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## **Job Training: Characteristics of Workforce Training Participants**

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## Summary

In 1998, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) replaced the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) as the country's major job training program. Specifically, the adult employment and training activities authorized under WIA Title I-B replaced the adult training program authorized under JTPA Title II-A. There are a number of statutory differences between JTPA and WIA, which could affect the characteristics of who is served under WIA and the type of training they receive. These differences include the addition of individuals 18 to 21 to the definition of adults under WIA, elimination of the JTPA income eligibility criteria, elimination of the JTPA older worker set-aside, and the inclusion of new WIA priorities for providing training to recipients of public assistance and other economically disadvantaged persons.

Through the years Congress has shown considerable interest in who was served in federal job training programs. For example, in the 101<sup>st</sup> and 102<sup>nd</sup> Congresses, the House and Senate held hearings and passed amendments to JTPA that addressed issues such as “creaming” (the practice of serving individuals who are the easiest to place in jobs and require the least services), possible racial and gender disparities in JTPA services, and how to best serve older workers — as part of the main JTPA program or in a separate “set-aside” program. In developing WIA, Congress also expressed interest in issues related to targeting services to various groups. This interest is likely to continue as WIA is being implemented and when it is considered for reauthorization in 2003.

This report examines the statutory differences between JTPA and WIA that might affect participation by various groups (e.g., public assistance recipients, the unemployed) in the WIA adult training program. This report also presents data for Program Year (PY) 1998 on specific characteristics of *all* adult JTPA participants receiving any services and data on general characteristics of *only* those JTPA participants who received training services. This data will serve as a baseline to compare the characteristics of WIA participants when PY2000 WIA data become available in 2002. (The program years 1998 and 2000 were chosen as comparison years because PY1999 was a transition year for the implementation of WIA, and PY2000 was the first year all states were required to implement WIA.) When WIA data for PY2000 become available, a second report will be written comparing the characteristics of WIA participants and JTPA participants.

This report presents an analysis of the characteristics of JTPA participants that answers the question “Who was served in JTPA?” and provides the basis for answering the question “How do persons served under WIA differ from those who were served in JTPA?” in the next report. Regarding demographic characteristics, PY1998 JTPA adult participants were more often female, members of a racial or ethnic minority, at least a high school graduate, either not employed or not in the labor force, and economically disadvantaged. Regarding training, individuals age 55 and older were less likely to receive training services than were younger adults, and public assistance recipients made up a higher proportion of those receiving basic skills training than other kinds of training.

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# Job Training: Characteristics of Workforce Training Participants

## Introduction

In 1998, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) replaced the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) as the country's major job training program. Specifically, the adult employment and training activities authorized under WIA Title I-B replaced the adult training program authorized under JTPA Title II-A.<sup>1</sup> WIA differs from JTPA in several ways that could affect who participates in the WIA adult program. These differences include the addition of individuals 18 to 21 to the definition of adults under WIA, elimination of the JTPA income eligibility criteria, elimination of the JTPA older worker set-aside, and the inclusion of new WIA priorities for providing training to recipients of public assistance and other economically disadvantaged persons.<sup>2</sup>

Through the years Congress has shown considerable interest in who was served in federal job training programs. For example, in the 101<sup>st</sup> and 102<sup>nd</sup> Congresses, the House and Senate held hearings and passed amendments to JTPA that addressed issues such as "creaming" (the practice of serving individuals who are the easiest to place in jobs and require the least services), possible racial and gender disparities in JTPA services, and how to best serve older workers — as part of the main JTPA program or in a separate "set-aside" program. In developing WIA, Congress also expressed interest in issues related to targeting services to various groups. This interest is likely to continue as WIA is being implemented and when it is presumably reauthorized in 2003.

This report presents data on the characteristics of JTPA participants in Program Year (PY) 1998. The JTPA data are organized so that a comparison with WIA data will be possible. The data in this report serve as a baseline for examining assumptions about who might be served under WIA. For example, the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) anticipates that, for PY2000, the number of participants will increase and that the majority of participants in "intensive" and "training services" will be disadvantaged, low-income individuals, including welfare recipients.<sup>3,4</sup> Members of

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<sup>1</sup>This report focuses on the adult training program. WIA authorizes other programs, such as the dislocated worker program, that are not discussed here.

<sup>2</sup>In this report the term "economically disadvantaged" will be used synonymously with the term "low-income. The first term was used in JTPA and the second is used in WIA, but their definitions are virtually identical.

<sup>3</sup>DOL bases its assumption that the number of participants will increase on the further assumption that the cost per participant will decrease "as (1) the programs shifts from  
(continued...)

Congress and others may also have assumptions based on their understanding of WIA's "intent" and the effects of the changes in the adult program made by WIA on who receives services. This report also serves as a "preview" of the characteristics of WIA participants and can assist Congress in its oversight functions until WIA data become available in 2002. At that time, a report will be written comparing the characteristics of JTPA participants and WIA participants.

## Differences Between JTPA and WIA

WIA differs from JTPA in several ways that could affect who participates in the adult program. These differences can be grouped into three main categories: age eligibility, income and other eligibility criteria, and targeting. This section explains the difference between the two statutes in these three categories.

### Age Eligibility

Under JTPA, adults were defined as individuals age 22 and older. Youth were defined as individuals age 16-21; no individuals in this age range were served in the adult program. Under WIA, adults are individuals age 18 and older. Individuals age 18-21 can be served under the adult program, the youth program, or they can be "co-enrolled" in both programs.

### Income and Other Eligibility Criteria

Under JTPA, individuals receiving services through the adult training program were generally required to be "economically disadvantaged." This term meant individuals or their families who had a total family income that was not higher than the poverty line or 70% of the "lower living standard income level" (See Appendix). Other adults who were considered economically disadvantaged were individuals or their families receiving welfare payments, persons eligible for food stamps, homeless persons, or disabled adults whose own income rather than their family income was low. Up to 10% of participants in the adult program could be noneconomically disadvantaged if they had some other barrier to employment.

