



# Facts on Women Workers

WOMEN'S BUREAU  
U.S. DEPARTMENT  
OF LABOR

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## EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN JANUARY 1948

A seasonal decline occurred in women's employment from December 1947 to January 1948, as shown by Census figures, due to the drop in employment in various nonagricultural industries following the end of the holiday season.

	Number of women	Change since December 1947	January 1948	
			Number	Percent women
Population (14 years and over)	54,844,000	+ 39,000	107,979,000	50.8
Civilian labor force	16,368,000	- 330,000	59,214,000	27.6
Employed	15,876,000	- 418,000	57,149,000	27.8
Unemployed	491,000	+ 87,000	2,065,000	23.8
Armed forces	16,000	No change	1,241,000	1.3
Nonworkers	38,461,000	+ 370,000	47,524,000	80.9

(U. S. Bureau of the Census)

## TRENDS IN EMPLOYMENT

South Carolina - Women in Factories. The average number of women employed in manufacturing in South Carolina for the year ended June 30, 1947, was somewhat greater than in the preceding fiscal year, but the percent women constituted of all workers declined. Textile industries accounted for somewhat less than half of all women salaried employees but for three-fourths of all women wage earners. Annual per capita wage payments to women in all manufacturing increased more than a fifth.

Women in Life Insurance Business. According to the Life Insurance Fact Book, there were 95,900 women (mostly cashiers and clerks) employed in the life insurance business, an increase of 9 percent from January 1946 to January 1947, the increase being chiefly in the home offices. The number of women managers and agents rose in 1947 to 3,300 in ordinary agencies, but it declined to 2,000 in industrial agencies.

## MINIMUM WAGE

The District of Columbia order for beauty culture occupations, effective March 27, 1948, sets a minimum wage of \$30.60 for operators and other employees (except maids and cleaners) for a 34-44-hour week. For less than 34, or more than 44 hours a week, 95 cents an hour must be paid, unless the absence is voluntary. No learner differential appears in the 1948 order.

For maids and cleaners the order requires payment of \$24.50 for 34-44 hours, and not less than 75 cents for hours under or in excess of these.

## COST OF LIVING, San Francisco

The latest Heller Committee cost of living budget for the minimum-adequate needs of a single working woman, based on prices obtained in San Francisco, Calif., in September 1947, is \$1,736 for commodities and services; \$2,165 for the total budget, including taxes and savings.

## AGE OF WOMEN WORKERS

The postwar decline in the extent to which women aged 20-34 years are in the labor force and the continuing high rates of labor force participation among women 35 years and over have been pointed out by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. (See Fact Sheet for September 30, 1947.) These trends, along with the aging of the population of working age, have resulted in increased proportions of women workers in the older age groups.

Census figures for October 1947 on the age of women workers show that about half of all women in the labor force were 35 years or more. Before the war about 2 out of every 5 women workers were at least 35 years old.

	<u>Numbers of women in Oct. 1947 (in thousands)</u>	<u>Percent distribution of women</u>	<u>Percent of all women of speci- fied age group</u>
Women in the labor force 14 years and over	<u>17,449</u>	<u>100.0</u>	<u>31.9</u>
14 - 19 years	2,074	11.9	31.9
20 - 34 years	6,757	38.7	37.9
35 - 44 years	3,866	22.2	38.0
45 - 64 years	4,277	24.5	29.1
65 years and over	475	2.7	8.6

## WOMEN IN UNIONS

Equal Pay. In San Francisco four union agreements, which became effective in 1947, between Hotel and Restaurant Employees, AFL, and employers' associations, representing hotels, restaurants, and clubs, contain the provision: "The wage scales hereinafter set forth shall apply equally to male and female employees."

Women Delegates to Conventions. The 1946 Convention of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, AFL, was attended by 23 women, 17 of them listed as "B" members (i.e., other than journeymen electricians). Relatively few men were "B" members.

The 1947 Convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, AFL, was attended by 99 women.

Textile Wages Raised. The Textile Workers Union of America (CIO) has obtained a 10-percent wage increase, a sixth paid holiday, and improved insurance for many in its membership, as nearly all northern cotton and rayon weaving mills have agreed to TWUA's Fall River-New Bedford contract terms raising the minimum wage in the mills to 97 cents an hour.

