



Facts on Women Workers

WOMEN'S BUREAU
U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF LABOR

JULY 31, 1947

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EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN JUNE 1947

Women in the labor force increased in number by over 1 million between May and June, and the total reached almost 18,150,000. Thus, the woman labor force was almost 900,000 above June of last year and was at the highest level reached since the end of 1945.

	June 1947			
	Number of women	Change since May 1947	Total persons Number	Percent women
Population (14 years and over)	54,506,000	+ 46,000	107,407,000	50.7
Civilian labor force	18,149,000	+ 1,029,000	62,609,000	29.0
Employed	17,302,000	+ 722,000	60,055,000	28.8
Unemployed	848,000	+ 308,000	2,555,000	33.2
Armed forces	19,000	- 1,000	1,398,000	1.4
Nonworkers	36,337,000	- 983,000	43,399,000	83.7

(U. S. Bureau of the Census)

STATE LEGISLATION--Recent Enactments

Hours legislation--Ohio amended its law to permit a 9-hour day without increase of the established 6-day maximum workweek of 45 hours for manufacturing and 48 hours for nonmanufacturing. It continues to exempt certain executive and professional personnel and agricultural and domestic service. ...Pennsylvania amended its law to extend the workweek from 44 to 48 hours and from 5 1/2 to 6 days, and to permit a 10-hour day, for most of the establishments under its hour law; exempted executive and professional personnel earning at least \$35 weekly; permitted round-the-clock employment in manufacturing if official work regulations are met. ...Texas exempted from its hour law employees on first processing, canning, or packing of perishable or seasonal fresh fruits or vegetables.

Equal Pay--New Hampshire and Pennsylvania adopted equal pay acts, applicable to most private employment, but containing limiting language as in the recently amended Massachusetts Act. The latter Act narrows application of the State equal pay law by permitting variations in pay based on differences in "experience, training, skill or ability," or in duties performed "whether regularly or occasionally or in availability for other operations or any other reasonable differentiation except difference in sex."

FEDERAL LEGISLATION

A new equal pay bill, S. 1556, was introduced by Senators Pepper and Morse on July 2, and was referred to the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. No hearings have been scheduled. This bill prohibits employers from paying lower wage rates to women than to men for 1) work of comparable character on jobs requiring comparable skills, or, 2) comparable quality and quantity of work on the same or similar operations.

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MINIMUM WAGE

California has revised its 10 industry wage orders. Each of them sets an hourly minimum of 65 cents and contains provisions relating to working conditions, safety, sanitation, etc. The June Fact Sheet reported that court procedure might delay effectiveness of these orders, but the Division of Industrial Welfare reports that the orders are now in force. ...Minnesota's order for the "retail merchandising business," effective June 30, 1947, sets \$22.50 as the minimum that may be paid to women working 36 to 48 hours a week in retail trades in the six cities over 20,000. Part-time as well as overtime rate for these cities is 55 cents an hour. Rates as low as \$20 weekly apply in smaller places.

Women's Bureau Conference on Minimum Wage -- On June 26-27 the Women's Bureau held its 13th Annual Conference for State minimum wage administrators. Nineteen States and two Territories, including 8 States from West of the Mississippi, were represented, showing the most diversified representation in many years. The conference was a technical one that dealt principally with special problems of administration of minimum wage laws and wage orders. State representatives reported on activity in their States during the past year. They indicated a lively interest in the current situation and a determination to improve the standards and administration of minimum wage in their own States. Topics receiving special attention included wage board procedures and problems of operation, factual information needed for wage board use (cost of living and wage data), new legislation, and the prospect ahead for minimum wage activity.

CONFERENCE OF INDUSTRIAL WOMEN WORKERS, BUFFALO, N. Y.

On July 12-13 the Buffalo YWCA sponsored for industrial women workers in that area a conference with the theme, "The Industrial Woman as a Worker and Citizen in Today's World." Group discussions were led by staff members of the Women's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor; New York State Department of Labor; Cornell Industrial Relations School; and Women's Auxiliaries, CIO. Labor security and State and Federal labor legislation were principal subjects of discussion. The group voted to hold semiannual conferences to study the privileges and responsibilities of working women.

RESOLUTION ON WOMEN'S WORK ADOPTED BY INTERNATIONAL LABOR CONFERENCE

At the International Labor Conference held in Geneva, June 19-July 11, 1947, a Resolution on Women's Work was adopted unanimously, after being hotly debated in committee sessions. The first part of the Resolution calls attention to, and quotes from, the previous Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labor Conferences regarding principles and procedures advocated relating to educational opportunities, employment opportunities, the recognition of the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value, conditions of work, and safeguards for motherhood and the health, safety, and welfare of women workers. The second part recommends that future Regional Conferences, like those held in the past, should consider action to further these principles and procedures; and, finally, it recommends that the ILO undertake the study of the problems of the employment of mothers of families, industrial home work, the status of domestic workers, and the steps to be taken to protect women workers, bearing in mind their role as mothers and homemakers.