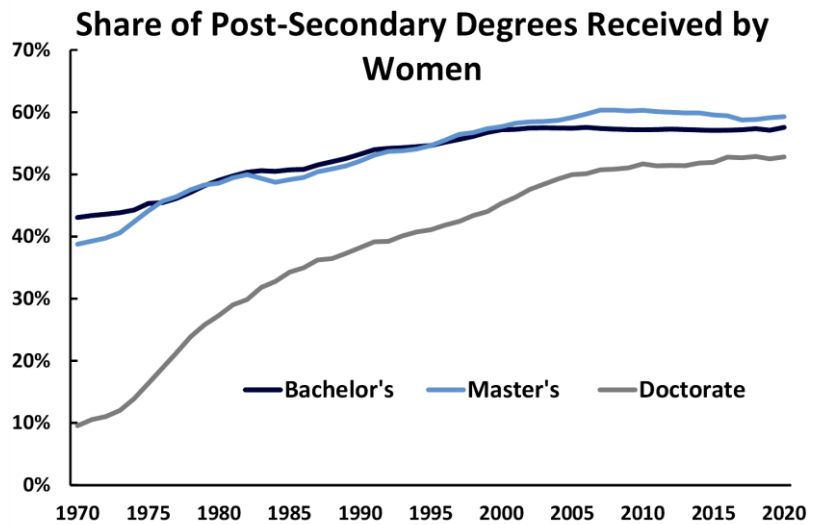




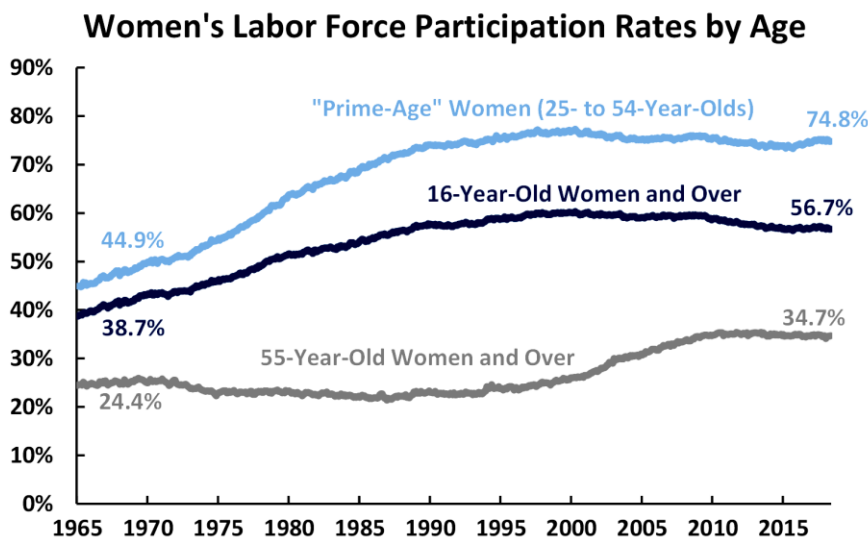
## The Economic State of Women in the United States

This fact sheet provides a snapshot of the current economic state of women in the United States. It includes measures of economic well-being, such as income and poverty rates, as well as data on educational attainment, labor force participation, and health insurance rates. Together, these measures help paint a portrait of women’s economic health in 2018.

**Women earn the majority of advanced degrees.** In 2015, women earned 57 percent of bachelor’s degrees, 60 percent of master’s degrees, and 52 percent of doctorate degrees.<sup>1</sup> Women’s increased educational attainment translates to greater returns in the labor market; bachelor’s degree recipients make nearly \$1 million dollars more over their lifetimes than those that stop after high school, on average.<sup>2</sup>



Source: Digest of Education Statistics: 2016, National Center for Education Statistics



