

# FACTS

# on Women Workers

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## EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN OCTOBER 1951

The civilian woman labor force, which includes both the employed and the unemployed, was estimated at 19.9 million in October 1951, according to the U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. The increase since October 1950 of almost  $\frac{1}{2}$  million in the woman labor force was sufficient to offset the decline, due to inductions into the armed force, in the male labor force during the year, and served to keep the total civilian labor force at approximately the same level as a year ago.

This increase during the year in the number of women in the labor force was not significantly different from that which occurred in the previous year. Both year-to-year changes may be accounted for by woman population growth and the historical rise in woman labor force participation. On the other hand, the extent of turnover shown by the woman labor force has been appreciably greater this year than last. Both the number of women entering the labor force from one month to the next--about 2.2 million on the average--and the number leaving the labor force each month--about 2.1 million--were about 400,000 larger than the comparable averages for 1950.

	October 1951			
	Number of women	Percent women of all persons	Change since September 1951	Change since October 1950
Civilian population (14 years and over).....	57,238,000	52.5	+ 62,000	+ 643,000
In labor force.....	19,930,000	31.4	+ 416,000	+ 494,000
Employed.....	19,204,000	31.1	+ 454,000	+ 536,000
In agriculture.....	1,792,000	23.4	+ 46,000	- 110,000
In nonagricultural industries.....	17,412,000	32.1	+ 408,000	+ 646,000
Unemployed.....	726,000	44.9	- 38,000	- 42,000
Not in labor force.....	37,308,000	81.8	- 354,000	+ 148,000

## MINIMUM WAGE

Connecticut's revision of its 1947 order applying to females, minors, and adult males employed in beauty shops, became effective November 1, 1951. The revised order established weekly minimum-wage rates of \$33 for 3-year operators, \$28.50 for 2-year operators (learners), and \$26 for 1-year operators (learners). For each type of operator, the weekly minimum wage must be paid for any week in which work is done on any part of 4 or more days. For hours over 44 a week, or, if a part-time worker, over 8 a day, hourly rates are specified in the order and

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## MINIMUM WAGE - Continued

these are approximately  $1\frac{1}{4}$  times the pro-rated minimum weekly rates. (Maximum hours for women and minors in this industry are 9 a day, 48 a week.) Minimum-wage rates set for these same operator groups in the superseded order were \$28, \$25, and \$23, respectively, or from \$5 to \$3 less than the minimums now in effect.

Oregon recently revised its 1941 minimum-wage order for minors, establishing a minimum hourly wage rate of 50 cents applicable to industries not covered by an individual or special order; and setting maximum hour and working-conditions standards. The revised order, effective October 11, 1951, applies to persons under 18 years of age, excluding, however, those employed at domestic work and chores in or about private residences, and newspaper carriers and vendors. The 1941 order set standards for hours and working conditions but did not set a minimum wage.

## GREATER PROTECTION OF THE WIFE AS A MOTHER UNDER SOCIAL SECURITY

Women, in general, have greater rights and larger benefits under the 1950 amendments to the Federal social security law. This applies to wives, mothers, and widows, as well as to the woman worker who is providing for the family. For instance, the new law recognizes, and meets to a fuller extent than the original act, the economic needs of the dependent woman with children. Heretofore, in no case was the wife of a retired and insured worker entitled to monthly insurance payments until she reached age 65. Now, if she has in her care their minor child who is entitled to insurance benefits, she too gets monthly payments, regardless of her age. These payments continue until the child reaches 18 years.

Under the old law, a mother caring for the minor children of her deceased divorced husband was not entitled to monthly insurance payments in her own right. Now, if she has in her care either their natural child, or legally adopted child entitled to insurance payments, and she has not remarried, she too will get monthly payments. However, she must have been receiving at least half her support from the insured divorced husband (pursuant to agreement or court order) at the time of his death. Through this provision, the revised law gives recognition to the fact that a divorced wife, largely supported by her former husband's earnings, is in as great a need of survivors' benefits after his death as is the wife in cases where the marital relationship has not been dissolved.

The provision in the new law granting wage credits for active service in World War II has brought new benefits to many women. In addition to providing social security wage credits for the women who actually served in the armed forces, it has enabled many widows and mothers of service men to qualify for survivors' benefits. Survivors of such insured workers, with minor children, may now receive insurance payments even though they get compensation or pension under veterans' legislation. When these World War II credits were added to the deceased husband's or son's civilian wage record in work covered by social security, many dependent women were immediately eligible for social security benefit payments.



