## U.S. Working Women a chartbook

U.S. Department of Labor

? WOMEN'S YEAR 1975

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## U.S. Working Women a chartbook

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To encourage worldwide efforts to improve the status of women, the United Nations General Assembly has designated 1975 as International Women's Year. The goals of International Women's

Year are threefold:
to promote equality between men and women;
to support the full integration of women into the economic, social, and cultural life of their countries;
to recognize and encourage the role of women in the development of international cooperation and world peace.

The President has requested that agencies of the
U. S. Government participate in activities in support of these goals. As part of its contribution
to the Department of Labor's program for International Women's Year, the Bureau of Labor

Statistics has prepared the accompanying chartbook to illustrate the role of working women in the U.S. economy.

Readers of this chartbook interested in keeping informed on current developments in the U.S.
labor force can find up-to-date statistics in regular publications of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
Labor force data are published monthly in Employment and Earnings and the Monthly Labor Review, both available by subscription from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. 20402. Special analyses are issued from time to time and are published in the Monthly Labor Review as Special Labor Force Reports. Reprints are available, as long as supplies last, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics or any of its regional offices.

This chartbook presents a wide array of data on the characteristics of American working women and their changing status over the past quarter of a century. The working life of women has expanded enormously over this period, and it is
likely to continue to lengthen.
Part I of the chartbook provides information on the
labor force participation of women - their employment and unemployment. Part II shows
their marital and family status. The income of working women is analyzed in Part III, and data on their education are shown in Part IV. Part V
provides additional information on the characteristics of working women. All data, unless
otherwise indicated, refer to the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years and over.

The chartbook was prepared in the Division of Labor Force Studies, Office of Current Employment Analysis. It was designed and written by Earl Mellor, with the assistance of Barbara Seale, under the direction of Elizabeth Waldman and Harvey Hamel. Robert Stein, Chief of the

Division of Labor Force Studies, provided
invaluable guidance and assistance.

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## Sources of Data

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# Labor Force, Employment, Unemployment, and <br> Work Experience 

Women are playing an increasingly important role in the U.S. economy. The number and proportion who are in paid employment continue to rise and their attachment to the labor force shows marked gains in strength as more work year-round at full-time jobs. At the beginning of 1975, some $361 / 2$ million women were in the work forceabout 40 percent of the country's entire labor force and almost 46 percent of all women 16 years of age and over.




> Civilian labor force by sex, selected years, 1950-74
> (annual averages)

The number of women in the labor force nearly doubled between 1950 and 1974-women now account for two-fifths of all workers.

Labor force participation rates by sex, 1950-74
(annual averages)

As the proportion of the female population in the labor force rose sharply from 1950 to 1974, the labor force participation rate for men moved downward.



Labor force participation rates by age and sex, selected years, 1950-74
(annual averages)

More than half of the women in most age groups are now in the labor force.

Recent increases have occurred mostly among women in their twenties and early thirties.

## Persons not in the labor force by sex and reason for nonparticipation, 1974

(annual averages)

Women constitute about three-fourths of the population outside of the labor force. Like men, most of these women do not want jobs, but for reasons markedly different from those for men.


Employed



Since 1950, women have made up an increasing proportion of persons with jobs and of those looking

Women
33.4 million

## Employed persons by sex and occupation, 1974

(annual averages)

Women are concentrated in fewer occupational categories than men.



> Employed women by occupation, 1960, 1970, and 1974

(annual averages)

The proportion of women employed as private household and farm workers has been declining and the proportion in professional-technical, clerical, and service jobs increasing.

Women as a proportion of all workers by occupation, 1974
(annual averages)

The majority of clerical and service jobs are held by women; they make up about 40 percent of professional-technical, sales, and operative workers.



Persons on nonagricultural payrolls by sex and industry, 1974
(annual averages)

11
Women as a proportion of all persons on nonagricultural payrolls by industry, 1974
(annual averages)

Women constitute about half the workers in the retail trade; finance, insurance, and real estate; and service industries and on State and local government payrolls.



## Unemployed

persons by
sex and age, selected years, 1950-74
(annual averages)

Teen-age and young adult women have become a larger share of the unemployed.



Unemployment rates by sex, 1950-74
(annual averages)


Unemployment rates are generally higher for women than for men. The gap usually widens as unemployment declines.

Unemployment rates by sex and age, 1974
(annual averages)

In the prime working age groups, women have substantially higher unemployment rates than men.



Unemployment rates by sex, age, and race, 1974
(annual averages)

Young women of minority races have the highest unemployment rates. experience, and weeks worked, 1973

Women workers are less likely than men to hold year-round full-time jobs; even so, about two-fifths of the women who worked in 1973 did so on a yearround full-time basis.



Women holding yearround full-time jobs in 1973 as a proportion of all women workers, by age

About half of the women workers 25 to 64 years old work all year at full-time jobs.



Women holding yearround full-time jobs in 1973 as a proportion of all women workers, by occupation

Women employed in professional-technical and managerial occupations are more likely to work year-round full-time than women who hold other
kinds of jobs.

