



U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

OFFICE OF EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

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American Time Use Survey

What is the American Time Use Survey?

- The American Time Use Survey (ATUS) provides nationally representative estimates of how, where, and with whom Americans spend their time, and is the only federal survey providing data on the full range of nonmarket activities, from childcare to volunteering.
- ATUS data files are used by researchers to study a broad range of issues; the data files include information collected from over 60,000 interviews conducted from 2003 to 2006.
- ATUS data files can be linked to data files from the Current Population Survey (CPS). This expands the context in which time-use data can be analyzed and saves taxpayer money because fewer questions must be asked in the ATUS interview.

What are some of the uses of ATUS data?

Economic research

- The Bureau of Economic Analysis has used ATUS data to measure the value of unpaid work, including volunteering, child care, and household activities.
- Researchers at the Bureau of Labor Statistics have examined the time Americans spend working at home and how this additional work time can be used to enhance traditional measures of worker productivity.

Health and safety

- The Bureau of Transportation Statistics has used ATUS data to measure exposure to vehicle accident risk.
- The Economic Research Service at the Department of Agriculture is using ATUS data to examine eating and drinking patterns and how they relate to a person's overall health.
- Sleep researchers have used ATUS data to measure the tradeoffs Americans make between sleep, work, commuting, and other activities, and how they relate to overall health.
- ATUS data on how much time people spend alone or with others can be used to study social isolation in different groups.

Family and work-life balance

- ATUS researchers study how working parents find the time to balance the demands of childcare, work, leisure, and other activities in their lives
- ATUS data show how different groups of Americans spend their leisure time, such as watching television, socializing with their neighbors, and exercising.

International comparisons

- ATUS data were recently published in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report 2007/2008. This report compares time use in the United States with time use in other countries across different demographic groups and sheds light on how Americans' well-being is different from those in other nations.
- ATUS data were also provided to the United Nations' Gender Statistics Database.



American Time Use Survey

Where can I find ATUS data?

Published estimates

- ATUS news releases include tables of time-use estimates: www.bls.gov/tus/home.htm#news
- Charts with estimates detailing how students and older Americans spend their time are available, as are charts that show how Americans spend time engaged in various activities such as working, providing childcare, and sleeping: www.bls.gov/tus/charts/home.htm.

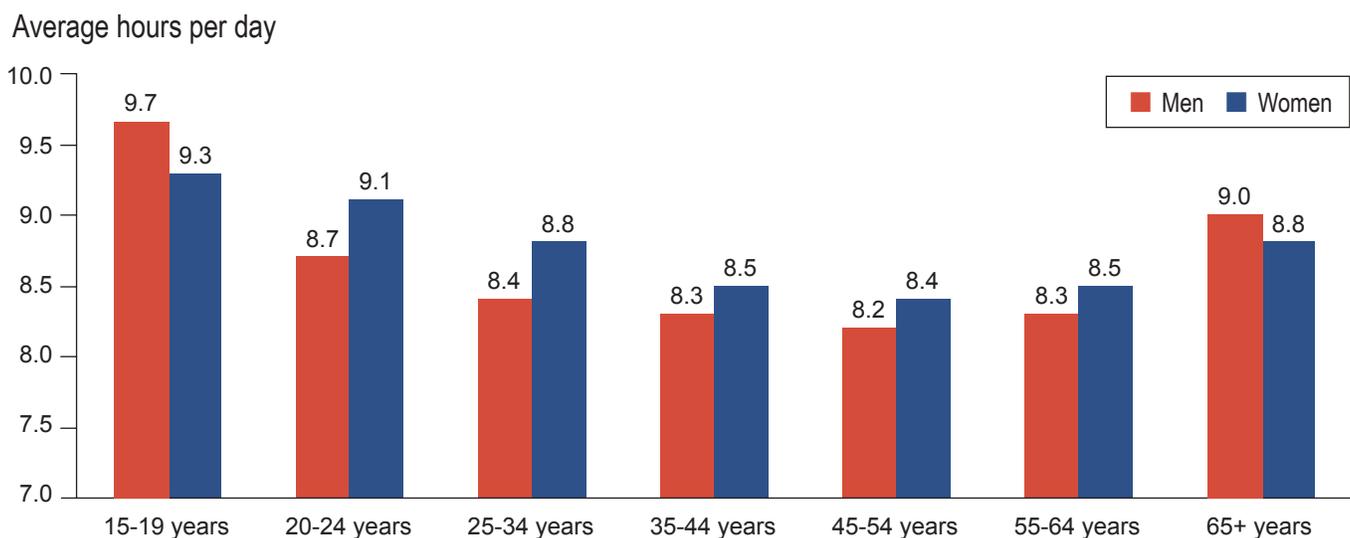
Unpublished estimates

Additional information on ATUS can be found on the BLS webpage at www.bls.gov/tus. Unpublished tables of time-use estimates by age, ethnicity, employment status, educational attainment, marital status, presence and age of household children, and other categories are available upon request by emailing the ATUS staff at atusinfo@bls.gov or calling 202-691-6339.

Producing your own estimates

Researchers can produce their own time-use estimates using the ATUS data files that are available for free download on the ATUS Web site (www.bls.gov/tus). For more detailed information on generating estimates using ATUS data, a “how to” Web page provides guidance: www.bls.gov/tus/howto.htm.

Average sleep times per day, by age and sex



NOTE: Data include all persons age 15 and over. Data include all days of the week and are annual averages for 2006.