

# FACTS

# on Women Workers

U. S. Department of Labor  
Maurice J. Tobin, *Secretary*

Women's Bureau  
Frieda S. Miller, *Director*

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

LIBRARY  
A. & M. COLLEGE OF TEXAS

January 31, 1951

## EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN DECEMBER 1950

Nearly a million more women were employed in December 1950 than in December 1949, according to the Bureau of the Census, the gain being entirely in the nonagricultural industries. The number of unemployed women declined by over a quarter of a million. The number of women nonworkers dropped very slightly.

Changes from November to December 1950 were largely seasonal in nature. Agricultural work slackens at this time, and farm women often leave the labor force for the time being. At the same time the Christmas expansion in trade adds to the number of women in nonagricultural employment and often gives work to women previously unemployed

	December 1950			
	Number of women	Percent of all persons	Change since November 1950	Change since December 1949
Population (14 years and over)	56,729,000	51.0	+ 53,000	+ 681,000
Civilian labor force	19,003,000	30.4	- 490,000	+ 723,000
Employed	18,232,000	30.2	- 329,000	+ 969,000
In agriculture	743,000	11.9	- 652,000	- 106,000
In nonagricultural industries	17,490,000	32.3	+ 323,000	+1,076,000
Unemployed	770,000	34.5	- 161,000	- 274,000
Armed forces	27,000	1.3	+ 1,000	+ 6,000
Nonworkers	37,700,000	80.8	+ 542,000	- 47,000

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

## MINIMUM WAGE

Puerto Rico recently promulgated two minimum-wage orders--one for the pineapple industry, effective September 1, 1950, and the other for the coffee industry, approved October 23, 1950, effective on publication in two newspapers. The pineapple industry order covers all processes from the growing to the canning and transportation of this fruit. Minimum-wage rates for agricultural occupations are established by zone and occupation; minimums range from \$1.70 to \$4 a day. The minimum for industrial occupations is 30 cents an hour. The coffee industry order sets a minimum of 50 cents an almud (8/10 of a liter) for pickers and \$1.44 a day for all other workers. Increase or decrease in minimum-wage rates may vary under terms of the order according to the price of coffee.



## DEFENSE INDUSTRIES MUST LOOK TO OLDER WOMEN WORKERS

Discussing the Nation's manpower potential before a subcommittee of the Senate Armed Services Committee, the Secretary of Labor, Maurice J. Tobin, said recently, "In sharp contrast to the situation with respect to males, most of the women of working age are not now in the labor force. Consequently, the adult woman group must supply the greatest relative addition to the labor force. We know that most of those under 35 years of age are the mothers of young children, with home responsibilities which greatly limit the extent to which they can seek employment. Therefore, it is to the housewives over 35 that we must turn for the bulk of our additional women workers."

After estimating the potential total labor force, the Secretary stated, "Under greater pressure and with careful planning we might stretch this total by a few more million. For example, large-scale provision for child-care centers and other community facilities could release many thousands of additional women for employment. The systematic placement of defense contracts and location of plant facilities in areas where potential labor is available would also serve to expand this total. However, beyond a certain limit, any further increase in gross numbers, drawn from such groups as the mothers with very young children or from the 14-17 year old age group, would yield little in terms of over-all productivity and would be possible only at a heavy social cost chargeable to the future."

## DAY CARE FOR CHILDREN OF WORKING MOTHERS

A conference on planning for day care and extended school services in areas affected by defense mobilization was held recently at the Federal Security Agency. The meeting substantially reindorsed the policy set forth in 1942 by the War Manpower Commission on employment in industry of women with young children, which stated that special efforts to secure employment in industry of such women should be deferred until full use has been made of all other sources of labor supply. However, the policy statement continued, barriers against employment of women with young children should not be set up. "The decision as to gainful employment should in all cases be an individual decision made by the woman herself in the light of the particular conditions prevailing in her home." If recruitment of women with young children is necessary, the statement said, it is essential that such women be employed at hours and on shifts causing the least disruption in their family life and that adequate community facilities be provided for day care of their children during working hours.

The day care committee of the Child Welfare League of America, meeting in New York recently, recommended that State and Federal funds be allocated immediately to help establish new programs for day care facilities for children of working mothers. A pressing need is already developing in certain areas as a result of the present emergency, the League pointed out.

During the last war, Federal funds for child-care centers were made available under provisions of the Lanham Act; direct grants were made to local communities after certification by the U. S. Office of Education and the Children's Bureau with respect to war necessity and program standards. The peak utilization of this program was reached in July 1944, when 3,102 units were in operation with an enrollment of 129,357 children. Federal funds were withdrawn in March 1946. During the entire period of the Lanham Act program (August 1942-March 1946), a total of \$51,922,977 of Federal funds was allocated to these projects, supplemented by local contributions. Federal funds amounted to 66 percent of the total spent.



## EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF WOMEN BY AGE GROUP

Close to half of all women from 18 to 24 years of age are in the labor force, according to figures for December 1950 from the U. S. Bureau of the Census. Only slightly over a third of women in the next age group--25 to 34--are workers, but nearly 40 percent of women from 35 to 54 are in the labor force.

