

FACTS

on Women Workers

U. S. Department of Labor
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EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN DECEMBER 1952

The civilian woman labor force, which includes both the employed and unemployed, was estimated at 19.7 million in December 1952. This figure was approximately the same as it was in December 1951, but it was three-fourths million less than the November 1952 figure. The decrease from the previous month was due primarily to the withdrawal of housewives and other family members from the labor force when their help on the farm was no longer needed.

During the first year after the outbreak of the Korean conflict, the growth of the woman labor force accounted for much of the expansion of the civilian labor supply. During the past year, although the woman labor force continued to grow, the increase was not so large. The number of working women averaged 19.5 million in 1952, 19.3 million in 1951, and 18.7 million in 1950.

Employment status	December 1952				
	Civilian non-institutional population	Number	Percent of all persons	Change since November 1952	Change since December 1951
Total, 14 years and over.....	110,464,000	58,166,000	52.7	+176,000	+810,000
In labor force.....	62,878,000	19,682,000	31.3	-746,000	+108,000
Employed.....	61,480,000	19,236,000	31.3	-588,000	+328,000
In agriculture.....	5,696,000	794,000	13.9	-492,000	-206,000
In nonagricultural industries.....	55,784,000	18,442,000	33.1	- 96,000	+534,000
Unemployed.....	1,398,000	446,000	31.9	-158,000	-220,000
Not in labor force.....	47,586,000	38,484,000	80.9	+922,000	+702,000

Source: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

WOMAN HEADS AVA

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Martha Creighton, professor of home economics education at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, was elected president of the American Vocational Association for 1953 at the Boston meeting of the House of Delegates in December.

NEW YORK MINIMUM-WAGE ORDERS SET NEW MINIMUMS

New York State recently revised five of its minimum-wage orders, all of which become effective February 15, 1953. The orders revised include those covering Beauty Service, Cleaning and Dyeing, Laundry, Hotel, and Restaurant industries. Two of the revised orders—beauty service and cleaning and dyeing—will establish a basic minimum of 80 cents an hour, the first State orders to set minimum wages for intrastate workers higher than that established by the Fair Labor Standards Act for workers employed in interstate commerce. In restaurants the new basic minimum for nonservice workers is 75 cents; but if the worker receives meals hourly rates may be decreased 10 cents. In hotels, the basic minimums for nonservice employees are 75 cents in New York City and 72 cents elsewhere.

A minimum wage of 75 cents an hour is set for workers in the laundry industry, with provision that, for 1 year only, a wage 5 cents lower may be paid in communities of less than 10,000 except in Nassau and Westchester counties. This order and the beauty service order provide for a weekly guarantee - the former establishes \$28 for 30 hours or more; the latter, \$32 for from 24 to 40 hours a week.

Two of the revised orders - beauty service and restaurant - provide for overtime at time and a half, applicable in the former to hours over 40 a week; in the latter, over 44 hours the first year, 42 hours the second year, and 40 hours thereafter.

INCREASE IN FAMILIES SINCE 1940

The number of families in the United States increased by $8\frac{1}{2}$ million from 1940 to 1952, according to data released by the U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. The great majority of families, 85 percent or more, include both husband and wife. Data on types of families in 1950 show an increase in husband-wife families of about $7\frac{1}{3}$ million since 1940. Families with a woman head had increased slightly from 1940 to 1950, and numbered in 1950 not far from $3\frac{2}{3}$ million. Women reported as heading households had increased by almost a fourth, and in 1950 numbered $6\frac{1}{2}$ million. (Since 1950, this group has been further increased by the induction of husbands into the Armed Forces.)

Age groupings of wives in husband-wife households were similar in 1940 and in 1950. Almost 40 percent of these wives were under 35 years of age, and less than half as many were 55 years old or more. Women heading households differed considerably in age from wives in husband-wife households. These household heads include both women in families and those living apart. In 1950, only a fourth were under 35 and 55 percent were 55 years of age or older. The proportion in the younger group had declined, in the older group increased considerably, from 1940.

