

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

JESSE H. JONES, Secretary

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

J. C. CAPT, Director (Appointed May 22, 1941)

WILLIAM LANE AUSTIN, Director (Retired January 31, 1941)

PHILIP M. HAUSER, Assistant Director



SIXTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES : 1940

POPULATION

THE LABOR FORCE

(Sample Statistics)

Part I: General Characteristics

*Bureau of the Census
Library*

Prepared under the supervision of

Dr. LEON E. TRUESDELL

Chief Statistician for Population

UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1943

THE LABOR FORCE (SAMPLE STATISTICS)

This volume is comprised of two parts, with the reports arranged as follows:

Part 1. General Characteristics:

Employment and Personal Characteristics
Characteristics of Persons Not in the Labor Force
Employment and Family Characteristics of Women
Wage or Salary Income in 1939
Education, Occupation, and Household Relationship
of Males 18 to 44 Years Old

Part 2. Occupational and Industrial Characteristics:

Industrial Characteristics
Occupational Characteristics
Usual Occupation

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SIXTEENTH CENSUS OF THE UNITED STATES: 1940

REPORTS ON POPULATION

Volume

- I Number of Inhabitants, by States.
- II Characteristics of the Population, by States.
- III The Labor Force—Occupation, Industry, Employment, and Income, by States.
- IV Characteristics by Age—Marital Status, Relationship, Education, and Citizenship, by States.

Statistics for Census Tracts (Including Housing Data).

Additional Reports—Internal Migration, Families (Including Housing Data), Fertility, Parentage, Mother Tongue, Further Statistics on The Labor Force, etc.

Special Reports.

REPORTS ON HOUSING

- I Data for Small Areas, by States.
Supplement: Block Statistics for Cities.
- II General Characteristics of Housing, by States.
- III Characteristics by Monthly Rent or Value, by States.
- IV Mortgages on Owner-Occupied Nonfarm Homes, by States.

Special Reports.

FOREWORD

Sampling techniques were utilized in the Sixteenth Decennial Census for the first time in the history of the Population Census. The use of sampling methods permitted the collection of statistics on a larger number of inquiries than had heretofore been possible, the release of preliminary population statistics at an early date, and the tabulation of a great many social and economic characteristics of the population at a relatively low cost.

This report is based on tabulations of a five-percent sample of the population returns and presents an analysis of the principal relationships between employment of individuals and their personal characteristics and family relationships. These statistics show some of the most important factors affecting the size and character of the supply of labor in the United States, and the degree to which it was utilized during a period of widespread unemployment. This report was prepared under the supervision of Dr. Leon E. Truesdell, Chief Statistician for Population, and Dr. A. Ross Eckler, Assistant Chief Statistician, by William H. Mautz, Chief of Economic Statistics, and Dr. John D. Durand, Employment Analyst. The sampling procedures were under the direction of Dr. W. Edwards Deming, Mathematical Adviser.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

	Page		Page
General.....	1	Employment status--Continued	
Related reports.....	1	Experienced labor force.....	8
Areas.....	1	Personal characteristics of employed and unemployed workers.....	8
Availability of unpublished data.....	1	Household relationships of employed and unemployed workers.....	10
Labor force classification.....	3	Class of worker and major occupation group.....	10
Personal characteristics.....	3	Class-of-worker categories.....	10
Age and sex.....	3	Employment status of class-of-worker groups.....	11
Color.....	4	Personal characteristics of class-of-worker groups..	11
Household relationship.....	4	Household relationships of class-of-worker groups..	11
Household relationship classification.....	4	Occupations of workers in various household relationship groups.....	12
Marital status classification.....	4	Part-time employment.....	12
Labor force status of household relationship groups	5	Hours worked during the census week.....	12
Trends in size and composition of the labor force.....	6	Months worked in 1939.....	12
Comparability of 1940 data on the labor force with previous census data for gainful workers.....	6	Personal characteristics of part-time workers.....	14
Labor force trends by age and sex.....	6	Household relationships of part-time workers.....	14
Trends in the nonwhite labor force.....	6	Duration of unemployment.....	14
Increase of married women in the labor force.....	7	Characteristics of persons with a job but not at work..	15
Employment status.....	7	Characteristics of persons for whom employment status was not reported.....	16
Employment status categories.....	7	Differences between results of sample tabulation and complete count.....	16
Misclassification of persons on public emergency work.....	8		
Number of unemployed.....	8		
New workers.....	8		