Under WIA, there is **no income eligibility** requirement for adults. Eligibility for WIA is based on the level of service received. WIA offers three levels of services. The first is **core services** for which being 18 years of age is the only eligibility

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<sup>3</sup>(...continued)

serving only disadvantaged to serving all adults, age 18 and above; and (2) participants receive services depending upon need, ranging from the less costly 'core services' through the more costly 'intensive and training' services." U.S. Department of Labor. *FY20001 Budget Justifications of Appropriations Estimates and Performance Plans for Committee on Appropriations*, February, 2000. p. TES-74.

<sup>4</sup>The WIA adult program is funded at \$950 million for PY2000, which is slightly less than funding for the JTPA adult program in PYs1998 and 1999, which was \$955 million.

criterion.<sup>5</sup> Core services include: job search and placement assistance; labor market information that identifies job vacancies, the skills necessary for occupations in demand, and employment trends; initial assessment of skills and needs; information on available services and programs; and follow-up services to assist in job retention.

The second level is **intensive services**, which are available to (1) unemployed adults who have received at least one core service, are unable to obtain employment through core services and need intensive services to obtain employment, and (2) employed adults who have received at least one core service and need intensive services to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency.<sup>6</sup> Intensive services include comprehensive assessments, development of individual employment plans, group and individual counseling, case management and short-term prevocational services.

The third level is **training services**, which are available to adults who have received at least one intensive service, have been unable to obtain or retain employment through such services, have the skills and qualification to successfully participate in a selected training program, select training programs that are directly linked to employment opportunities in the local area and are unable to obtain other grant assistance, including Pell grants, or need assistance above the levels provided by such other grants. Training includes occupational skills training, on-the-job training, entrepreneurial training, skill upgrading, job readiness training, and adult education and literacy activities in conjunction with other training.

## Targeting

**Older Worker Set-Aside.** Under JTPA, each state was required to set aside 5% of its Title II-A allotment for serving economically disadvantaged individuals 55 years of age and older.<sup>7</sup> Under WIA, there is **no older worker set-aside**.

**Priorities for Services.** Under JTPA, there was a general program requirement that efforts be made “to provide equitable services among substantial segments of the population.” Under WIA, **there is no comparable requirement**.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup>There is, however, no entitlement to any WIA service nor was there for any JTPA service.

<sup>6</sup>The criteria for determining whether employment will lead to self-sufficiency are established at the local level, but federal regulations specify that the criteria must, at a minimum, provide that self-sufficiency means employment that pays at least the lower living standard income.

<sup>7</sup>Up to 10% of participants in the set-aside program could have been *noneconomically* disadvantaged if they faced serious barriers to employment and met the income eligibility requirements of the Senior Community Service and Employment Program (Title V of the Older Americans Act). In addition, in the case of JTPA programs carried out with operators of Title V programs, individuals who were eligible for the Title V program (e.g., individuals who had an income no more than 125% of poverty) were deemed eligible for JTPA.

<sup>8</sup>States are required, however, to include in their annual report to the Secretary of Labor information on the performance (e.g., entry into, retention in, and earnings of unsubsidized employment) of out-of-school youth, recipients of public assistance, individuals with disabilities, veterans, displaced homemakers, and older individuals. This reporting

(continued...)

Also, under JTPA, not less than 65% of participants in each local area, other than participants served under the older worker set-aside, had to be individuals who were in one or more of the following categories: (1) basic skills deficient, (2) high school dropouts, (3) recipients of cash welfare payments, (4) offenders, (5) disabled, (6) homeless, or (7) in a category established by the service delivery area with the approval of the Governor. **There is no comparable requirement under WIA.**

Under WIA, **priority for intensive and training services** must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals if WIA funds are limited in a local area.<sup>9</sup>

## Participant Characteristics and Training Received

This section of the report is divided into two parts. The first, **Participant Characteristics**, focuses on *all* participants who received JTPA services, which in general are similar to the core, intensive, and training services provided under WIA. The next part, **Training**, focuses *only* on JTPA participants who received training services. Data for both parts are for PY1998 (July 1, 1998 through June 30, 1999). This year will serve as a “baseline” against which to compare the characteristics of WIA participants in PY2000 (July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2001). When the PY2000 data are available in 2002,<sup>10</sup> a second report will be issued making comparisons between JTPA and WIA participants. The program years 1998 and 2000 were chosen as comparison years because PY1999 was a transition year for the implementation of WIA, and PY2000 was the first year all states were required to implement WIA.

The word **participant**, as used in this report, means one incidence of enrollment in a JTPA program by an individual who received services in addition to an objective assessment of skills levels and service needs; who received services in any of the 50 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico; and who left the program for any reason. If an individual left a JTPA program, re-enrolled, and left again in PY1998, that would count as two incidents of enrollment and consequently as two participants. In the tables that follow, individuals who are counted more than once in a **single** program (e.g., adult, youth, older worker set-aside) constitute less than 2% of the total number of individuals and are included in the analysis. Individuals who participated in **both** the older worker set-aside and the main Title II-A adult program

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<sup>8</sup>(...continued)

requirement could be perceived by states as placing a priority on serving these groups, although the requirement focuses on the performance of the groups and not the number or percentage of individuals served.

<sup>9</sup>States and local areas establish the criteria for determining the availability of funds and the process by which any priority will be applied. The local boards and the governors may establish a process that gives priority to public assistance recipients and other low income individuals and that also serves other individuals meeting eligibility requirements.

<sup>10</sup>Reporting information for the program year ending June 30, 2001 is due to DOL by September 30, 2001. The data will most likely be available to the public some time in the first few months of 2002.

are not included in the analyses of older worker participants in these two programs, because under WIA there is no comparable group of older workers i.e., older workers who can participate in two programs.