## TESTIMONY ON AMENDMENT TO THE IMMIGRATION ACT OF 1924

H. R. 5137, introduced in the 80th Congress, by Mr. Lesinski, of Michigan, would amend the Immigration Law to permit alien husbands of women citizens of the United States to enter as non-quota immigrants without regard to the date of the marriage. The present law does not permit an alien husband to enter the United States on a non-quota basis unless the marriage occurred before July 1, 1932. Alien wives of citizen men may come in non-quota regardless of the marriage date.

Miss Frieda S. Miller, Director, Women's Bureau, testified in support of the proposed change at the hearing on February 4 before the House Subcommittee on the Judiciary. She pointed out that "the effect of the law as it stands is to put a heavy economic responsibility upon substantial numbers of citizens' wives affected by it, particularly those with small children. The unwarranted separation of the family from the husband and father, whom the law of the land regards as the main supporter and protector of his wife and children, produces great hardships not alone of an economic kind, but in denying the family group the comfort and companionship implicit in our concept of home life and the marriage relation."

"Because of the human hardships involved," Miss Miller concluded, "and the prospect of a continuation of the practice of international marriages, the Women's Bureau strongly supports the proposal to make the same condition of entry applicable to both alien husbands and alien wives who seek to join their citizen spouses here."

### POPULATION OF VOTING AGE

The number of persons eligible to vote in the United States in this year's presidential election will exceed the number eligible to vote in 1940 by about 10,000,000, according to a provisional estimate prepared by the Census Bureau.

The number of males and females 21 years and over as of Nov. 1, 1948, follows:

Male	46,181,000
Female	<u>47,760,000</u>
Total	93,941,000

To this total should be added approximately 200,000 between 18 and 21 years of age in Georgia where 18's and over are permitted to vote.

To be deducted from the estimated total are the number of aliens in the United States not eligible to vote and persons in the District of Columbia 21 and over, - estimates for which are not at present available.

In 1940, those aged 21 and over were made up as follows:

Male	42,004,816
Female	<u>41,991,813</u>
Total	83,996,629

UN COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Statement by Dorothy Kenyon, U. S. Representative to the Commission on the Status of Women, at the meeting of the Commission on January 8, 1948:

"In each of the meetings of the First United Nations Assembly nine women participated as delegates or alternates. The countries appointing women on their delegations have varied somewhat, and the individual women so appointed have also varied. In the Second Assembly, which met this September, there were four women delegates and nine women alternates. The New Zealand delegation included two additional women, but no distinction was made in their list between alternates or advisors. A number of women have accompanied delegates as advisors and assistants, but since the total number of delegates and alternates at each of these meetings has exceeded 200, the disproportion of women in the positions of major responsibility is apparent. The United States has always had one or more women as Assembly delegates."

After quoting from an article in the Women Lawyer's Journal (Fall issue, 1947) on the number of women in Federal and State Government offices in the United States, she continued:

"Leaders in women's and civic organizations have expressed concern over this scarcity of women delegates. Similar concern has been expressed in the United States because so few women are in the 80th Congress — a total of 7, actually fewer than in the 79th. The U.S. record is more encouraging if State legislatures are examined: 211 women are now serving in the 48 States, 7 of these in various State Senates. Women are frequently found on local school boards and in other local activities. It is not argued that women should be placed in office simply because they are women. It is argued rather that the disproportion remains unduly great; that many qualified women are known, and their failure to win recognition, or the failure of political leaders to recognize them as suitable for public office, does not accord with democratic expectations. It is argued further that the interest of women in public questions will be stimulated if it is evident competent persons will be sought for public office regardless of sex."

- A N N O U N C E M E N T -

The Women's Bureau will publish a report on its recent conference, "The American Woman, Her Changing Role - Worker, Homemaker, Citizen," which was held February 17-19. Full text or summaries of the speeches and summaries of comments from the discussion periods will be included.

It is expected that the pamphlet will be ready sometime in the Spring. Requests for it should be sent to the Women's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C.