MAP AND DIAGRAMS

	Page
Map of the United States showing regions, divisions, and States.....	VI
Diagram 1.--Employment status of persons 14 to 74 years old, by single years of age and sex, for the United States: March 1940.....	2
Diagram 2.--Percent of labor force seeking work and on public emergency work, by age, for the United States: March 1940.....	9
Diagram 3.--Percent distribution by class of worker for the experienced labor force, by age, for the United States: March 1940.....	9
Diagram 4.--Percent reporting less than 40 hours worked during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, by hours worked, for persons at work, by age and sex, for the United States.....	13
Diagram 5.--Percent reporting less than 12 months work in 1939 by months worked, for persons who were wage or salary workers in March 1940, by age, for the United States.....	13
Diagram 6.--Median duration of unemployment for wage or salary workers seeking work, by age, for the United States: March 1940.....	15

TEXT TABLES

	Page
Table I.--Labor force status of persons 14 years old and over, by sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940	3
II.--Percent of population in the labor force, by household relationship, age, and sex, for the United States: March 1940.....	5
III.--Percent of population in the labor force, March 1940, and percent gainful workers, 1900 and 1930, by age and sex, for the United States.....	6
IV.--Percent of population in the labor force, March 1940, and percent gainful workers, 1930, by age, sex, and color, for the United States.....	7
V.--Employment status of persons in the labor force, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	8
VI.--Class of worker of persons in the labor force, by sex, for the United States: March 1940.....	10
VII.--Percent seeking work or on emergency work, for all persons in the labor force and for wage or salary workers, by sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	11
VIII.--Months worked in 1939 by persons 14 years old and over (except persons in institutions), by employment status in March 1940, for the United States.....	14
IX.--Persons with a job but not at work, by class of worker and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	16
X.--Sample tabulation and complete count, for persons 14 years old and over, by employment status and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	16

CONTENTS

DETAILED TABLES

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIP	
Table	Page
1.--Persons in the labor force and persons employed (except on public emergency work), by single years of age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	17
2.--Labor force status of the population, by age, color, and sex, for regions; urban and rural: March 1940.....	25
3.--Labor force status of the population, by household relationship, age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	29
4.--Percent of population in the labor force for various household relationship groups, by age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	31
5.--Labor force status of the population by household relationship, age, color, and sex, for regions, urban and rural: March 1940.....	33
6.--Percent of population in the labor force for various household relationship groups, by age, color, and sex, for regions, urban and rural: March 1940.....	41
7.--Labor force status of the population, by marital status, age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	45
8.--Labor force status of the population, by marital status, age, and sex, for regions, urban and rural (with nonwhite for the South): March 1940.....	48
9.--Labor force status of the population, by relationship to head of household, marital status, age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	55
10.--Labor force status of the population, by relationship to head of household, marital status, age, color, and sex, for regions, urban and rural: March 1940.....	57

EMPLOYMENT STATUS, CLASS OF WORKER, AND MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUP

