

FACTS

on Women Workers

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

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

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

July 31, 1951

EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN JUNE 1951

While the number of women of working age increased by about 2/3 million between June 1950 and June 1951, the number in the labor force was practically unchanged. The number of unemployed declined more than 1/3 million.

The change from May to June 1951 represented almost entirely a seasonal trend. More women entered agriculture, chiefly as unpaid family workers. An increase in unemployment usually follows the closing of schools.

	June 1951			
	Number of women	Percent women of all persons	Change since May 1951	Change since June 1950
Civilian population				
(14 years and over)	57,002,000	52.4	+ 53,000	+ 671,000
Civilian labor force	19,467,000	30.5	+173,000	+ 30,000
Employed	18,654,000	30.2	+ 19,000	+ 401,000
In agriculture	1,748,000	21.8	+270,000	- 285,000
In nonagricultural industries	16,906,000	31.4	-251,000	+ 686,000
Unemployed	813,000	41.1	+154,000	- 371,000
Nonworkers	37,535,000	83.3	-119,000	+ 641,000

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

EQUAL PAY CONVENTION ADOPTED BY ILO

The 34th Conference of the International Labor Organization, which met in Geneva beginning June 6, adopted an Equal Remuneration Convention concerning equal pay for men and women workers for work of equal value. Although the equal pay principle has been incorporated in the ILO constitution since its earliest days, the Organization considered for the first time last year drafting of international regulations for effecting equal pay. At that time a first draft of regulations was adopted for final consideration in 1951. During the meeting this June, after discussion of various forms of international regulations, the Conference voted 109 to 38 for the adoption of a Convention supplemented by a Recommendation. The Convention lays down general principles concerning equal remuneration and the Recommendation sets forth specific approaches to ensure that the principles are carried out. The Director of the Women's Bureau attended the Conference as adviser to the United States Government Delegates and served as Reporter for the Committee on Equal Remuneration.

331.4
U58f

July 1951

LIBRARY
R. & M. COLLEGE OF TEXAS

MINIMUM WAGE

Connecticut's recent amendment to its minimum-wage law established a statutory minimum rate of 75 cents an hour, broadened application of the law, simplified wage board administrative procedure, and extended court review to include power to remand orders to the Commissioner for modification and, if necessary, resubmission to a wage board. Wage orders in effect or issued before July 1, 1951, must be modified to provide a basic hourly minimum of 75 cents by October 1, 1951.

North Dakota's new public housekeeping order, effective August 13, 1951, establishes a weekly minimum of \$23.25 for waitresses and counter girls and \$22.15 for chambermaids and kitchen help who do not receive board. For workers in these same occupational groups who are furnished board as part payment of their wages, the sums actually paid may not be less than \$18.00 and \$16.65 a week, respectively; this amounts to an increase of more than 2/3 over the 1946 rates. North Dakota has also revised its mercantile order, effective August 17, 1951, setting a minimum weekly rate of \$23.25 for experienced workers and of \$19.25 for learners. Both new orders retain practically all the working conditions standards appearing in the orders of 1946. Maximum hours for women employed in these and several other industries in North Dakota are 8½ a day, 48 a week, except that in towns of under 500 population the daily maximum period may be 9 hours a day, the weekly maximum 54 hours.

75-CENT MINIMUM SENDS WOMEN'S WAGES UP

The effects of the 75-cent minimum wage set by amendment to the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act, effective January 25, 1950, have recently been studied in two industries by the U. S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. In one of these industries--men's seamless hosiery--women constitute about two-thirds of total plant employment in the three areas covered by the survey, Hickory--Statesville, N.C.; Reading, Pa.; and Winston-Salem--High Point, N.C. While in October 1949, significant proportions of all workers, men and women, in each area had averaged less than 75 cents an hour, by March 1950, the wage group under 75 cents was less than 3 percent in each area.

The increase in earnings from October 1949 to March 1950 was much greater for women than for men. The percentages of women receiving less than 75 cents an hour in October 1949 were 51, 38, and 18, respectively, in the three areas, compared with 16, 17, and 7 percent for men. In each area in March 1950 less than 3 percent of either men or women were below that level. Average hourly earnings of women workers increased in the three areas 9, 8, and 3 cents. Further wage increases occurred by the fall of 1950, reflecting at least in part the post-Korea wage movement. Whereas in the earlier period, October 1949 to March 1950, average earnings of men generally increased less than those of women, in the March-October 1950 period the increase in average earnings for men was greater than that for women.

WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT

The number of women employed in Federal executive agencies has increased in the past year, but is considerably below the 1946 level. The Civil Service Commission reported 532,500 women employed in executive agencies in all parts of the country on April 1, 1951. Women were 24 percent of all these Federal employees April 1, 1951, as compared to 22 percent July 1, 1950 and 28 percent in 1946. In the District of Columbia, women were 45 percent of Federal employees in April 1951, as compared to 44 percent July 1, 1950 and 49 percent in 1946.

