

FACTS

on Women Workers

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EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN SEPTEMBER 1950

The number of women in the civilian labor force increased by over 1/3 million from September 1949 to September 1950, according to the U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. The net increase is attributed to over 4/5 million additional women workers in the nonagricultural industries. The increase in non-farm employment was general—including both sexes and all ages—but the greatest relative gains apparently took place among women 35 and over. There were fewer women in agriculture than last year. Unemployment among women dropped by more than 1/4 million over the year. The number of women in the armed forces was 5,000 greater in September 1950 than in September 1949.

Seasonal slow-downs between August and September 1950 caused a decline in women's employment of about 1/4 million. Teen-age girls returned to school and agricultural activities slackened. Reductions also took place in trade and service activities, which ordinarily hire large numbers of summer workers.

	September 1950			
	Number of women	Percent women of all persons	Change since August 1950	Change since September 1949
Population (14 years and over)	56,557,000	50.9	+ 60,000	+ 681,000
Civilian labor force	18,841,000	29.6	- 208,000	+ 397,000
Employed	17,982,000	29.4	- 231,000	+ 656,000
In agriculture	1,444,000	18.5	- 17,000	- 149,000
In nonagricultural industries	16,538,000	31.0	- 214,000	+ 805,000
Unemployed	859,000	36.7	+ 23,000	- 259,000
Armed forces	24,000	1.7	+ 1,000	+ 5,000
Nonworkers	37,692,000	81.9	+ 268,000	+ 280,000

(U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census)

MINIMUM WAGE

Kentucky's recent revision of its 1943 minimum-wage order for hotels and restaurants reduces the number of zones in the State from 4 to 3 and sets minimum rates for zones 1, 2, and 3 respectively, at 60 cents, 58 cents, and 56 cents for non-service employees, and 45 cents, 43 cents, and 41 cents for service employees.

It also requires premium pay after 48 hours throughout the State. This directory order was to become effective October 1, 1950, but enforcement has been temporarily restrained by court order.

EQUAL PAY

The 81st Congress, before its recess on September 23, 1950, failed to act on equal-pay legislation. The Senate equal-pay bill (S. 706) came up on the consent calendar twice and was twice passed over, resulting in no action. In the House, H.R. 1584 and H.R. 2438 were reported favorably by a subcommittee, but the full Committee on Labor and Education did not act. Copies of reports of both Senate and House Committees are available.

HOUSEHOLD EMPLOYEES NOW OVER THE SOCIAL SECURITY HURDLE

January 1, 1951, will be a big day for household employees. Work they do in a private home may, from then on, count toward monthly insurance payments for them and their families in old age, and for their families when they die. To qualify for social security coverage, a worker must meet two tests: he must make \$50 or more in cash wages from one household in a quarter (13 week period), and he must work either full or part time on 24 or more days for this household employer during that quarter or the quarter just before it. If the worker meets these tests for more than one employer he will get credit for work with his other employers also.

Provisions for extending social security to household employees were included in a bill amending the Social Security Act, which President Truman signed in August. Until 1954 the household employee's tax will be $1\frac{1}{2}$ cents on each dollar of his cash wages. The worker's employer deducts this from the wages and adds an equal amount as his own payment.

SALARIES OF OFFICE WORKERS, NEW YORK CITY

Women general stenographers employed in New York City offices averaged \$47 a week in February 1950, according to a study made recently by the U. S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. Of 24 occupational groups studied, general stenographers was the largest. Clerk-typists and clerks doing routine filing work, the second and third largest job groups for women, averaged \$40 and \$35.50, respectively. In 4 women's jobs—hand bookkeepers, technical stenographers, class A bookkeeping-machine operators, and payroll clerks—average weekly salaries were above \$50.00; hand bookkeepers had the highest average (\$65.50).

"Salary levels were about the same for men and women employed in routine office jobs;" says the BLS report, "but men's pay generally averaged higher than women's when pay comparisons were made in jobs involving a substantial period of training and thorough knowledge of office procedures or of employer policy. Men payroll clerks and accounting clerks, for example, averaged \$10 more a week than did women in these jobs."

Office workers in wholesale trade, in the transportation, communication, and other public utilities group, and in central and administrative offices of firms with operations in many areas, generally had higher earnings than workers in other industries studied. A 35-hour, 5-day week was the most common work schedule in all industry divisions, except retail trade, in which a 40-hour week was usual.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATES

Slightly over 79 percent of the recent graduates of Hunter College (women in the classes of June 1946 through June 1948) were gainfully employed in 1949, according to a survey reported this year. Almost 11 percent were full-time graduate students. About 8 percent were housewives not otherwise employed, and roughly 2 percent were unemployed. In addition to the full-time graduate students, 15 percent of all the recent alumnae were taking graduate work on a part-time basis while gainfully employed. The employment status of recent graduates as shown in this report did not differ appreciably from that reported in 1947 when a similar survey was made of the classes of January 1940 through June 1946.