Women by reason for less than fullyear work, 1973


Weeks unemployed


1 to 4 weeks
5 to 14 weeks
15 to 26 weeks
27 weeks or more

Year-round full-time workers unemployed 1 or 2 weeks only


Did not work
in 1973,
but looked for a job

43 million women in the labor force anytime during 1973 With
unemployment


Women with unemployment in 1973 by work experience and weeks unemployed

Of the 43 million women with work experience in 1973, 6.6 million were unemployed at some time during the year-about 45 percent of their unemployment lasted less than

5 weeks.

23
Women with unemployment in 1973 by race, age, and marital status

Of the 6.6 million women with some unemployment in 1973, 19 percent were of minority races, 45 percent were teenagers and young adults, and 50 percent were wives.


Note: Age and marital status as of March 1974

## Marital and Family Status

Nowadays single women no longer predominate in the female labor force as they did before World War II and in the early 1950's. Married women living with their husbands - nearly 21 million in 1974-account for almost three-fifths of all women workers. The proportion of female workers who are widowed, divorced, or separated is comparatively small, but on the rise.

The trend toward smaller families has contributed to the consistent increases in women's overall labor force participation rate. Where young children are in the family, the likelihood of a mother's working outside the home is considerably reduced. Even so, labor force participation of these mothers has risen steadily for more than a decade. With divorce and separation on the increase in the 1970's, the number of families headed by working women
is rising.

24
Women in the labor force by marital status, 1950-74

The number of married women in the labor force has more than doubled since 1950.



Labor force participation rates of women by marital status and age, March 1974

As a group, divorced women are more likely to be in the labor force than women of any other marital status. Widows are the least likely to be workers, but thiṣ is largely attributable to age.


## Married, Husband Present

By presence and age of children
By number of children under age 5


Divorced, Separated, and Widowed


The presence of children, especially preschoolers, reduces the likelihood of labor force participation among married women in the typical childbearing ages. This is true for divorced and separated women as well.

Children under age 18 by type of family and labor force status of mother, 1970 and 1974

While the number of children under age 18 dropped between 1970 and 1974, the number whose mothers were in the labor force rose. As a result of the increase in divorce and separation among married couples with children, most of the increase in the number of children with working mothers took place among families headed by women.


All families
Total number of children
Children with mother in labor force

Husband-wife-families
Total number of children
Children with mother in labor force

Families with female head
Total number of children
Children with mother
Percent changes between 1970 and 1974
in labor force



Children under age 18 by type of family, age, and labor force status of
mother, March 1974

Most children of working mothers are old enough to be in school, but in 1974 about 6 million were below
regular school age,
requiring other
arrangements for care
in their working mothers'
absence.

Birth rates of women in husband-wife families by age and labor force status of mother, June 1974

Wives who are in the labor force bear fewer children, on average, than wives who are not; although working wives plan to have more children in the future, they would still have fewer children than nonworking wives.



## Summary indicators for families headed by women, selected periods, 1960-74

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## Income and Earnings

The great majority of working women have not yet attained parity with working men in earned income. Median usual weekly earnings of women on full-time jobs in 1974 were about 60 percent of those of men. For year-round full-time workers, women's median annual earnings were only 57 percent of men's, a ratio that ranged from 38 percent for sales workers to 64 percent for professional-technical workers. Through the years, employed women have consistently been clustered in lower paying occupations than men.

Despite their comparatively low earnings, women make a substantial contribution to their family's economic well-being, and the family with more than one earner has become a prominent feature of American life. In nearly half of all husband-wife families in 1973, both the husband and wife were
earners. Wives' earnings accounted for, on average, 26 percent of the total family income in that year, and as much as 38 percent for wives who worked year round, full time.

## Income of women by source, 1973

Of the aggregate income of women in 1973, more than 75 percent was from earnings, about 10 percent was from social security and similar benefits, and 3 percent was from welfare and public assistance payments.



Earnings of women as a


Median usual weekly earnings of fulltime wage and salary workers by sex, 1967-74

From 1967 to 1974, median weekly earnings of full-time women workers remained at about 60 percent of the earnings of men working full time. During this period, the earnings фf both men and women róse about 60 percent-but ónly about 10 percent after allowing for inflation.

Median usual weekly earnings of full-time women wage and salary workers by occupation, May 1974

The usual weekly earnings of full-time women workers in eight broad occupational groups ranged from about 40 to 70 percent of the earnings of men.


' Not shown because the male population base is under 75,000.
Note: The mining industry is not shown because the number of full-time women workers is too small (under 75,000 ) for a statistically reliable estimate.


## Median usual

 weekly earnings of fulltime women wage and salary workers by industry, May 1974Compared to men, women fared best in agriculture and public administration.

Median annual earnings of year-round full-time women workers by occupation, 1973

Annual earnings of women varied by occupation, but in no occupational group were they as much as twothirds of those of men employed in similar work.



