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Labor Force Participation in 2013 Lowest in 35 Years

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By [Ali Meyer](#)

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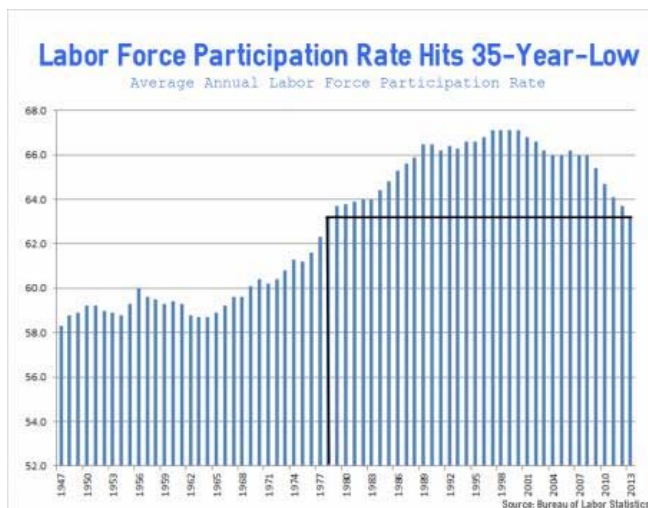
(CNSNews.com) - The average annual labor force participation rate hit a 35-year-low of 63.2 percent in the United States in 2013, according to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS).

The last time the average annual labor force participation rate was that low was in 1978, when it was also 63.2 percent. Jimmy Carter was president then.

The BLS bases its employment statistics on the civilian noninstitutional population, which consists of all people in the United States 16 or older who are not on active duty in the military or in an institution such as a prison, nursing home or mental hospital. The labor force participation rate is the percentage of people in the civilian noninstitutional population who either had a job or who actively sought one in the previous four weeks.



AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka. (AP)

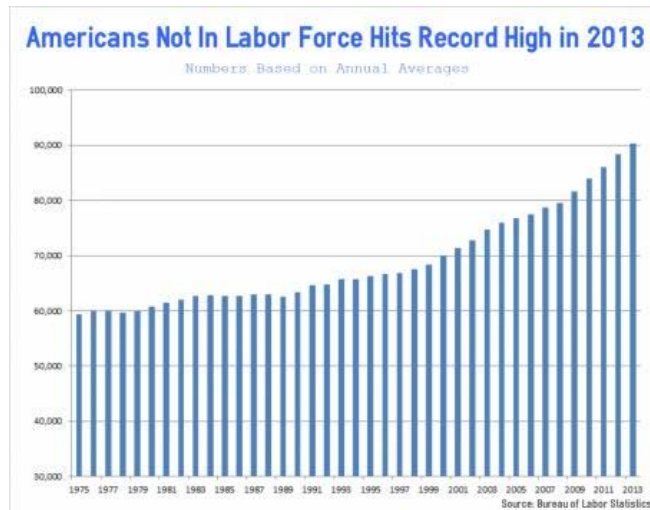


The 63.2 percent average annual labor force participation rate for 2013 means that in the average month of 2013 only 63.2 percent of the civilian noninstitutional population held a job or actively sought one.

The BLS has been tracking the labor force participation rate since 1947, when it was 58.3 percent. Over five decades, it climbed to a peak of 67.1 percent in 1997--a rate it maintained in 1998, 1999, and 2000.

As the civilian noninstitutional population has increased and the labor force participation rate has dropped, the number of people not in the labor force has climbed to record highs. In 2000, there was an annual average of 69,994,000 Americans not in the labor force. By 2013, there was an annual average of 90,290,000 not in the labor force.

In January 2014, according to BLS, there were 92,535,000 not in the labor force.



Unemployed people, as calculated by BLS, are people who participated in the labor force by actively looking for a job, but did not find one. The unemployment rate is the percentage of the people in the labor force who are "unemployed."

In 2013, according to BLS, there was an annual average of 245,679,000 in the civilian noninstitutional population. On average, 155,389,000 (or 63.2 percent) of those people participated in the labor force. Another 90,290,000 (or 36.8 percent) of them did not have a job or actively seek one--and, thus, were not in the labor force.

Of the 155,389,000 in the labor force, 143,929,000 had jobs, and 11,460,000 (or 7.4 percent) actively sought jobs and did not find them, making them unemployed.

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