Age	Woman population 14 years and over	Women in labor force		Employed	Unemployed	Women not in labor force
		Total Number	Percent of woman population			
Total	56,702,000	19,003,000	33.5	18,233,000	770,000	37,700,000
14-15	2,128,000	253,000	11.9	240,000	13,000	1,875,000
16-17	2,037,000	661,000	32.4	591,000	70,000	1,376,000
18-19	2,120,000	1,052,000	49.6	982,000	70,000	1,068,000
20-24	5,770,000	2,805,000	48.6	2,685,000	120,000	2,966,000
25-34	12,097,000	4,149,000	34.3	3,991,000	158,000	7,950,000
35-44	10,726,000	4,230,000	39.4	4,089,000	141,000	6,496,000
45-54	8,837,000	3,418,000	38.7	3,294,000	124,000	5,419,000
55-64	6,878,000	1,837,000	26.7	1,782,000	55,000	5,041,000
65 and over	6,109,000	599,000	9.8	580,000	19,000	5,510,000

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

## WOMEN IN UNIONS

United States -- The 1950 Convention of the Congress of Industrial Organizations, held in November in Chicago, was attended by 557 delegates, of whom 25 were women. Six of the women represented national and international unions; 6 were from State, city, county, or district Industrial Union Councils; while the remaining 13 represented local industrial unions.

In Houston, Texas, in September, the 1950 Convention of the American Federation of Labor was attended by at least 13 women. The list of delegates, 573 in all, listed some persons by initials only, so that other women delegates may have been present who were not identifiable from the official list. Seven women represented national and international unions; four came from city central bodies, and one was a delegate for a State branch. Miss Florence Hancock, chief woman officer of the Transport and General Workers Union in England, was one of the two fraternal delegates from the British Trades Union Congress. Miss Hancock is the second British woman sent to the United States as a fraternal delegate in the 56 years of fraternal relations between the AFL and the BTUC.

Great Britain -- Of 913 delegates attending the 1950 Trades Union Congress in Great Britain, 36 were women. The report of the Congress showed that altogether there were 1,217,083 women members of unions affiliated with the Trades Union Congress. They were 15.4 percent of all members.

Since the Trades Union Congress was founded in 1868, two women have served as President, Anne Loughlin in 1943 and Florence Hancock in 1948. Margaret Bondfield served as chairman of the parliamentary committee and general council in 1923; Anne Loughlin held the same position in 1942 and Florence Hancock in 1947.



## WOMEN IN POLITICS

According to a release issued by the Republican National Committee, a total of 235 women are serving in 1951 State Legislatures. The political line-up is: Republicans, 152; Democrats, 80; without party designation, 2; Citizens Party, 1. The 1951 total is the all-time high, exceeding by 1 the previous high in 1946. The 1951 total is 21 more than that listed in the 1949-50 Legislatures. Twenty-three of the women are serving in State Senates, 212 in State Assemblies. Only 8 States do not have women legislators; they are Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kansas, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Virginia, according to the Committee.

## WOMEN IN THE ARMED SERVICES

Assistant Secretary of Defense Anna M. Rosenberg has asked Congress to lift the statutory limitation on number of women in the armed services. At present, a ceiling is set of 2 percent of total strength. In making the request, Mrs. Rosenberg said, "We definitely do not anticipate now any draft induction of women, but I am quite sure we can use twice as many as we have authorized."

## WOMEN IN AVIATION

A new altitude record for light planes was set on January 5 by a 28-year old woman, Miss Caro Bayley, who flew her Piper Super Cub 30,380 feet above Miami, Florida. The temperature at this height was 34 degrees below zero. Miss Bayley's feat passes the previous altitude record (also set by a woman) by 6,000 feet.

## MORE BOYS THAN GIRLS GO TO SCHOOL, SAYS U.N.

In most countries of the world, according to a report made to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, fewer girls than boys attend school. In some countries three or four times as many boys as girls are in school, though in general the differential is not this great. In only a few countries are there more girls than boys in school, and in these cases the difference is insignificant. Proportion of boys to girls in school in the United States was given as 70 to 66; in France, 62 to 53; Canada, 82 to 85; India, 27 to 10; Iraq, 33 to 8. Some factors accounting for the differences were suggested: the emphasis often made on education for boys to increase their future earning power, the fact that girls often drop out of school to help or replace their mothers at home or to marry.

### THE OUTLOOK FOR WOMEN IN SOCIAL CASE WORK IN A PSYCHIATRIC SETTING.

U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Bulletin 235-2. 1950.

### WOMEN'S BUREAU 1950 HANDBOOK OF FACTS ON WOMEN WORKERS.

U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Bulletin 237. 1950.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE AMONG THE NATIONS. U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau. 4 pp. Mimeo. September 1950.

"Child Care Facilities for Women Workers," in INTERNATIONAL LABOUR REVIEW, November 1950.

"State Budgets for Single Women Workers," in MONTHLY LABOR REVIEW, December 1950.

(The printing of this publication has been approved by the Director of the Bureau of the Budget, March 9, 1950)

H  
A  
V  
E  
Y  
O  
U  
R  
E  
A  
D