11.--Employment status of persons in the labor force, by class of worker, age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	65
12.--Percent distribution by employment status of persons in the labor force, and percent distribution by class of worker of employed persons, by age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	68
13.--Percent distribution by age of persons in the labor force, employment status, class of worker, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	71
14.--Employment status of persons in the labor force, by class of worker, age, color, and sex, for regions, urban and rural: March 1940.....	74
15.--Percent distribution by employment status of persons in the labor force, and percent distribution by class of worker of employed persons, by age, color, and sex, for regions, urban and rural: March 1940.....	85
16.--Percent distribution by age of persons in the labor force, employment status, class of worker, color, and sex, for regions, urban and rural: March 1940.....	90
17.--Employment status of persons 14 to 24 years old, by single years of age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	96
18.--Employment status of persons 14 to 24 years old, by single years of age and sex, for regions, urban and rural (with nonwhite for the South): March 1940.....	99
19.--Employment status of persons in the labor force, by household relationship, age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	106
20.--Employment status of persons in the labor force not living in private households, by age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	111

EMPLOYMENT STATUS, CLASS OF WORKER, AND MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUP--Continued	
Table	Page
21.--Employment status of persons in the labor force, by household relationship, age, and sex, for regions, urban and rural (with nonwhite for the South): March 1940.....	113
22.--Employment status of persons in the labor force, by marital status, age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	119
23.--Percent distribution by marital status of persons in the labor force, and percent of labor force employed (except on public emergency work), for various marital status groups, by age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	122
24.--Employment status of persons in the labor force, by relationship to head of household, marital status, age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	124
25.--Employment status of persons in the labor force, by relationship to head of household, marital status, age, and sex, for regions, urban and rural (with nonwhite for the South): March 1940.....	128
26.--Class of worker and major occupation group of employed persons (except on public emergency work), by household relationship, age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	133
27.--Percent distribution by class of worker and major occupation group of employed persons (except on public emergency work), by household relationship, age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	137
28.--Class of worker and major occupation group of employed persons (except on public emergency work), by household relationship, age, and sex, for regions (with nonwhite for the South): March 1940.....	141