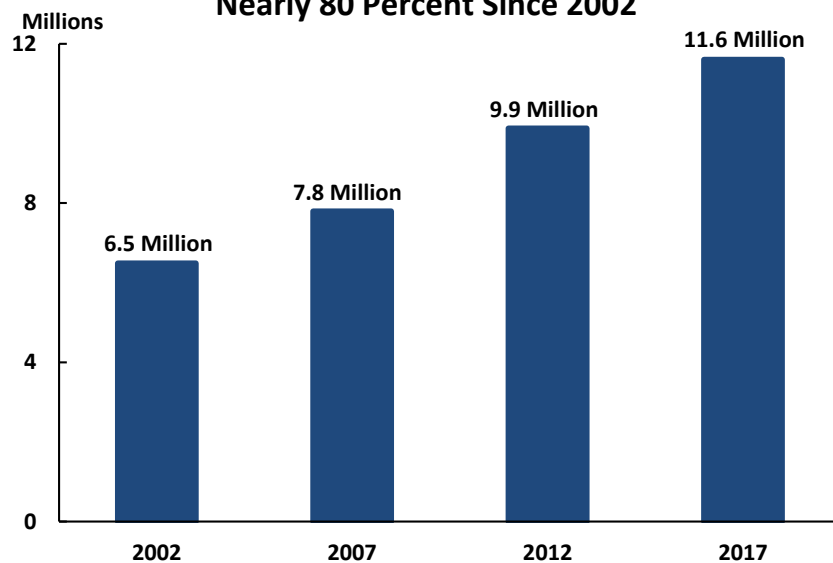
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Note: Data are seasonally adjusted

**Three out of four working-age women are in the labor force.** From 1948 to 1999, women’s labor force participation rate (LFPR), or the share of women working or actively seeking work, nearly doubled. But in the years since its peak at the turn of the century, working-age women’s LFPR has declined by 2.5 percentage points, potentially leaving over \$500 billion in estimated economic activity on the table in 2016 alone.<sup>3</sup>

**During a period of overall decline in new business formation, women’s entrepreneurship is on the rise.** Over the last two decades, the growth rate of women-owned businesses was more than 2.5 times the national average.<sup>4</sup> In 2017, there were an estimated 11.6 million women-owned businesses in the United States, employing almost 9 million workers and generating more than \$1.7 trillion in revenues.<sup>5</sup>

**Number of Women-Owned Firms has Grown by Nearly 80 Percent Since 2002**



Source: State of Women-Owned Businesses, 2016 and 2017, American Express OPEN  
 Note: 2017 data are estimates

**Women have made significant wage gains over the last several decades, yet a pay gap persists.**

Since 1980, median earnings for women working full-time, year-round have more than doubled, and women have made great strides towards pay parity, slicing the gender pay gap in half.<sup>6</sup> However, in 2016, women earned just 80 cents for every dollar earned by men.<sup>7</sup> The gap is much wider for women of color: Black and Hispanic women earn 63 cents and 54 cents, respectively, for every dollar earned by a white man.<sup>8</sup> Although Asian American women come closest to achieving parity, they still only earn 87 cents for every dollar earned by a white man and some subgroups earn far less than the national average.<sup>9</sup>

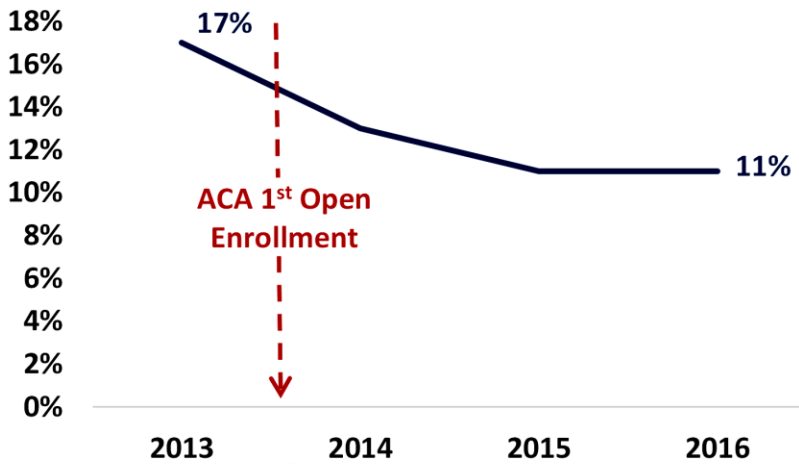
**Women’s earnings are critical to the economic security of families.** Women’s share of household earnings has grown from 36 percent in 1993 to 45 percent in 2016.<sup>10</sup> Juggling work and family life is no easy feat, especially with the rising cost of child care. The United States is the only industrialized country that does not mandate any paid leave for new parents.<sup>11</sup> Only 13 percent of private-sector workers had access to paid family leave through their employers in 2017.<sup>12</sup> Paid leave policies increase employment among mothers, as those with access to leave are 69 percent more likely to return to work in the long run than those without access.<sup>13</sup>

