

FACTS

on Women Workers

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

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

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

March 31, 1951

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN FEBRUARY 1951

The number of women in the labor force increased by over half a million from February 1950 to February 1951, according to the Bureau of the Census. The change was the net result of an increase of 1 million employed women and a decrease of nearly half a million in the number unemployed. Practically all of the increase was among women in nonagricultural employment.

From January to February 1951 there was little change in the number of women in any group. Unemployment among women fell although there is usually a seasonal increase at this time of year.

	February 1951			
	Number of women	Percent women of all persons	Change since January 1951	Change since February 1950
Civilian population (14 years and over)	56,793,000	52.1	+ 42,000	+ 665,000
Civilian labor force	18,419,000	30.0	- 2,000	+ 551,000
Employed	17,605,000	29.9	+ 28,000	+ 995,000
In agriculture	610,000	10.3	- 46,000	+ 32,000
In nonagricultural industries	16,996,000	32.1	+ 75,000	+ 964,000
Unemployed	813,000	33.8	- 31,000	- 445,000
Nonworkers	38,374,000	80.6	+ 43,000	+ 114,000

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

COST OF LIVING

The New York State Department of Labor reported last month that according to the fourteenth survey of living costs made by its Division of Research and Statistics a working woman living with her family in New York State in September 1950 needed \$41.46 a week (\$2,155.92 annually) to support herself adequately, pay income tax and save for emergencies and old age. Of this amount, \$12.18 was for housing, food at home and other household expenses; \$3.20 for lunches; \$6.53 for clothing; \$0.47 for clothing upkeep; \$1.04 for personal care; \$1.74 for medical care; \$3.16 for leisure-time activities; \$2.81 for other living essentials (including transportation); \$1.35 for insurance; \$4.15 for savings; and \$4.83 for taxes. This represents an increase of almost 6 percent over the amount which was found to be needed in January 1950.

LIBRARY
A. & M. COLLEGE OF TEXAS

MINIMUM WAGE

Colorado has revised its four prewar minimum-wage orders, effective as follows: laundry (Feb. 11); retail trade (Feb. 18); beauty service (Mar. 4); and public housekeeping (Mar. 10). All include provisions establishing working conditions standards as well as wage rates. The laundry order, like the former order, sets two zones, establishing minimums of 55 cents and 45 cents, respectively, for a workweek up to 44 hours, with time and one-half employee's regular hourly rate after 44 hours. The retail trade order divides the State into two zones, instead of three as in the former order. Minimums of 55 cents and 45 cents, respectively, are set for experienced workers for a 48-hour workweek. The order for beauty service occupations, like the superseded one, sets State-wide minimums. Senior operators must be paid 65 cents an hour and junior operators, 50 cents an hour for a basic workday of 8 hours or a basic workweek of 44 hours. Overtime after 44 hours must be paid at time and one-half the employee's regular rate. The public housekeeping order retains the former two zones. It sets a 55-cent hourly minimum for Zone A and a 45-cent minimum for Zone B for hours worked up to 8 a day or 48 a week.

All of these industries are covered by the Woman's 8-Hour Law, and an amendment to this law provides that only in emergencies or conditions demanding immediate action may the workday of women and minor employees exceed 8 hours, and then only if the employer has first secured an emergency relaxation permit from the Industrial Commission.

New Hampshire's revised minimum-wage order for restaurants, effective October 1, 1950, establishes a minimum hourly rate of 50 cents for non-service and 40 cents for service employees (former rates were 16 2/3 cents and 13 cents respectively). Employer may deduct 40 cents for each meal furnished but not exceeding \$4.80 a week, while the old order required employer to add 25 cents to the wage for each meal not furnished by him.

New York recently issued its first minimum-wage order for the amusement and recreation industry, effective April 22, 1951. It sets rates on both an occupational and community-size basis. Rates range from 75 cents an hour for cashiers, cleaners, porters and matrons in motion picture theaters in the larger communities to 9 cents per line for pin setters in sections other than New York City and Nassau and Westchester Counties.

2 MILLION ADDITIONAL WOMEN UNDER SOCIAL SECURITY

Over 2 million women are now, for the first time, eligible for old-age and survivors insurance, by extension of the coverage of the Social Security Act effective January 1, 1951. The Social Security Administration estimates that women are 45 percent of the total workers benefited; numbers of women affected in each type of employment are as follows: Domestic service, 750,000; employees of non-profit organizations, 420,000; Federal civilian employees, 62,000 (not covered by Civil Service or other governmental retirement plans); workers in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, 100,000; State and local government employees, 350,000; agricultural labor, 13,000; agricultural processing, 100,000; self-employed persons, 550,000; and workers employed outside of the United States, 15,000. In Puerto Rico coverage was contingent on legislative action which took the form of a concurrent resolution by the legislature to the Governor that it desired the extension of the Social Security Act to Puerto Rico.

WOMEN IN BUSINESS AND INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONS

Over 1 million women in the United States were working in their own businesses, professions, or trades, for profit or fees, in February 1951, according to data from the U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. In addition, 215,000 women were self-employed in agriculture—operating farms of their own. The entire group of self-employed women were less than 10 percent of all employed women.