The data for this report are from the JTPA Standardized Program Information Report (SPIR) PY98 Public Use File made available on CD-ROM by the Employment and Training Administration of the U.S. Department of Labor. SPIR includes data on **all** participants<sup>11</sup> in the Adult Title II-A program; SPIR data are **not** a sample of participants.<sup>12</sup>

**NOTE ON THE DEFINITION OF TERMS:** The terms used below to describe the characteristics of participants can be found in the appendix. Examples of these terms are “employed,” “unemployed,” “not in the labor force,” “economically disadvantaged,” “public assistance recipient,” “veteran,” and terms referring to various racial and ethnic groups, e.g., white, black, Hispanic.

## Participant Characteristics

The following analyses of participant characteristics are organized into three categories: adults, older workers, and young adults.

**Adults.** For the purpose of analyzing the characteristics of adults, participants in the main Title II-A program and in the Title II-A older worker set-aside are combined in **Tables 1 through 4**. Generally, DOL in its SPIR data books presents data separately for adults enrolled in the main Title II-A adult program and adults enrolled in the Title II-A older worker set-aside. Since there is no older worker set aside under WIA, the data for participants in the main Title II-A program and participants in the Title II-A older worker set-aside are combined to create a grouping comparable to a WIA grouping of persons age 22 and older.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 1** shows the characteristics of all JTPA Title II-A Adult participants. In general, the adult participants were more likely to be: female (68%), between the ages of 30 and 54 (53%), a racial or ethnic minority (56%), at least high school graduates (78%), either unemployed or not in the labor force (82%), and economically disadvantaged (96%). Also, about 31% received public assistance.

One reason why WIA participants might differ from JTPA participants is that almost all JTPA participants were economically disadvantaged because this was an eligibility criterion. Since WIA does not have an income eligibility requirement for

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<sup>11</sup>In SPIR data books, the term “terminees” is used instead of the term “participants” used in this report, but both terms are defined the same way.

<sup>12</sup>JTPA PY1998 data can be found in the “PY 98 SPIR Data Book,” April 2000, prepared by Social Policy Research Associates for the Department of Labor under contract number K-5950-6-00-80-30.

<sup>13</sup>Under WIA, youth ages 18 to 21 can be served in the adult program, the youth program or both programs. Since it is impossible to know which JTPA youth would be comparable to those served under WIA, they are not included at this point in the analysis. They are discussed later in this report.



the receipt of services, the proportion of persons receiving any WIA services who are economically disadvantaged may fall below the PY1998 level of 96%.

Another reason why WIA participants may differ from JTPA participants involves older workers. Over three-quarters of the JTPA Title II-A participants age 55 and over were served in the older worker set-aside program, which is eliminated under WIA. If the data from the older worker set-aside were not included in **Table 1**, it would show that 2.3% rather than 9.3% of the participants were age 55 and older.<sup>14</sup>

**Table 2** shows the characteristics of participants by their economic status. The 4% of JTPA participants who were *not* economically disadvantaged were more likely to be 55 years of age or older, white, veterans, and employed than were the economically disadvantaged participants. If a greater proportion of WIA participants are not economically disadvantaged individuals as a result of the elimination of the income eligibility requirement, participants might be more likely to have these characteristics. (While WIA requires that priority for intensive and training services be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals, it seems unlikely that the proportion of economically disadvantaged persons served under WIA would be higher than the 96% level for all JTPA adult participants shown in **Table 1**.)

**Table 3** shows the characteristics of participants by their status as public assistance recipients. The 31% of JTPA participants who received public assistance were more likely to be female, younger adults, black, not high school graduates, and not in the labor force than were participants who were not recipients of public assistance. If the WIA requirement that priority for intensive and training services be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals has the effect of increasing the proportion of public assistance recipients served, then persons with these characteristics are more likely to be served.

**Table 4** shows the characteristics of participants by their employment status. The 18% of JTPA participants who were employed were more likely to be white and to be better educated than those who were unemployed or not in the labor force. Since WIA explicitly allows for the receipt of intensive and training services by employed individuals who need to obtain or retain employment that allows for self sufficiency,<sup>15</sup> it is possible a greater proportion of WIA participants may be employed

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<sup>14</sup>It is not clear how the elimination of the set-aside will affect the participation of older workers in WIA. There has been a long standing debate on whether having a set-aside for older workers increases the number of older individuals served or acts as a deterrent to serving older workers. Some observers assert that providers or state and local policy makers perceive the set-aside program as the primary way to serve individuals 55 years of age and older and the main Title II-A program as the primary way to serve those under 55 years of age, thus limiting services to the former group. Others assert that society in general discriminates against older workers and without a set-aside, they will not be served.

<sup>15</sup>The criteria for determining self-sufficiency is set at the state and local levels. The WIA regulations set the minimum criterion as employment that pays at least the "lower living (continued...)

than were JTPA participants. However, the characteristics of the employed participants under WIA may be different from those under JTPA because WIA participants may be less likely to be economically disadvantaged.

***TECHNICAL NOTE:*** In the tables that follow, there are some characteristics (e.g. gender, age) for which data are missing, but in no table for any characteristic is the percent of missing data greater than 0.04%.

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<sup>15</sup>(...continued)  
standard income level.”

