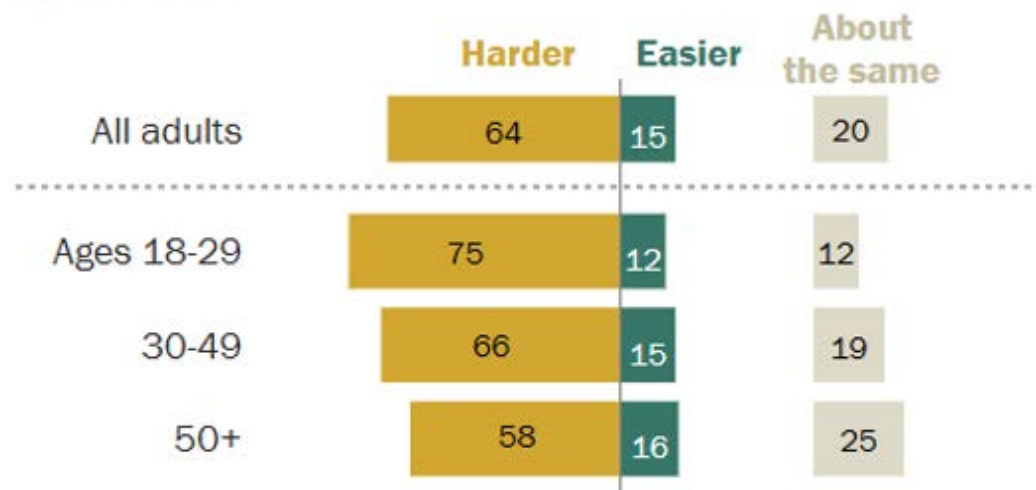


Young Adults in the Job Market

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Generational Disconnect: Young Adults Struggling to Find Jobs

*% of U.S. adults saying **finding a job** is ____ for young adults today than it was for their parents' generation* **Chart 1**



Generational differences in perspective are nothing new, and views on the state of the job market are no exception. Many young adults are pessimistic about their employment prospects and believe they face greater challenges than previous generations. As seen in Chart 1¹, 64% of Americans think it is harder for young adults to find a job than it was for their parents. Older generations, however, are less likely to share that view. In fact, 41% of adults over 50 think it is the same or easier to find a job.

The current hiring environment disproportionately affects younger workers, who often depend on job openings to gain experience and establish their careers. Older workers, by contrast, are more likely to be firmly established in their professions and therefore less reliant on new hiring opportunities. The impacts of artificial intelligence may further the difficulty for younger adults to find entry level positions as well.²

Workers aged 55 and older have an unemployment rate of 3.1%³, while the unemployment rate for those ages 20 to 24 is more than double that figure at 7.1%. With older workers staying in higher paid positions for longer it can be hard for younger workers to move up the ranks and find highly paid work⁴.

Economic Definitions

U-3 Unemployment Rate: The unemployment rate tracks the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the labor force (the total number of employed plus unemployed). These figures generally come from a household labor force survey.

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¹ [Majorities of Americans say key financial milestones are harder for today’s young adults to reach | Pew Research Center](#)

² [Young Adult Workers in a ‘Low-Hire, Low-Fire’ Labor Market](#)

³ [Table A-10. Selected unemployment indicators, seasonally adjusted - 2026 M07 Results](#)

⁴ [Why Younger Workers Just Can’t Get Ahead](#)