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

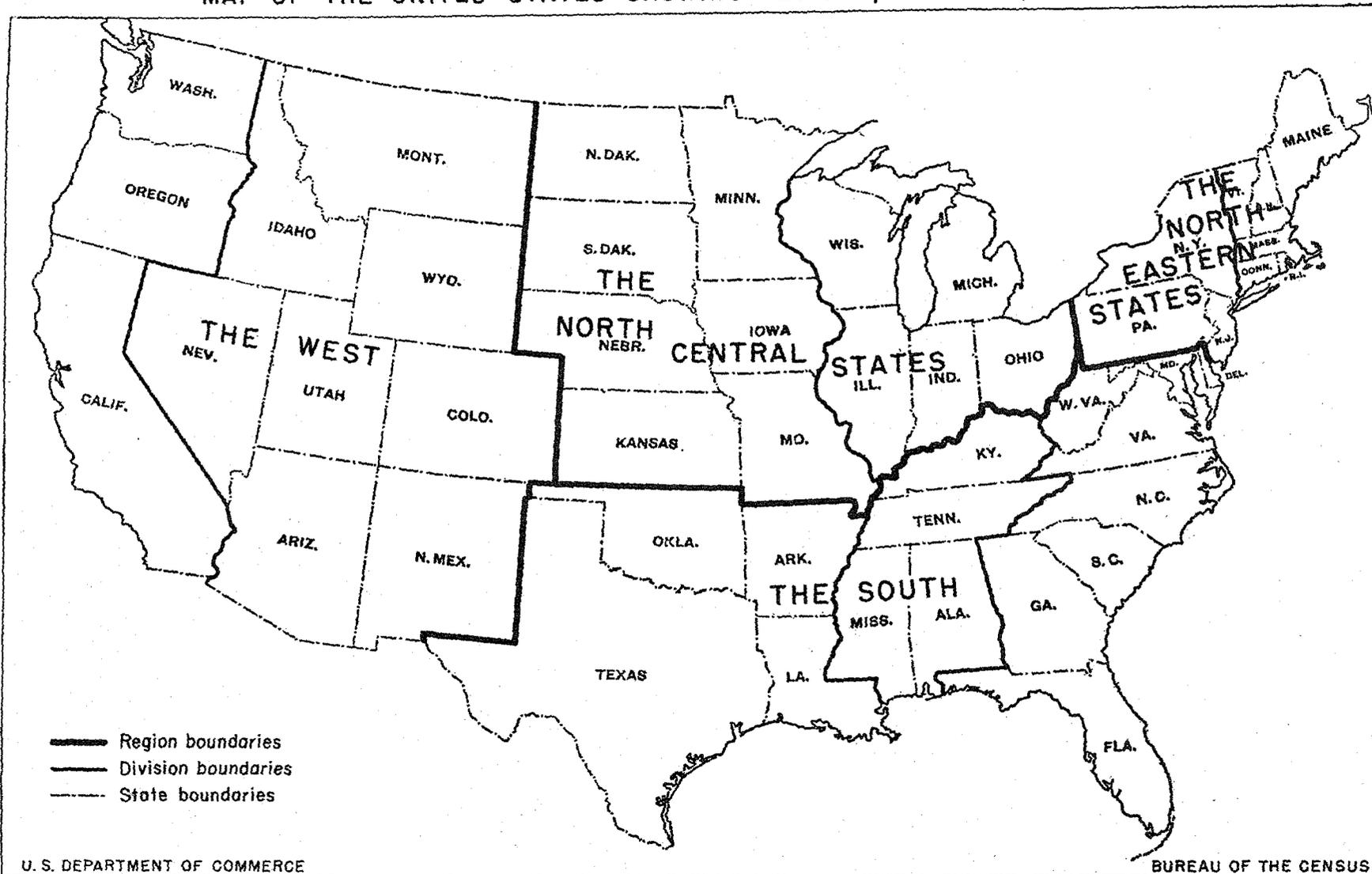
29.--Hours worked during week of March 24-30, 1940, by persons at work (except on public emergency work), by age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural.....	144
30.--Hours worked during week of March 24-30, 1940, by persons at work (except on public emergency work), by age and sex, for regions, urban and rural (with nonwhite for the South).....	147
31.--Months worked in 1939 by persons 14 years old and over (except persons in institutions), by employment status and class of worker in March 1940, color and sex, for the United States, urban and rural.....	154
32.--Months worked in 1939 by persons 14 years old and over (except persons in institutions), by employment status and class of worker in March 1940, and sex, for regions, urban and rural (with nonwhite for the South).....	157
33.--Months worked in 1939 by persons who were wage or salary workers in March 1940 (except persons on public emergency work), by age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural.....	164
34.--Months worked in 1939 by persons who were wage or salary workers in March 1940 (except persons on public emergency work), by household relationship, age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural.....	167

DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT

35.--Duration of unemployment of wage or salary workers seeking work, by age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	171
36.--Percent distribution by duration of unemployment of wage or salary workers seeking work, by age, color, and sex, for the United States, urban and rural: March 1940.....	174
37.--Duration of unemployment of wage or salary workers seeking work, by sex, for regions, urban and rural (with nonwhite for the South): March 1940.....	177

MAP OF THE UNITED STATES SHOWING REGIONS, DIVISIONS, AND STATES

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EMPLOYMENT AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL

This report presents detailed national and regional data on employment and unemployment according to personal characteristics and household relationships, based on tabulations of a five-percent sample of the returns of the Sixteenth Decennial Census of Population, taken in April 1940.¹ Statistics on employment status and hours worked during the census week (that is, the week of March 24 to 30, 1940), months worked in 1939, duration of unemployment, class of worker, and major occupation group are presented by age, sex, color, and household relationship, for the United States and four broad regions by urban and rural residence.

These statistics show the principal relationships between employment of individuals and their personal characteristics and family relationships, during a period of large-scale unemployment. Statistics showing the proportion in the labor force for various population groups in 1940 are useful for estimating the size and character of the actual and potential supply of labor. Data on the characteristics of workers who were wholly or partly unemployed at the time of the census, and on the length of their unemployment, are useful in the analysis of unemployment problems.