**Table 1. Characteristics of JTPA Title II-A Adult Participants**

| <b>Characteristics</b>             | <b>Total adult participants<br/>(N=163,223)</b> |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Gender — female</b>             | 67.7%   |
| <b>Age</b>                         |   |
| 22-29                              | 37.7%   |
| 30-54                              | 53.0%   |
| 55+                                | 9.3%  |
| <b>Race/ethnicity</b>              |   |
| White (not Hispanic)               | 43.9%   |
| Black (not Hispanic)               | 34.5%   |
| Hispanic (of any race)             | 17.1%   |
| American Indian/Alaska Native      | 1.6%  |
| Asian or Pacific Islander          | 2.9%  |
| <b>Highest grade completed</b>     |   |
| Less than high school graduate     | 22.4%   |
| High school graduate               | 56.1%   |
| Post high school                   | 17.9%   |
| College graduate and above         | 3.6%  |
| <b>Veteran</b>                     | 6.4%  |
| <b>Disability</b>                  | 6.2%  |
| <b>Public assistance recipient</b> | 30.7%   |
| <b>Labor force status</b>          |   |
| Employed                           | 18.2%   |
| Unemployed                         | 49.7%   |
| Not in the labor force             | 32.1%   |
| <b>Economically disadvantaged</b>  | 96.0%   |

**Table 2. Characteristics of JTPA Title II-A Adults by Economic Status**

| Characteristics                                | Not economically disadvantaged<br>(N=6,500) | Economically disadvantaged<br>(N=156,723) |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Gender — female</b>                         | 63.4%                                       | 67.9%                                     |
| <b>Age<sup>a</sup></b>                         |   |   |
| 22-29  | 25.5%                                       | 38.2%                                     |
| 30-54  | 46.1%                                       | 53.2%                                     |
| 55+  | 28.4%                                       | 8.5%                                      |
| <b>Race/ethnicity</b>                          |   |   |
| White (not Hispanic)                           | 51.7%                                       | 43.6%                                     |
| Black (not Hispanic)                           | 33.3%                                       | 34.5%                                     |
| Hispanic (of any race)                         | 11.9%                                       | 17.3%                                     |
| American Indian/Alaska Native                  | 1.0%  | 1.7%                                      |
| Asian or Pacific Islander                      | 2.1%  | 2.9%                                      |
| <b>Highest grade completed<sup>a</sup></b>     |   |   |
| Less than high school graduate                 | 21.8%                                       | 22.4%                                     |
| High school graduate                           | 54.0%                                       | 56.2%                                     |
| Post high school                               | 18.7%                                       | 17.9%                                     |
| College graduate and above                     | 5.5%  | 3.6%                                      |
| <b>Veteran</b>                                 | 12.0%                                       | 6.2%                                      |
| <b>Disability</b>                              | 9.6%  | 6.1%                                      |
| <b>Public assistance recipient<sup>b</sup></b> | 17.6%                                       | 31.2%                                     |
| <b>Labor force status</b>                      |   |   |
| Employed                                       | 25.1%                                       | 17.9%                                     |
| Unemployed                                     | 55.3%                                       | 49.5%                                     |
| Not in the labor force                         | 19.6%                                       | 32.6%                                     |

<sup>a</sup> These percentages may not sum to a 100% because of rounding.

<sup>b</sup> It is not clear why nearly 18% of those who were not economically disadvantaged were public assistance recipients. The JTPA statutory definition of economically disadvantaged includes being a public assistance recipient or being a member of a family that receives public assistance. Not all economically disadvantaged persons need be public assistance recipients — they could be economically disadvantaged because of other factors — but one would expect that all public assistance recipients would be economically disadvantaged.

**Table 3. Characteristics of JTPA Title II-A Adult Recipients by Public Assistance Status**

| <b>Characteristics</b>                        | <b>Recipients<sup>a</sup><br/>(N=50,091)</b> | <b>Non-recipients<sup>a</sup><br/>(N=113,109)</b> |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Gender — female</b>                        | 85.5%  | 59.8%   |
| <b>Age<sup>b</sup></b>                        |  |   |
| 22-29   | 43.9%  | 35.0%   |
| 30-54   | 53.0%  | 53.0%   |
| 55+   | 3.1%   | 12.1%   |
| <b>Race/ethnicity<sup>b</sup></b>             |  |   |
| White (not Hispanic)                          | 38.8%  | 46.1%   |
| Black (not Hispanic)                          | 40.7%  | 31.7%   |
| Hispanic (of any race)                        | 16.1%  | 17.6%   |
| American Indian/Alaska Native                 | 1.9%   | 1.5%  |
| Asian or Pacific Islander                     | 2.4%   | 3.1%  |
| <b>Highest grade completed</b>                |  |   |
| Less than high school graduate                | 27.8%  | 19.9%   |
| High school graduate                          | 54.8%  | 56.7%   |
| Post high school                              | 15.5%  | 19.0%   |
| College graduate and above                    | 1.9%   | 4.4%  |
| <b>Veteran</b>                                | 2.8%   | 8.1%  |
| <b>Disability</b>                             | 6.4%   | 6.1%  |
| <b>Labor force status</b>                     |  |   |
| Employed                                      | 9.3%   | 22.1%   |
| Unemployed                                    | 42.0%  | 53.2%   |
| Not in the labor force                        | 48.7%  | 24.7%   |
| <b>Economically disadvantaged<sup>c</sup></b> | 97.7%  | 95.3%   |

<sup>a</sup> The sum of the number of recipients and non-recipients is 23 participants less than the total number of Title II-A participants because of missing data.

<sup>b</sup> These percentages may not sum to a 100% because of rounding.

<sup>c</sup> It is not clear why 97.7% instead of 100% of public assistance recipients were economically disadvantaged. The JTPA statutory definition of economically disadvantaged includes being a public assistance recipient or being a member of a family that receives public assistance. Not all economically disadvantaged persons need be public assistance recipients — they could be economically disadvantaged because of other factors — but one would expect that all public assistance recipients would be economically disadvantaged.

