

Mapping the Transition to Adulthood: A Bird's-Eye View of Enrollment, Employment, Independence, and Marriage

Population Association of America
Chicago, IL
April 27, 2017

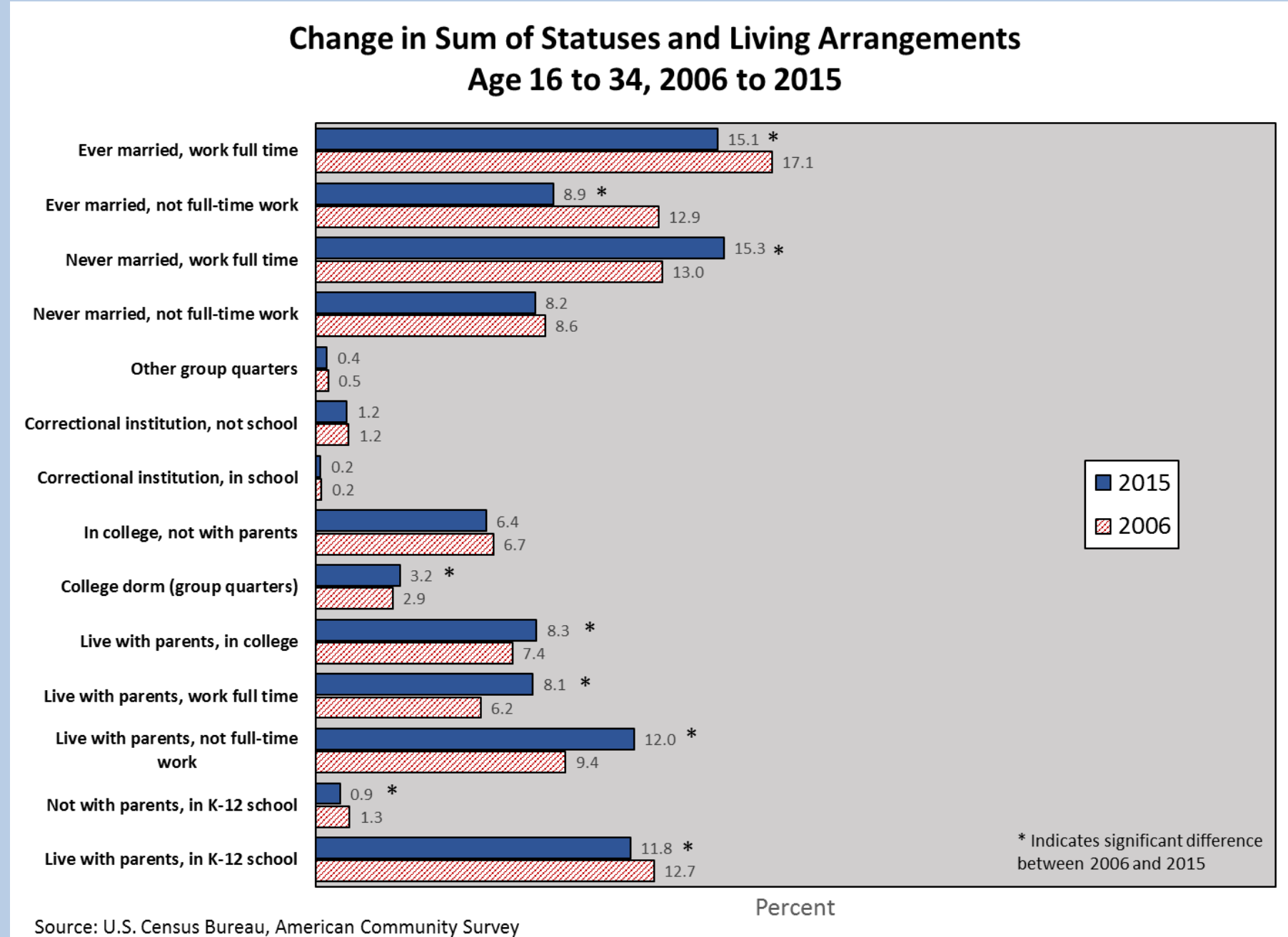
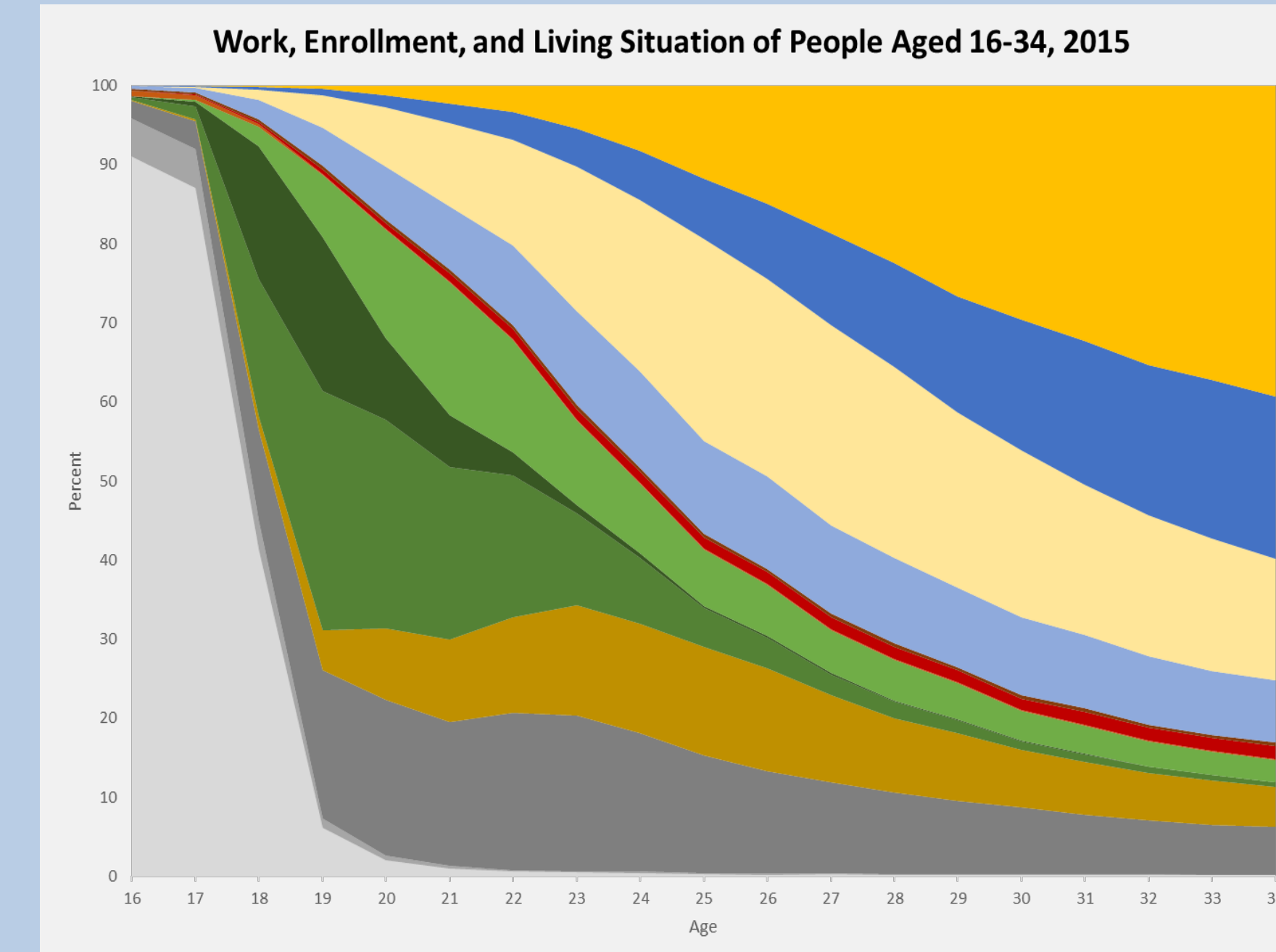
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INTRODUCTION

