AN OVERVIEW OF UNEMPLOYMENT & WAGES BY RACE & ETHNICITY IN THE U.S. AND NEW YORK LABOR MARKETS
Black and Hispanic workers face higher rates of unemployment than similarly, and sometimes less educated, white workers

Unemployment rates by race and ethnicity and education, 2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than high school</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced degree</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** Race and ethnicity categories are mutually exclusive (i.e., white non-Hispanic, Black non-Hispanic, and Hispanic any race). Educational categories are mutually exclusive and represent the highest education level attained for all individuals ages 16 and older.

**Source:** Economic Policy Institute, *State of Working America Data Library*, [Unemployment by race and education], 2023.
Black–white wage gaps are wider now than 43 years ago and largely unexplained by factors associated with individual productivity

Average and regression-adjusted Black–white wage gaps, 1979–2022

Note: Race and ethnicity categories are mutually exclusive (i.e., white non-Hispanic and Black non-Hispanic).

Hispanic–white wage gaps are wider now than 43 years ago and largely unexplained by factors associated with individual productivity

Average and regression-adjusted Hispanic–white wage gaps, 1979–2022

**Note:** Race and ethnicity categories are mutually exclusive (i.e., white non-Hispanic and Hispanic any race).

**Source:** Economic Policy Institute, *State of Working America Data Library*, [Hispanic-white wage gap], 2023.
The intersection of race and gender imposes dual wage penalties on women of color

Regression-adjusted hourly wage gaps relative to white men, by race, ethnicity, and gender, 1979--2022

Note: Race and ethnicity categories are mutually exclusive (i.e., white non-Hispanic, Black non-Hispanic, and Hispanic any race).

Black and Hispanic New Yorkers faced higher rates of unemployment than white New Yorkers before, during and since the pandemic.

New York unemployment rates by race and ethnicity, 2019-2022

![Bar chart showing unemployment rates for White, Black, and Hispanic populations from 2019 to 2022.]

**Note:** Race and ethnicity categories are mutually exclusive (i.e., white non-Hispanic, Black non-Hispanic, and Hispanic any race).

Over the last 42 years, Black-white and Hispanic-white wage gaps have widened for the typical New York worker

New York median wage by race and ethnicity, 1979-2021

Note: Race and ethnicity categories are mutually exclusive (i.e., white non-Hispanic, Black non-Hispanic, and Hispanic any race). All values in 2021 dollars.


https://microdata.epi.org/
The lowest-wage New York workers had the strongest wage growth during the pandemic

New York real wage growth across the wage distribution, 2019–2021

Note: Low-wage is represented by the 10th percentile and high-wage is represented by the 90th percentile.

New York low-wage workers have experienced stronger-than-usual wage growth in the pandemic business cycle

New York real wage changes at the 10th percentile, three years from prior peak, in current and last four business cycles, 1979–2021

SUMMARY

• Racial disparities in unemployment and wages persist nationally and at the state level – discrimination is a factor

• Women of color face the dual impact of race and gender pay gaps

• As of 2022, Black and Hispanic New Yorkers still had higher rates of unemployment than before the pandemic

• In New York, while the lowest wage workers had the strongest wage growth since the pandemic, median wage growth among Black and Hispanic workers has been very limited since 1979
POLICY GOALS

• Raise wages for workers at or below the median while also closing racial and gender wage gaps
  • Minimum wage
  • Paid leave
• Restructure systems and institutions to prevent discriminatory outcomes rather than enable them
  • Unions
  • Equity as a well-defined goal & systems for supporting those goals
• The pandemic policy response provided an expanded set of income supports that were especially beneficial to low-income working families – those policies should be permanent rather than temporary
  • Unemployment insurance
  • Tax credits
  • Affordable, high-quality & reliable childcare