**Table 4. Characteristics of JTPA Title II-A Adults by Employment Status**

| <b>Characteristics</b>                     | <b>Employed<sup>a</sup><br/>(N=29,670)</b> | <b>Unemployed or not in<br/>the labor force<sup>a</sup><br/>(N=133,550)</b> |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Gender — female</b>                     | 70.5%                                      | 67.1%   |
| <b>Age<sup>b</sup></b>                     |  |   |
| 22-29                                      | 42.2%                                      | 36.7%   |
| 30-54                                      | 49.6%                                      | 53.7%   |
| 55+  | 8.2%                                       | 9.5%  |
| <b>Race/ethnicity</b>                      |  |   |
| White (not Hispanic)                       | 51.2%                                      | 42.3%   |
| Black (not Hispanic)                       | 31.9%                                      | 35.0%   |
| Hispanic (of any race)                     | 12.9%                                      | 18.0%   |
| American Indian/Alaska Native              | 1.4%                                       | 1.7%  |
| Asian or Pacific Islander                  | 2.6%                                       | 3.0%  |
| <b>Highest grade completed<sup>b</sup></b> |  |   |
| Less than high school graduate             | 14.2%                                      | 24.2%   |
| High school graduate                       | 58.7%                                      | 55.5%   |
| Post high school                           | 23.0%                                      | 16.7%   |
| College graduate and above                 | 4.0%                                       | 3.6%  |
| <b>Veteran</b>                             | 6.2%                                       | 6.5%  |
| <b>Disability</b>                          | 5.1%                                       | 6.4%  |
| <b>Public assistance recipient</b>         | 15.7%                                      | 34.0%   |
| <b>Economically disadvantaged</b>          | 94.5%                                      | 96.4%   |

<sup>a</sup> The sum of the number of participants not employed or not in the labor force and the number employed is three participants less than the total number of Title II-A participants because of missing data.

<sup>b</sup> These percentages may not sum to a 100% because of rounding.

**Older Workers.** **Table 5** compares the characteristics of individuals age 55 and older who participated in the Title II-A older worker set-aside with individuals age 55 and older who participated in the main Title II-A program. Persons who participated in both programs are not included in this analysis.<sup>16</sup> As shown in the table, the two groups were similar except for three characteristics. The set-aside participants were more likely to be female (70% vs 56%) and age 65 and above (29% vs 12%) and less likely to be Hispanic (12% vs 19%) than the older workers in the main Title II-A program. It is possible that the older worker set-aside programs engaged in more outreach to older persons and consequently served a higher proportion of older individuals and women. It is not clear why a higher proportion of Hispanic older workers were served in the main Title II-A program.

Since both groups of JTPA older workers were similar in many respects, it is likely that older workers in WIA will have a similar profile. For example, WIA older workers are likely to have at least a high-school education and be unemployed or out of the workforce. However, regarding gender, age, and ethnicity, it is not clear whether WIA older workers, who with the elimination of the older worker set-aside will be served in the adult WIA program, will “look” more like the set-aside participants or like the main Title II-A older workers.

Regardless of which program the older individual participated in, persons age 55 and older differed in some characteristics from the population of all participants as shown in **Table 1**. Participants who were 55 and older were more likely to be white, Asian or Pacific Islander, a college graduate, veteran, or have a disability than were all participants. In addition, older participants were much less likely to be recipients of public assistance. The elimination of the older worker set-aside, and the WIA requirement that priority for intensive and training services be given to recipients of public assistance could result in a decrease in the *proportion of older workers* served. However, a decrease in older workers is unlikely to affect the *characteristics of all WIA participants*, since the proportion of all participants who are 55 and older is only 9%.

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<sup>16</sup>There were 821 individuals who participated in both programs. Because under WIA there is no comparable group of older workers, i.e., older workers who can participate in two programs, they have been excluded from this analysis of older workers.

**Table 5. Characteristics of JTPA Title II-A of Older Worker Participants by Program of Participation**

| <b>Characteristics</b>                | <b>Adults age 55 and older participating in the 5% set-aside (N=10,822)</b> | <b>Adults age 55 and over in main II-A (N=2,763)</b> |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Gender — female</b>                | 70.4%   | 56.2%  |
| <b>Age<sup>a</sup></b>                |   |  |
| 55-59                                 | 45.4%   | 67.5%  |
| 60-64                                 | 25.7%   | 20.3%  |
| 65+                                   | 29.0%   | 12.2%  |
| <b>Race/ethnicity<sup>a</sup></b>     |   |  |
| White (not Hispanic)                  | 57.9%   | 53.4%  |
| Black (not Hispanic)                  | 24.6%   | 21.2%  |
| Hispanic (of any race)                | 11.7%   | 19.0%  |
| American Indian/Alaska Native         | 1.0%  | 1.5%   |
| Asian or Pacific Islander             | 4.8%  | 5.0%   |
| <b>Highest grade completed</b>        |   |  |
| Less than high school graduate        | 23.6%   | 23.8%  |
| High school graduate                  | 46.4%   | 45.9%  |
| Post high school                      | 19.7%   | 18.9%  |
| College graduate and above            | 10.3%   | 11.4%  |
| <b>Veteran</b>                        | 12.2%   | 14.8%  |
| <b>Disability</b>                     | 7.8%  | 11.2%  |
| <b>Public assistance recipient</b>    | 9.5%  | 12.4%  |
| <b>Labor force status<sup>a</sup></b> |   |  |
| Employed                              | 16.0%   | 13.9%  |
| Unemployed                            | 50.2%   | 55.8%  |
| Not in the labor force                | 33.9%   | 30.3%  |
| <b>Economically disadvantaged</b>     | 87.3%   | 89.3%  |

<sup>a</sup> These percentages may not sum to a 100% because of rounding.