**Women carry the majority of student debt, threatening their overall economic well-being.**

The cost of attending college has skyrocketed over the last several decades. Community college tuition has tripled and public four-year college tuition has more than doubled since the 1970s.<sup>14</sup> In the first quarter of 2018, outstanding student loans in the United States surpassed \$1.5 trillion, more than two times its size just 10 years ago.<sup>15</sup> Women shoulder this rising debt disproportionately, as they tend to take on more loans and take longer to repay their debt.<sup>16</sup> As of mid-2018, women hold almost two-thirds of the outstanding student debt in the United States—about \$890 billion.<sup>17</sup>

**Women are more likely to have health care coverage due to the Affordable Care Act (ACA).** Uninsured rates for nonelderly adult women dropped 6 percentage points from 2013 to 2016, to 11 percent, after the implementation of the ACA.<sup>18</sup> Despite this progress, roughly 10.5 million women still lack coverage, leaving them without critical health services, including maternity care, prescription drugs, and mental health services.<sup>19</sup>

## Percent of Women Ages 19-64 Without Health Insurance



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation

Note: Uninsured rates include those without health insurance and those who have coverage under the Indian Health Service only.

### Planning for retirement early is becoming

**increasingly important for women.** Older women are less financially secure today than they were more than 25 years ago in part due to higher debt and poor retirement planning.<sup>20</sup> In 2016, women 65 and older earned just 58 percent of that of men, which is more than twice the overall gender wage gap.<sup>21</sup> In fact, elderly women are 40 percent more likely than elderly men to live in poverty.<sup>22</sup> Lower lifetime earnings, longer life spans, and shorter work tenures all contribute to women's retirement insecurity.<sup>23</sup>

State	Median Annual Earnings for Women Working Full-Time, Year-Round	Percent of Women in the Labor Force	Uninsured Rates for Women Ages 19-64	Percent of Women in Poverty
United States	41,554	58.3%	11%	16.1%
Alabama	34,400	53.2%	12%	18.3%
Alaska	47,000	64.6%	15%	13.8%
Arizona	38,000	54.5%	15%	18.0%
Arkansas	32,000	53.8%	10%	18.5%
California	45,000	57.1%	9%	17.2%
Colorado	43,000	62.5%	12%	14.3%
Connecticut	50,000	62.8%	8%	11.6%
Delaware	41,200	57.8%	10%	13.4%
District of Columbia	65,000	67.4%	5%	26.7%
Florida	35,000	53.7%	16%	17.1%
Georgia	38,000	58.1%	15%	17.4%
Hawaii	40,000	60.9%	7%	13.1%
Idaho	34,000	54.9%	12%	16.8%
Illinois	42,000	60.6%	10%	15.0%
Indiana	35,100	59.4%	8%	15.7%
Iowa	38,000	63.0%	6%	14.0%
Kansas	37,000	61.7%	9%	14.5%
Kentucky	36,000	54.8%	8%	20.6%
Louisiana	34,500	56.1%	12%	21.8%
Maine	40,000	58.7%	8%	15.3%
Maryland	50,000	64.1%	7%	11.9%
Massachusetts	50,000	63.5%	6%	13.8%
Michigan	40,000	57.4%	7%	15.7%
Minnesota	44,000	65.7%	9%	12.0%
Mississippi	31,300	53.4%	15%	21.9%
Missouri	36,000	59.1%	11%	15.5%
Montana	33,000	59.5%	10%	15.0%
Nebraska	36,000	64.4%	9%	13.7%
Nevada	36,000	58.6%	11%	16.0%
New Hampshire	44,000	64.4%	9%	10.8%
New Jersey	50,000	59.8%	10%	11.9%
New Mexico	35,000	54.7%	12%	21.2%
New York	47,500	58.3%	7%	17.6%
North Carolina	36,400	57.3%	13%	17.3%
North Dakota	40,000	66.4%	10%	14.0%
Ohio	38,000	58.8%	7%	15.8%
Oklahoma	34,000	55.6%	12%	17.5%
Oregon	39,000	57.3%	7%	17.2%
Pennsylvania	40,000	58.0%	6%	14.3%
Rhode Island	43,800	59.2%	N/A	14.6%
South Carolina	34,000	56.7%	12%	16.7%
South Dakota	35,000	64.6%	10%	16.4%
Tennessee	35,000	55.9%	13%	17.2%
Texas	37,400	57.9%	19%	17.0%
Utah	35,000	59.8%	14%	14.2%
Vermont	40,000	63.9%	6%	13.9%
Virginia	44,000	60.8%	12%	13.4%
Washington	44,000	58.1%	7%	14.7%
West Virginia	33,300	50.2%	10%	19.8%
Wisconsin	40,000	62.9%	8%	13.4%
Wyoming	40,000	59.5%	13%	14.1%