COUNCIL WILL STUDY EDUCATION OF WOMEN

A broad new study of the education of women has been announced by the American Council on Education. The project director is Dr. Althea K. Hottel, on leave of absence from the University of Pennsylvania, where she is dean of women. A new commission, headed by Dr. Esther Lloyd-Jones, has been set up by the ACE to direct the study, which is financed by a 3-year grant from the Ellis L. Phillips Foundation of New York. The project represents a merging of plans by the council's continuing committee on the Conference of Women in the Defense Decade and the National Association of Deans of Women. The study will explore what education is offering to meet the current and long-range needs of women — as individuals, as members of families, as gainfully employed workers, as citizens, and as creators and perpetuators of values — in the light of changing social conditions.

WOMAN SUFFRAGE ADVANCES

The Political Rights of Women Convention, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1952 has focused new interest on women's political status throughout the world. Lebanon has granted suffrage to women since the UN Secretary General analyzed the situation in 81 countries in August 1952 and reported that 16 denied women any political rights (2 of these also denied electoral privileges to men). In addition Bolivia has extended the right to vote in national elections to women.

In Mexico the right to vote in national elections would be granted women through a constitutional amendment, now pending before the State Legislatures of the Mexican Republic. Women have voted in Mexican municipal elections for the past 6 years.

In Switzerland, women of the Canton of Geneva secured a token referendum at which 85 percent of those participating voted to enact legislation giving women the vote. This action has no legal effect, but it has served to stimulate interest in woman suffrage throughout Switzerland, and the Swiss Association for Feminine Suffrage is securing signatures of eligible voters (limited to males) to a petition to initiate national suffrage legislation.

Egypt may become the first major Arab country to extend the right to vote to women. The new Premier, General Naguib, has stated that he and his government look with favor on suffrage for women and women's full participation in political life.

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

Mrs. Mary Pillsbury Lord, New York civic leader, has been named as the United States representative on the United Nations Commission for Human Rights, to succeed Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt who recently resigned. Mrs. Lord is a graduate of Smith College and is married to Oswald B. Lord, a textile manufacturer. She has been active in social work, civil defense, recreation, health, and various national and international committees concerned with the welfare of women and children, and has had overseas experience as chairman of the United States Commission for the UN International Children's Emergency Fund.

SWISS TEXTILE AND FRENCH CLOTHING WORKERS

The number of workers in Swiss industries increased notably after the war, mainly to supply civilian needs of surrounding countries, according to the Federal Statistical Office in Switzerland. Women constituted an important source of this increase, since for some years there has been no reserve of unemployed. From 1949 (considered a normal year) to 1951, almost half the new workers were women, and the number of women in Swiss factories increased about 15 percent. Constituting 31 percent of such workers in 1949, women were 33 percent in 1951. Almost three-fourths of the additional women factory workers in the latest year given (1950-51) were in the metal, textile, and watch industries.

At the same time, the French Manpower Directorate advises girls that there is much unemployment among textile and clothing workers in France. In these industries, the only occupations demanding more than the available supply of workers in 1951, were those of stitcher and machinist. Jobs were especially hard to find for tailors, dressmakers, and underwear makers. Among the reasons given for this situation are the growing preference for ready-made clothing, high costs of materials, and lessened purchasing power, work done in homes or in low-wage establishments, high customs charges that cut export trade, and changes in men's clothing habits. The slump in the fashion trade in turn affects the fabric industries.

LABOR TURN-OVER AMONG WOMEN: JULY 1952

Accession rates for women, that is, the number of women hired per 1,000 women working, have increased greatly over the past year. The rate of hiring changed from 44 women per 1,000 employees in July 1951 to 52 women per 1,000 employees in July 1952, or an increase of 18 percent.

Unlike the accession rates, the separation rates for women have remained fairly stable over the past year in the selected manufacturing groups for which these rates are available. Although there was little change in the rate at which women were quitting their jobs in July 1952 (28 per 1,000 employees), by comparison with the previous year (26 per 1,000 employees), the 1952 rates were considerably higher than the 1950 rate of 20 per 1,000 employees, before the effects of the Korean crisis had been realized. The male quit rate in July 1952 for the same manufacturing groups was 20 per 1,000 employees.

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