**Young Adults.** Table 6 shows the characteristics of JTPA Title II-C Youth participants between the ages of 18 and 21 who were out of school. Being out of



school is not a WIA eligibility criterion, but since 96% of adult JTPA participants were not in school, it can be anticipated that out-of-school youth, who comprise 79% of youth ages 18-21, would be more likely than in-school youth to participate in WIA's adult program.<sup>17</sup>

In general, the young adult participants are more likely to be female (66%), a member of a racial or ethnic minority (62%), educated at least at the high school level (56%), either unemployed or not in the labor force (82%), and economically disadvantaged (97%). In addition, about 27% received public assistance. The characteristics of young adults are similar to those of adults shown in **Table 1** with four main exceptions that are in part related to age differences. Young adults are less likely to have graduated from high school than adults (22% vs 43%), are less likely to have any post high school education (5% vs 22%), are more likely to not be in the labor force than adults (43% vs 32%), and are less likely to be veterans (0.5% vs 6.4%).

As with the JTPA adult participants, almost all JTPA youth participants were economically disadvantaged because that was an eligibility criterion. Youth enrolled in the WIA youth program, or co-enrolled in the WIA youth and adult programs, will still have to be economically disadvantaged. Young adults enrolled only in the adult program will not have to meet any income eligibility criteria.

Since WIA, unlike JTPA, allows individuals age 18-21 to participate in the adult program, there will inevitably be some young adults who will participate in that program. However, the characteristics of the young adult participants under WIA may be different from those under JTPA. For example, it may be that young adults with characteristics most similar to JTPA adult participants will be more likely to participate in the adult program than other young adults. Based on the JTPA data, this would indicate that perhaps individuals who have graduated from high school and are either employed or are unemployed (as opposed to being out of the work force) might be more likely to participate in the adult program.

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<sup>17</sup>Older youth served by JTPA were more likely to be out of school than younger youth. Of those who were 18 years old, 62% were out of school, while of those 21 years old, 92% were out of school.

**Table 6. Characteristics of JTPA Title II-C Youth Participants**

| Characteristics                    | Total youth participants age 18-21 and out of school (N=33,125) |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Gender — female</b>             | 66.4%   |
| <b>Race/ethnicity</b>              |   |
| White (not Hispanic)               | 38.2%   |
| Black (not Hispanic)               | 35.4%   |
| Hispanic (of any race)             | 22.5%   |
| American Indian/Alaska Native      | 1.7%  |
| Asian or Pacific Islander          | 2.2%  |
| <b>Highest grade completed</b>     |   |
| Less than high school graduate     | 44.3%   |
| High school graduate               | 50.5%   |
| Post high school                   | 5.1%  |
| College graduate and above         | 0.1%  |
| <b>Veteran</b>                     | 0.5%  |
| <b>Disability</b>                  | 5.2%  |
| <b>Public assistance recipient</b> | 26.7%   |
| <b>Labor force status</b>          |   |
| Employed                           | 18.5%   |
| Unemployed                         | 38.2%   |
| Not in the labor force             | 43.3%   |
| <b>Economically disadvantaged</b>  | 97.0%   |

## Training Received

Under WIA, training may be provided to individuals who have received at least one core service and one intensive service and who need training in order to obtain or retain employment at the level of self-sufficiency. (See the previous discussion on eligibility in the section of this report titled **Differences Between JTPA and WIA.**) Priority for training must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals if WIA funds are limited in a local area. In this report, a participant is considered to have received training if he or she received basic skills training, occupational skills training, or on-the-job training.

**Table 7** shows the percent of participants by program who received training. As discussed in the **Introduction**, DOL expects the total number of participants

receiving WIA services to increase as the adult program moves to serving any adult over the age of 18 and to providing services that range from the less costly core services to the more costly intensive and training services. If this proves to be true, then an increase in the overall *number* of participants may result in a decrease in the *proportion* of participants receiving training as more persons receive the lower cost core services and fewer persons receive the higher cost training services.

While, in general, there may be a decrease in the proportion of participants receiving training, it is less clear how the proportion of older workers and youth ages 18-21 who receive training might be affected by new WIA training provisions. There are several questions that can be raised about the proportion of these two groups that might receive WIA training services. These questions (and those pertaining to **Table 8**) could be relevant as Congress monitors the implementation of WIA. They are:

- ! In the case of older workers, will the new priority on training public assistance recipients affect the proportion of those workers who receive training since a relatively small percentage of older workers receive public assistance (**Table 5**)? Or will there be no effect because there is also a priority on training economically disadvantaged persons and nearly 90% of JTPA older worker participants were economically disadvantaged?
- ! In the case of participants 18-21 years of age, what will be the effect of opening the adult program to them? Will youth who do not meet the income eligibility criteria of the WIA youth program enroll in the WIA adult program to receive any service, i.e., core, intensive or training? Or will those economically disadvantaged youth enrolled in the WIA youth program who primarily “need” the training services offered in the adult program enroll in it for those services?

**Table 7. Percent of JTPA Participants Receiving Training by Program**

| Adults participating in the Title II-A program (N=163,223) | Adults age 55 and older participating in the 5% set-aside program (N=10,822) | Adults 55 and older participating in main Title II-A program <sup>a</sup> (N=2,763) | Youth participants age 18-21 and out of school participating in the Title II-C program (N=33,125) |
|--|--|---|---|
| 81.3%  | 62.6%  | 71.8%   | 80.1%   |

<sup>a</sup> This group is a sub-set of the adults participating in the Title II-A program and is shown here as a comparison to adults participating in the set-aside program.