The transition to adulthood has become an important framework for analyzing social change. The point of this presentation is to provide a summary that will allow us to keep an eye on the overall transition, while analytic efforts continue to focus on specific aspects of importance.

DATA

The key to this exercise is the availability of data from the American Community Survey (ACS) on a set of positions in which young people may find themselves on the way to adulthood. These include residence with parents, independence from parents, school enrollment, residence in university dorms, residence in correctional facilities and other group quarters, employment, and marriage.



DEFINITIONS

- Living with parents: listed on the household roster as son or daughter (biological, adopted or foster), or as grandchild.
- “Not living with parent:” Not as above and not in group quarters facility.
- Never married/ever married: from current marital status.
- Elementary-secondary or college enrollment: from grade enrolled.
- Working full-time: at least 50 weeks and at least 35 hours in previous year.

OBSERVED CHANGES

From 2006 to 2015:

- Living with parents grew from 37 % to 41 %.
- Full-time employment grew from 36 % to 39 %.
- College enrollment grew from 17 % to 18 %.
- Ever married fell from 30 % to 24 %.

DISCUSSION

The young people of 2015 have increased living at home, increased working, and decreased marriage relative to the young people of 2006. Some shifts may reflect long-term trends, others may result from the recession and recovery that occurred between 2006 and 2015. As we move forward through the 21st century, the American Community Survey will be a useful tool for keeping track of these changes.