Median annual earnings of full and parttime women workers by weeks worked, 1973

Women working at full-time jobs earned considerably less than men, even after allowing for differences in
the number of weeks worked. Women working part-time were closer to parity with male part-time workers. in production and nonsupervisory jobs by sex, 1963-73

The gross median earnings of female production and nonsupervisory workers who are family heads have lagged behind those of their male counterparts. After allowing for changes in Federal income and social security taxes and consumer prices, the 10-year increase in earnings was 21 percent for men and only 8 percent for women.


# Husband-wife families by earners in family during 1973 

 40- working wivesEarnings of women in husband-wife families as a percent of 1973 family income, by selected characteristics

In families with working wives, the wife's earnings account for about one-fourth of family income, on average. The proportion is higher in younger families and in families of minority races.


Nonfarm families
By age of family head

## 40 ——



By work experience of wife


[^0]


Median 1973 income of families with children by type of family and labor force status of mother, March 1974

Children of working mothers are typically in higher income families.

 income of women with income by years of school completed

Years of school completed as of March 1974
Women below
the poverty
level, 1973,
by selected
character-
istics

Black women are more than three times as likely as white women to be below the poverty level. The proportion of women in poverty also varies by occupation, marital status, and education.


## Education

Working women, on the average, had more formal schooling than working men in the 1950's, but since then, their level of education has not risen as rapidly as men's. In 1952, about 51 percent of the working women had completed high school, compared with 40 percent for men. By 1974 the gap had narrowed, with 72 percent of women workers having graduated from high school, compared with 67 percent for men.

Women who have more education are more likely
to be in the labor force, less likely to be unemployed, and more likely to be in the higher paying occupations than women with less
schooling.

Women in the labor force are more likely than men to have graduated from high school, but less likely to have completed 4 years of college. Nearly three-quarters of women workers have high school diplomas compared to only one-half in 1952.


$$
100
$$




> Labor force participation and unemployment rates of women by years of school completed, March 1974

Women with more education are more likely to be in the labor force and less likely to be unemployed.

Women in the labor force by age and years of school completed, March 1974

Young women workers have had more formal education than their older counterparts.



35 to 44


45 to 54


55 and over

Less than 4 years of high school

$\square$

## Clerical workers

Professional and technical

Managers and administrators, except farm

Sales workers
Operatives, except transport

Service workers, except private household
Private household workers

Other occupations


Note: "Other occupations" is the sum of those in which less than 5 percent of the women of that educational level are employed.

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Multiple jobholding by sex, May 1974

Women are less likely than men to hold two or more jobs; women's reasons for "moonlighting" are similar to men's.



Full-time wage and salary workers by sex and usual workweek, May 1974

Among full-time workers, women are far less likely than men to work more than 5 days a week.


A large majority of both women and men workers report to work between 6 and 9 in the morning and leave work between 4 and 6 in the afternoon.

Women


Men




Women are only about onethird as likely as men to work overtime. However, women working overtime are as likely as men to re-
ceive premium pay.

Women have been on their current job a considerably shorter time, on average, than men. The largest differences are in the prime working age groups.

Workers by length of time on current job


Median years on current job by age


Women
Workers by usual means of transportation
Men


Norkers who walk or use public transportation, by income level


A majority of women workers, like men, drive their cars to work, but women are almost twice as likely as men to use public transportation. One-third of the low-income women workers either walk to work or use public transportation.


Percent of women
16 years old and over in the labor force




Life expectancy and work-life expectancy by sex, selected years, 1900-1970

The work-life expectancy of American women has expanded enormously since the beginning of the century. Women's work life will undoubtedly continue to lengthen in the face of such changes as the decline in birth rates, the upturn in divorce and separation, and enforcement of legislation prohibiting sex discrimination.

[^1]
## Sources of Data

The source of data for all charts, except $10,11,54,55$, and 56 , is the Current Population Survey (CPS) conducted monthly for the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) by the Bureau of the Census of the U. S. Department of Commerce. The survey consists of approximately 47,000 households eligible for interview from which about 45,000 interviews are obtained each month. The sample is selected to represent the entire United States population 16 years of age and older. Survey responses on labor force and employment status are tabulated and published monthly by BLS in Employment and Earnings. In addition, supplemental questions relating to other social and economic characteristics of the work force or of particular subgroups are included in specific months' surveys. For example, supplemental questions on income, marital and family characteristics, work experience, and educational attainment are included in the March survey, and usual weekly earnings, multiple jobholding, and work schedules in the May survey.

Charts 10 and 11 are based on establishment records. These data are compiled each month by BLS from mail questionnaires, and cover only persons on government and business establishment payrolls. The 1970 decennial Census of Population is the source of data for charts 54 and 55. Data for chart 56 were developed in BLS and in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The data for each chart can be found in the publications cited below, along with information on survey methods, definitions of terms, reliability of estimates, and related matters.

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U. S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics Washington, D. C. 20212

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[^0]:    Age in March 1974

[^1]:    ' Not available. The Bureau of Labor Statistics is currently developing estimates for 1970.