**Table 8** shows the percent of JTPA participants by program who received training and were economically disadvantaged, recipients of public assistance, or unemployed or not in the work force. The percent of these groups that received training under each of four programs is similar to the percent that received any JTPA services. For example, 30.7% of Title II-A participants were public assistance recipients (**Table 1**) and 31.4% of Title II-A participants who received training were public assistance recipients (first column, second row, **Table 8**).<sup>18</sup>

As noted in the **Introduction** section at the beginning of this report, DOL expects that the majority of participants in training services will be economically disadvantaged individuals, including welfare recipients. WIA *does* require that priority for intensive and training services be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals if WIA funds are limited in a local area. WIA also explicitly allows for the receipt of training services by employed persons who need to obtain or retain employment that allows for self sufficiency. It is unclear, however, how these provisions might affect the receipt of training by participants who are economically disadvantaged, recipients of public assistance, or unemployed or not in the work force. Questions that can be raised about the groups who might receive WIA training are:

- ! Will a smaller proportion of those receiving training be economically disadvantaged because of the elimination of the eligibility requirement?
- ! Will a relatively high proportion of youth ages 18-21 who receive training be economically disadvantaged, because most youth receiving training under WIA will be “co-enrolled” in the WIA youth program and therefore, economically disadvantaged? Or will a smaller proportion of youth be economically disadvantaged because they are enrolled only in the adult program, which does not have any income eligibility requirements?
- ! Will the priority WIA places on serving public assistance recipients result in a greater proportion of these persons receiving training?
- ! Will a smaller proportion of persons who receive training be unemployed or not in the labor force, because WIA explicitly allows for the receipt of training services by employed persons who need to obtain or retain employment that

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<sup>18</sup>To make similar comparisons with other programs, see **Tables 5 and 6**.

allows for self sufficiency result in receiving training services? Will employed persons also be economically disadvantaged?

**Table 8. Percent of Selected Groups of JTPA Participants Receiving Training by Program<sup>a</sup>**

| Group                                | Adults participating in the Title II-A program (N=132,738) | Adults age 55 and older participating in the 5% set-aside program (N=6,774) | Adults 55 and older participating in main Title II-A program (N=1,985) <sup>b</sup> | Youth participants age 18-21 and out of school participating in the Title II-C program (N=26,545) |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Economically disadvantaged           | 96.2%  | 87.4%   | 88.8%   | 97.0%   |
| Public assistance recipients         | 31.4%  | 10.3%   | 12.0%   | 27.4%   |
| Unemployed or not in the labor force | 80.9%  | 83.0%   | 85.3%   | 80.4%   |

<sup>a</sup> Using the first column as an example, this table should be read as follows: Of the adults who received training in the Title II-A program, 96.2% were economically disadvantaged, 31.4% were public assistance recipients, and 80.9% were unemployed or not in the labor force.

<sup>b</sup> This group is a sub-set of the adults participating in the Title II-A program and is shown here as a comparison to adults participating in the set-aside program.

**Table 9** shows the percent of JTPA participants by program who received each of three types of training and were economically disadvantaged, recipients of public assistance, or unemployed or not in the work force.<sup>19</sup> The percent of these groups that received basic skills training, occupational skills training, and on-the-job training under each of four programs is fairly similar to the percent that received any training. For example, 31.4% of Title II-A participants who received any training were public assistance recipients (**Table 8**) and 37.8% of Title II-A participants who received basic skills training were public assistance recipients (first column, second row, **Table 9**).

One new WIA requirement that may affect who receives which type of training is the requirement that basic skills training can only be provided in combination with other training. This requirement is most likely to affect public assistance recipients because they constituted a higher proportion of participants receiving basic skills training than of participants receiving occupational skills training or on-the-job

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<sup>19</sup>Older workers participating in the main Title II-A program or the set-aside program are not shown separately in this table because the number of older worker receiving each type of service tend to be relatively small. However, older workers who received training in the main Title II-A program are included in the columns labeled "Title II-A Adults."

training. Consequently, there may be an increase in the proportion of public assistance recipients who receive occupational skills training and on-the-job training.

**Table 9. Percent of Selected Groups of JTPA Participants Receiving Training by Type of Training<sup>a</sup>**

| Group                                | Basic skills training           |                                | Occupational skills training     |                                | On-the-job training             |                               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
|                                      | Title II-A adults<br>(N=29,564) | Title II-C youth<br>(N=12,028) | Title II-A adults<br>(N=103,020) | Title II-C youth<br>(N=16,652) | Title II-A adults<br>(N=15,346) | Title II-C youth<br>(N=1,393) |
| Economically disadvantaged           | 96.6%                           | 97.0%                          | 95.6%                            | 97.1%                          | 97.2%                           | 96.8%                         |
| Public assistance recipients         | 37.8%                           | 29.4%                          | 31.3%                            | 28.1%                          | 25.6%                           | 16.4%                         |
| Unemployed or not in the labor force | 87.7%                           | 88.0%                          | 78.9%                            | 75.9%                          | 85.4%                           | 85.1%                         |

<sup>a</sup> Using the first column as an example, this table should be read as follows: Of the adults who received basic skills training, 96.6% were economically disadvantaged, 37.8% were public assistance recipients, and 87.7% were unemployed or not in the labor force.

## Next Step

This report analyzes the characteristics of JTPA adult participants (and those youth who could be considered adults under WIA) and the types of training they received in PY1998. The report answers the question “Who was served in JTPA?” and provides the basis for answering the question “How do persons served under WIA differ from those who were served in JTPA?” A subsequent report using WIA PY2000 data is planned for the spring of 2002 when WIA data will be available.

The forthcoming report will compare the characteristics of WIA adult participants and the types of training they received to the JTPA participants. It is likely to reflect some differences that could occur as a result of statutory differences between JTPA and WIA, such as the addition of individuals 18-21 to the definition of adults under WIA, elimination of the JTPA income eligibility criteria, elimination of the JTPA older worker set-aside, and the WIA specified priorities for providing training to low-income persons and public assistance recipients in certain cases. However, factors other than statutory differences may also affect the characteristics of WIA participants and may need to be taken into account. These factors could include, the incidence of certain groups (e.g., economically disadvantaged adults, public assistance recipients) in the general population and whether there is an increase in individuals co-enrolled in WIA and other programs.