Though self-employed women workers were significant in numbers, women were relatively less important in this type of employment than among certain other groups of workers. Women were about 1 out of every 3 wage or salary workers, for example, but only about 1 out of every 7 persons in self employment.

EARNINGS OF SOCIAL WORKERS, 1950

Salaries of the estimated 75,000 social workers in the country averaged \$2,960 annually, according to a survey conducted early in 1950 by the U. S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics in cooperation with other Government and private agencies. Case or group workers, who represent over 60 percent of all of the social workers in the country, earned an average of \$2,730 a year. The highest paid single group of social workers were teachers of social work, and lowest paid were social workers in institutions for the aged.

Women case or group workers, who make up about three-quarters of all persons doing case work, averaged \$2,660 a year contrasted with \$2,860 for men in similar jobs. Executives in social work averaged \$3,700 annually; men receiving an average of \$4,430 and women, \$3,180.

AVERAGE TEACHER WORKS 48-HOUR WEEK

Teachers spend an average of 47.9 hours each week in school service, according to a survey made recently by the National Education Association. They are required to spend 32.3 hours, on the average, "on duty," but additional hours are necessary for correcting papers, class preparation, making out records and sponsoring extra-curricular activities. The 48 hours a teacher averages in working time does not include time spent participating in non-school organizations such as parent-teacher associations and voluntary community services; the average teacher reported nearly 4 hours each week in this type of work.

Summer School Expenses May be Deductible from Income Tax — The U. S. Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Internal Revenue has announced a new rule which permits teachers to deduct summer-school costs as a necessary business expense for Federal income-tax purposes, if the summer-school expenses are incurred in order to maintain their positions. Expenses incurred for the purpose of obtaining a teaching position, qualifying for permanent status, a higher position, or advance in the salary schedule, are not deductible.

NEGRO WOMEN IN POLITICS

Two Negro women are serving in State legislatures this year. In West Virginia, a Negro school teacher won a seat in the State house of delegates, after almost 30 years of active participation in local and State politics. In Michigan, an Atlanta-born, 29-year old woman with no previous political experience was elected to the legislature.

WOMEN IN FORESTRY

When the Society of American Foresters met in Washington, D. C., recently to celebrate its 50th anniversary, the membership rolls showed 16 women among the 6,800 professional foresters. According to a summary published in American Forests, during 50 years of professional forestry, 28 women have received forestry degrees. While at the present time no school bars girls outright, many attempt to discourage girls from enrolling, pointing out various complications and disadvantages.

The first woman to receive a degree in forestry, so far as is known, was Mabel Beckley, who was graduated from Cornell University in 1915. She never worked in forestry, but married a classmate a year after graduation. The second woman forester was graduated in 1922 from the University of Washington, received a master's degree in 1924, and immediately married. Not until 1930 did a woman graduate in forestry actually work in her professional field; Margaret Stoughten, an Iowa State College graduate, took a Civil Service examination, passed and was hired by the U. S. Forest Service in its South East Experiment Station. She continued to work for 5 years. During the 1930's, 9 other women foresters were graduated, 7 of whom did forestry work of some type, usually desk jobs related to forestry. Of all the women who were ever graduated in forestry, over half have worked in the forestry field, averaging about 3 years of work each. Ten were in Government service, the other 5 in private industry.

LEISURE TIME OF THE AMERICAN HOUSEWIFE

Most housewives have only 1 or 2 hours of leisure time each day, according to a study made recently by Purdue University of 1,250 housewives in urban and rural communities in five Midwestern States. Rural housewives had larger families and less leisure time than the urban housewives in this study. The city housewives were found to have more "modern conveniences" than rural housewives, and for this reason also had greater amounts of leisure time. Almost all the housewives reported that they read or listen to the radio in their leisure time, and next to these activities club attendance ranked highest. About half of the urban and over 90 percent of the rural housewives spend part of their leisure time in home economics clubs. The League of Women Voters ranked high with urban housewives as a leisure-time activity.

WOMAN TRADE UNIONIST TO AID JAPANESE UNIONS

The first woman trade unionist from the United States to go to the Orient on an official labor mission left Washington early in March, to fly to Tokyo. Miss Gladys Dickason, a vice-president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, CIO, at General MacArthur's invitation will advise members of his staff on ways of encouraging activities of Japanese women in the trade union movement and promoting the growth of democracy there. While in Tokyo Miss Dickason will also serve as fraternal delegate from the CIO to the convention of the General Council of Trade Unions of Japan; she plans to deliver greetings to the convention in a brief speech in Japanese learned for the occasion.

Women in the Professions, by Marguerite W. Zapoleon. Reprinted from the JOURNAL OF SOCIAL ISSUES, Vol. 6, No. 3. 1950. (Available at the Women's Bureau.)
Statement of Frieda S. Miller, Director, Women's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, before the Subcommittee on Immigration of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary at Joint Hearings on S. 716 and H.R. 2379, the "Immigration and Nationality Act." March 20, 1951. 4 pp. Mimeo.

HAVE
YOU
READ

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