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation and Institute for Women's Policy Research

Note: All data are for 2016

- 
- <sup>1</sup> Digest of Education Statistics: 2016, National Center for Education Statistics
- <sup>2</sup> <https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/cache/files/55c705fa-7ce7-49c3-b48d-57dec5d2df65/education---foundation-for-economic-success.pdf>
- <sup>3</sup> JEC Democratic Staff analysis based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and OECD, using methodology from the Department of Labor. <https://www.dol.gov/featured/paidleave/cost-of-doing-nothing-report.pdf>. Economic activity left on the table is defined as the foregone economic activity if the prime-age (age 25-54) female labor force participation rate were as high as Canada or Germany's. See footnote 154 in Department of Labor report for more information.
- <sup>4</sup> <http://about.americanexpress.com/news/docs/2017-State-of-Women-Owned-Businesses-Report.pdf>
- <sup>5</sup> [Ibid.](#)
- <sup>6</sup> JEC analysis of Current Population Survey 2016 data, Annual Social and Economic Supplement
- <sup>7</sup> Current Population Survey 2016 data, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, Table P-40 Women's Earnings as a Percentage of Men's Earnings by Race and Hispanic Origin
- <sup>8</sup> JEC analysis of Current Population Survey 2016 data, Annual Social and Economic Supplement; Ratio is comparing median annual earnings of full-time, year-round workers only.
- <sup>9</sup> JEC analysis of Current Population Survey 2016 data, Annual Social and Economic Supplement; Ratio is comparing median annual earnings of full-time, year-round workers only.
- <sup>10</sup> JEC Democratic Staff analysis based on Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement data from 1993 to 2017.
- <sup>11</sup> <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/09/26/u-s-lacks-mandated-paid-parental-leave/>
- <sup>12</sup> JEC Democratic Staff analysis based on Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Compensation Survey
- <sup>13</sup> [https://www.dol.gov/wb/resources/paid\\_parental\\_leave\\_in\\_the\\_united\\_states.pdf](https://www.dol.gov/wb/resources/paid_parental_leave_in_the_united_states.pdf)
- <sup>14</sup> <https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/cache/files/5270bffa-c68e-44f0-ac08-693485083747/the-college-affordability-crisis-in-america.pdf>
- <sup>15</sup> [https://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/g19/HIST/cc\\_hist\\_memo\\_levels.html](https://www.federalreserve.gov/releases/g19/HIST/cc_hist_memo_levels.html)
- <sup>16</sup> [https://www.aauw.org/files/2018/05/Deeper-in-Debt-pager\\_updated-2018-nsa.pdf](https://www.aauw.org/files/2018/05/Deeper-in-Debt-pager_updated-2018-nsa.pdf)
- <sup>17</sup> [Ibid.](#)
- <sup>18</sup> JEC analysis based on Kaiser Family Foundation Data, Health Insurance Coverage of Women 19-64
- <sup>19</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation Data, Health Insurance Coverage of Women 19-64, 2016
- <sup>20</sup> <http://www.nber.org/papers/w22606>
- <sup>21</sup> JEC analysis based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, [PINC-08: Source of Income in 2016 - People 15 Years Old and Over, by Income of Specified Type in 2016, Age, Race, Hispanic Origin, and Sex \(Both Sexes, 65 Years and Over, All Races\)](#)
- <sup>22</sup> <https://www.jec.senate.gov/public/cache/files/4063c207-21d1-4ceb-809b-af4268842eea/social-security-final.pdf>
- <sup>23</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3462438/>