## Appendix: Glossary

The definitions of the following terms used throughout this report are based on the definitions contained in the “Standardized Program Information Report (SPIR) Format Instructions and Definitions” for PY1998, with the exception of the definition for “lower living standard income level,” which is defined in the statute authorizing JTPA programs. In general, the terms used here are defined similarly under WIA reporting requirements.

**Disability** refers to a “participant who has a physical (motion, vision, hearing) or mental (learning or developmental) impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person’s major life activities and has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment ... such impairment does result in a substantial barrier to employment.”

### Economic Status

**Economically disadvantaged**<sup>20</sup> refers to a JTPA participant “who (1) receives, or is a member of a family which receives, cash welfare payments under a Federal, State, or local welfare program; (2) has, or is a member of a family which has, received a total family income for the six-month period prior to application, in relation to family size and location, that when ANNUALIZED did not exceed either (a) the official poverty line as defined by the Department of Health and Human Services, and revised annually in accordance with Section 673(2) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)), or (b) 70 percent of the lower living standard income level, whichever is greater; (3) is receiving or has been determined eligible to receive in the 6-month period prior to the application food stamps pursuant to the Food Stamp Act of 1977; (4) qualifies as a homeless individual under(a) and (c) of Section 103 of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act; (5) is a foster child on behalf of whom State or local government payments are made; or (6) is an individual with a disability who meets the requirements of (1) or (2) above, but who is a member of a family whose income does not meet such requirements.”

**Lower living standard income level** “means that income level (adjusted for regional, metropolitan, urban, and rural differences and family size) determined annually by the Secretary [of DOL], based on the most recent lower living family budget issued by the Secretary.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Under WIA, the term “low-income” is used instead of economically disadvantaged, but its definition is similar.

<sup>21</sup>The lower living standard income level as published in the *Federal Register* on May 12, 2000 (v. 65, no. 93, p. 30630-30636) for a family of four ranges from \$24,510 in the non-Metropolitan South to \$29,300 in the metropolitan Northeast. Income levels are higher for Alaska, Hawaii and Guam.

## Labor Force Status

**Employed** refers to a participant “who, during the 7 consecutive days prior to application, did any work at all as a paid employee, in his or her own business, profession or farm, worked 15 hours or more as an unpaid worker in an enterprise operated by a member of the family, or is one who was not working, but has a job or business from which he or she was temporarily absent because of illness, bad weather, vacation, labor-management dispute, or personal reasons, whether or not paid by the employer for time-off, and whether or not seeking another job.”

**Unemployed** refers to a participant “who did not work during the 7 consecutive days prior to application, who made specific efforts to find a job within the past 4 weeks prior to application, and who was available for work during the 7 consecutive days prior to application. Also included as unemployed are those who did not work, and (a) were waiting to be called back to a job from which they had been laid off, or (b) were waiting to report to a new wage or salary job scheduled to start within 30 days.”

**Not in labor force** refers to a participant “who did not work during the 7 consecutive days prior to application for a JTPA program and is not classified as employed or unemployed.”

**Public Assistance Recipient** refers to a participant who was receiving any of the following assistance at time of application.<sup>22</sup>

- ! Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF). Also includes individuals receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) at application.
- ! General Assistance (GA) (State/local government).
- ! Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA).
- ! Supplemental Security Income (SSI) (SSA Title XVI).

## Training Services

**Basic skills training** is “instruction normally conducted in an institutional classroom or one-on-one tutorial setting and designed to upgrade basic skills and prepare the individual for further training, post-secondary education transition, future employment, or retention in present employment, and may be provided within the framework of basic education skills competencies. Includes, but is not limited to, reading, writing, mathematics, literacy training, speaking, listening, problem-solving, reasoning, study skills, English for non-English speakers, bilingual training, and GED preparation (including computer assisted instruction).”

**Occupational skills training** is “instruction conducted in an institutional or worksite setting designed to provide or upgrade individuals in the primary/technical and secondary/ancillary skills to perform a specific job or group of jobs such as auto mechanics, health services, or clerical training. Includes job-specific competency training, job-specific school-to-work/apprenticeship programs, on-site industry

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<sup>22</sup>When not used for eligibility determination, the information may be self-reported.



specific training, customized training, entrepreneurial training, internships, and pre-apprenticeship training. It may be provided within the framework of occupational/job specific skills competencies, and when structured like a job, may also be used to provide training in work maturity competencies.”

**On-the-job-training (OJT)** is “training in the public or private sector which is given to an individual while s/he is engaged in productive work, designed to provide or upgrade individuals in the primary/technical and secondary/ancillary skills required to perform and essential to the full and adequate performance of the job. It may be provided within the framework of occupational/job specific skills competencies, and may also be used to provide training in work maturity competencies.”

## **Race/ethnicity**

**White (not Hispanic)** is a participant who has “origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.”

**Black (not Hispanic)** is a participant who has “origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.”

**Hispanic** is a participant of “Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin (including Spain), regardless of race.”<sup>23</sup>

**American Indian or Alaska Native (not Hispanic)** is a participants who has “origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintains cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.”

**Asian or Pacific Islander (not Hispanic)** is a participant who has “origins in any of the original people of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent (e.g., India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Sikkim, and Bhutan), or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for example, China, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, [and] Samoa. Hawaiian Natives are [also] recorded as Asian or Pacific Islanders.”

**Veteran** refers to a participant “who (A) served on active duty in the military service (of the U.S.) for a period of more than 180 days and who was discharged or released with other than a dishonorable discharge or (B) was discharged or released from active duty because of a service-connected disability or (C) was discharged as a member of a reserve component under an order to active duty pursuant to Section 672(a), (d), or (g), 673, or 673b of Title 10, who served on active duty during a period of war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge is authorized and was discharged from such duty with other than a dishonorable discharge. (38 U.S.C. 2011(4))”

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<sup>23</sup>Among persons from Central and South American countries, only those who are of Spanish origin, descent, or culture are included in the Hispanic category.