Miss Lenroot Retires from Children's Bureau--Katharine F. Lenroot, chief of the Children's Bureau, Federal Security Agency, will retire on August 31 after 36 years of service with the Bureau, including 17 years as its director. Appointed to be her successor is Dr. Martha M. Eliot, for the past 2 years assistant director-general of the World Health Organization of the United Nations. Dr. Eliot had worked in the Children's Bureau for many years, and served as associate chief for some 15 years.

WOMEN IN CONGRESS

Two more women have joined the 82d Congress. Both widows of House of Representatives members who died recently, Mrs. John W. Kee of West Virginia, and Mrs. Frank Buchanan of Pennsylvania were elected in special elections on July 17 and July 24, respectively.

This brings the total number of women now in Congress to 11 (10 in the House and 1 in the Senate). It is the largest number of women ever to serve in Congress, though there were 10 in the 77th, 79th, and 81st Congresses.

WOMEN IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE

The number of women in the Foreign Service has increased nearly tenfold since just before the last war, according to the Department of State. More than 2,400 women are serving this country in 294 missions overseas. Serving as Chiefs of Missions are Mrs. Eugenie Anderson, Ambassador to Denmark, and Mrs. Perle Mesta, Minister to Luxemburg. The bulk (1,500) of these women are clerical and stenographic workers, but 21 are career Foreign Service Officers, 21 are Foreign Service Reserve Officers who are appointed for 2-year terms as specialists in various fields, and 810 are Foreign Service Staff Officers performing work as translators, interviewers, librarians, welfare and labor attachés, etc.

As reported in the May Fact Sheet, Frances E. Willis, Political Officer, Helsinki, was recently nominated to be Foreign Service Officer Class I, the first woman in history to reach the top of the career Foreign Service. In addition, two women are in Class III now, Constance R. Harvey, 1st Secretary-Consul at Athens, and Kathleen Molesworth, Consular Officer, London.

VIRGINIA AAUW PRESENTS "OUR TOWN" TO THE WORLD

To give other countries a cross-section of life in American communities, the Virginia chapter of the AAUW has prepared "Our Town" scrapbooks in 5 languages for distribution abroad through the International Federation of University Women, of which the AAUW is a member. "We are trying to present," said a representative of the Virginia AAUW, "not a glamorous 'tourist folder' picture of life in our towns, but a simple, accurate picture of our members in their homes, their kitchens, their stores, working in their churches and civic organizations; of their children in schools and at play; of the tremendous amount of civic activity which is the distinguishing characteristic of American life just as much as vacuum cleaners and automobiles." The Danville, Va., book featured its main industry by using a colorful Dan River fabric on the cover. Snapshots and pictures from various sources were used to show Danville's modes of transportation, fire-brigade and police squads, self-help markets, and the queue of citizens awaiting their turn to vote. Hampton, Va., pictorially portrayed not only its social background but such items of practical interest as typical small houses accompanied by floor plans. This book concluded with drawings done by Hampton school children.

WOMEN HELP IMPROVE HEALTH AND SOCIAL WELFARE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

Eighty women have served with the World Health Organization in professional capacities in posts ranging from Borneo to Ecuador and including such places as Hong Kong, Thailand, Pakistan, Istanbul, Cairo, Copenhagen, Haiti, El Salvador. Most of these women have been public health nurses, but others have worked as physiotherapists, statisticians, doctors, information specialists, librarians.

Under the Advisory Social Welfare Services program of the United Nations, 28 women experts in social welfare have served in the field as advisers to governments. Of the total number, 15 were from the United States, 3 from France, 3 from Chile, 2 from Canada, and 4 from various other countries. The countries in which these experts served were Austria, China, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Greece, Guatemala, Iran, Italy, Japan, and the Philippines. Typical services: The first School of Social Work in Guatemala was formally opened April 1949 through the joint efforts of the Government and the UN, which had sent a woman social welfare expert there to assist in planning and organizing the school. Later the UN sent another woman expert to help in supervision and actual teaching at the school. ...Because of its serious internal refugee problem the Government of Greece asked the UN for an adviser in the field of social services to refugees, and Miss Hansi Pollak from South Africa was sent to Greece by the UN.

H
A
V
E
Y
O
U
R
E
A
D

THE OUTLOOK FOR WOMEN IN SOCIAL CASE WORK WITH FAMILIES. U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau Bulletin 235-4. 1951.
PROGRESS OF WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES, 1949-1951. A Report Prepared by the Women's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, for Mary M. Cannon, U. S. Delegate to the Inter-American Commission of Women, Seventh Assembly, Santiago, Chile, May 30-June 14, 1951. 30 pp. Mimeo.
WOMEN IN THE 82d CONGRESS. [A collection of biographical sketches] U. S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau. 6 pp. Mimeo.
"Facilities for Women Workers with Home Responsibilities," in INTERNATIONAL LABOR REVIEW, March 1951.

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