MAJOR OCCUPATIONS OF EMPLOYED WOMEN, OCTOBER 1951

Almost three-fourths of the increase in woman employment from October 1950 to October 1951 occurred in clerical and kindred occupations. A net gain of 393,000 women clerical workers during the year more than compensated for a decrease in the number of men clerical workers and changed the proportion which women comprised of all clerical workers from 62.2 percent in October 1950 to 65.2 percent in October 1951, according to figures just issued by the U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

This increase in the number of women clerical workers was the most dramatic change in women's employment during the year. However, there were other changes of equal or greater significance to defense production. Reflecting the fact that professional and technical workers and craftsmen and foremen are most likely to be needed in the tooling-up stage of defense production, total employment in each of these occupational groups increased by about 6 percent during the year. Although relatively few women are employed as craftsmen or foremen, this group showed a net gain of 36,000 women, representing an increase of 16 percent. The number of women professional and technical workers increased by 90,000, representing a gain of 5 percent. The employment of operatives declined somewhat between October 1950 and October 1951. This loss will undoubtedly be recovered when the tooling-up phase is completed and production is under way.

The occupational distribution of women in October 1951 was about the same as it was a year before. Approximately one-fourth of all employed women were in clerical and kindred occupations and almost one-fifth were operatives and kindred workers. Each of the two groups--professional, technical and kindred workers and service workers except private household--comprised slightly more than one-tenth of the total number of employed women.

	Employed women, October 1951			
	Number	Percent distribution	Percent of all workers	Change since October 1950
All occupations.....	19,204,000	100.0	31.1	+ 536,000
Clerical and kindred workers.....	5,088,000	26.5	65.2	+ 393,000
Operatives and kindred workers.....	3,572,000	18.6	28.6	- 68,000
Service workers, except private household.....	2,096,000	10.9	44.8	+ 52,000
Professional, technical and kindred workers.....	1,992,000	10.4	39.3	+ 90,000
Private household workers..	1,704,000	8.9	98.4	- 63,000
Farm laborers and foremen..	1,568,000	8.2	44.7	- 51,000
Sales workers.....	1,482,000	7.7	39.2	+ 4,000
Managers, officials, and proprietors, except farm.	1,112,000	5.8	17.5	+ 166,000
Craftsmen, foremen and kindred workers.....	262,000	1.4	3.1	+ 36,000
Farmers and farm managers..	202,000	1.1	5.1	- 43,000
Laborers, except farm and mine.....	126,000	0.7	3.2	+ 21,000



## WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

Sweden.--The recently issued report of a special committee of representatives of the Swedish Confederation of Trade Unions and the Swedish Federation of Employers, set up in 1948 to investigate women's wages and general position in industrial life, is summarized in the International Labor Review for July 1951. The trade unions and employers agreed on the desirability of eliminating arbitrary wage differentials according to sex and of setting up rates for the job. The committee recommended the extension of vocational training for women, more suitable arrangements for supervision of children, an adjustment of shop-closing hours to meet the needs of working women, and further study of the effect of certain aspects of taxation and social policy that may deter married women from entering employment.

Italy.--Signora Angela Guidi Cingolani, undersecretary to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, is the first woman to be seated on the government benches of the Italian parliament. Signora Cingolani will have charge of the problems of the whole Italian artisan class.

Mrs. Josephine McNeill of Ireland, has been appointed as envoy to the Netherlands.

She is the first woman to represent Ireland in the diplomatic service.

South Africa.--An investigation into causes of absenteeism among women employed in a large commercial establishment in Cape Town, South Africa, between September 1946 and August 1948 is reported by V. G. Pons in The South African Journal of Economics (vol. 18, no. 2). Household work done by women workers was definitely associated with the amount of time they lost from work. Workers with an education "higher than standard six" lost 12 fewer working days per 1,000 than workers with less education. Because the study was limited to employees of a single establishment, the author believes its chief value lies in the suggestions it offers for further research.

- HAVE PART-TIME JOBS FOR WOMEN: A Study in 10 Cities. Women's Bureau Bulletin No. 238. U. S. Department of Labor, Washington 25, D. C. 1951. 82 pp.
- YOU WHAT WILL SOCIAL SECURITY MEAN TO YOU? By William J. Matteson. American Institute for Economic Research, Great Barrington, Mass. 1951. 96 pp.
- READ? THERE IS A RIGHT JOB FOR EVERY WOMAN. By Anne Heywood. Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N. Y. 1951. 192 pp.