In the 1949 survey, teaching held first place among occupations reported for those gainfully employed. Next most frequently reported occupations were secretary-stenographer, social worker, laboratory technician or research assistant, clerk, dietitian or food manager, accountant-bookkeeper, librarian, journalist, personnel worker, statistician or social research worker, or advertising-publicity worker. Median monthly salary reported in 1949 for the classes of June 1946-1948 was \$206.

WOMEN BENEFICIARIES OF SOCIAL SECURITY

During 1949 the number of retired women workers who began receiving old-age benefits under the Social Security system was 48,193. Average monthly amount paid them was \$22.27. Comparable number of male beneficiaries was 289,080; their average monthly payment was \$29.41. Beginning in September 1950, however, benefit payments to all retired workers were increased as provided by the 1950 amendments to the Social Security law.

WOMEN HEADS OF HOUSING AUTHORITIES

Forty-two women are heads of local housing authorities in the United States, according to the National Association of Housing Officials. Chicago, second largest city in the country, has a woman executive head of its housing authority—Miss Elizabeth Wood. Women also administer housing authorities in San Antonio, Texas; Ponce, P.R.; Duluth, Minn.; Pawtucket, R.I.; Hamilton, Ohio, LaCrosse, Wis.; Raleigh, N.C.; and White Plains and Rome, N.Y. California has more women directors of local housing authorities than any other State—seven. Texas runs a close second with six.

WOMEN AND LIFE INSURANCE

Women bought more life insurance in 1949 than any previous year, according to the Institute of Life Insurance. They almost doubled their 1940 purchases. At the end of 1949 nearly \$39 billion of life insurance was in force on the lives of women, about one-fifth of the total life insurance in the U. S. About 60 percent of the ordinary insurance bought on women's lives was on working women and about one-third on housewives.

THE CALL TO COLORS

First employee of the large Monsanto Chemical Company to be called to active duty as a direct result of the action in Korea was a woman, according to Monsanto Magazine. A former secretary in the St. Louis office—surrounded by reserve colonels, majors and captains, all male—she is now Pfc. Claire Messimore, U. S. Marine Corps.

UNITED NATIONS REPORTS ON WOMEN'S POLITICAL RIGHTS

Currently 56 countries permit women to vote in all elections on an equal basis with men; 3 countries admit women to all elections, but under different and generally higher qualifications than those applied to men; 5 countries allow women to vote only in local elections; and 16 countries deny women any political rights (3 of these have no electoral rights for men, either). These are findings of a report submitted by the Secretary General to the UN General Assembly at its current meeting in New York City. The report, requested by ECOSOC, covers women's status as of September 1, 1950, under political laws in 80 countries throughout the world.

Progress in women's political status is shown by the fact that 21 countries have extended full or limited political rights to women since the Charter of the United Nations was signed in 1945. This advance has undoubtedly been stimulated by international cooperation, growing out of the systematic reports of conditions among the countries, and by the interchange of information on methods used and results observed in countries where women have already achieved full political status.

NEGRO WOMAN NAMED TO UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Mrs. Edith Sampson, outstanding Negro attorney, has been named by President Truman as an alternate delegate to the UN General Assembly. Mrs. Sampson has been engaged in the private practice of law in Chicago for the past several years. Previously she had served as Probation Officer and Referee of the Juvenile Court of Cook County. She holds law degrees from John Marshall Law School and Loyola University, being the first woman to receive a Master of Laws degree from Loyola. Long active in civic affairs in this country, she traveled last year with the world-touring American Town Hall forum, as chairman of the panel that toured the Far East, visiting India, Pakistan, and other countries.

WOMEN'S CONFERENCE HELD IN GERMANY

"The Individual Responsibility of Women in Meeting the Critical Issues of Today" was the theme of a Women's Conference held in Bad Reichenhall, Bavaria, September 25-30. The Conference was called by the Women's Affairs Branch of HICOG (Office of the High Commissioner for Germany) in cooperation with Women's Affairs Offices of the French and British Zones and a Consultative Committee of German women. Over 100 delegates from 15 different countries attended. Through the lectures and discussions the delegates found new directives for their work and their organizations and many of them established contact with women of other countries from whom they had been shut off for almost 20 years. The delegates came from a wide assortment of professions and represented women's organizations, labor unions, student associations, Catholic and Evangelical associations, press and radio, Red Cross, and Bar associations. Miss Mary Cannon, Chief of the International Division of Women's Bureau, was one of the 4 U.S. representatives at the Conference.

WOMEN MAYORS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Women are occupying high municipal office in several South African cities. The mayor of Durban, one of the principal ports in South Africa, with a population of 370,000, is a woman, and the deputy-mayor is a woman too. Roodepoort, population 74,000; Salisbury, population 84,000; Potchefstroom, with 27,000 population; Pretoria, 242,000; and Springs, 106,000—have women mayors also.

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