Related reports.—This is one of a series of reports which will be published under the general title, "The Labor Force--Sample Statistics." These reports supplement the labor force data presented in Volume III of the Sixteenth Census Reports on Population, entitled, "The Labor Force." The titles of other reports in this series, with a brief summary of the subjects covered, are given below.²

Employment and Family Characteristics of Women: Labor force status of women by marital status and number of children according to age, education, and other personal and family characteristics, for the United States and regions, and for metropolitan districts of 100,000 or more.

Occupational Characteristics: Statistics on the occupational characteristics of the labor force, according to age, months worked in 1939, and other characteristics, for the United States and for regions; and the occupational structure of industries, showing a detailed occupation classification of employed workers in each industry for the United States.

Wage or Salary Income in 1939: Statistics on wage or salary income and receipt of other income in 1939 for wage or salary workers by months worked in 1939, age, and other characteristics, for other persons in the labor force, and for persons not in the labor force, for the United States, geographic divisions, States, and large cities.

Usual Occupation: Usual occupations of persons in the labor force and of those not in the labor force, including data for regions, States, and large cities.

Another report, based on sample tabulations, presents 1940 data pertinent to the problems of potential labor supply, and appears under the title indicated below.

Characteristics of Persons Not in the Labor Force: Sex, age, color, marital status, household relationship, and data on previous employment, for persons not in the labor force, with an analysis of potential labor supply, for the United States and regions.

Data on the characteristics of the labor force for States and cities of 100,000 or more, based on complete tabulations of

the census returns, are presented in Volume III of the Sixteenth Census Reports on Population. This volume gives less detailed data than those presented here, on employment status by sex, age, color, and marital status, and on class of worker, hours worked in the census week, months worked in 1939, and duration of unemployment by sex and color; together with statistics on occupation, industry, and wage or salary income in 1939.

Additional statistics on personal characteristics of the labor force are presented in Volume IV of the Reports on Population, entitled "Population Characteristics by Age," which includes data on employment status, and on school attendance of employed workers, by age, sex, and color (in selected areas), for States and cities of 100,000 or more.

Condensed labor force statistics for cities and other urban places, metropolitan districts, and counties are given in Volume II of the Reports on Population, entitled "Characteristics of the Population," which includes data on employment status, class of worker, major occupation group, and industry group, by sex and by color in selected areas.

Labor force data for families are presented in the series of reports published under the general title, "Families," based on tabulations of samples of the returns of the 1940 Censuses of Population and Housing. Among the reports in this series which present labor force statistics are the following:²

General Characteristics: Statistics for heads of families by employment status, major occupation group, and other characteristics; and for families classified according to family employment status, labor force status of children 14 to 17 years old, class-of-worker composition, family wage or salary income in 1939, and other characteristics; for States, cities of 100,000 or more, and metropolitan districts of 200,000 or more.

Employment Status: Data for families by number and employment status of persons in the labor force by characteristics of the family and of the family head, for regions and cities of 1,000,000 or more.

Family Wage or Salary Income in 1939: Statistics on wage or salary income and receipt of other income in 1939 for families classified by characteristics of the family and of the head, for regions and cities of 1,000,000 or more.

Areas.—Most of the statistics in this report are presented for the United States and for four regions: (a) the Northeastern States, comprising the New England and Middle Atlantic Divisions; (b) the North Central States, comprising the East North Central and West North Central Divisions; (c) the South, comprising the South Atlantic, East South Central, and West South Central Divisions; and (d) the West, comprising the Mountain and Pacific Divisions. In some cases figures for regions are omitted or are presented in condensed form because sampling variations are relatively large in the detailed cross-classifications for regions.

All of the statistics are presented separately for urban, rural-nonfarm, and rural-farm areas. Urban population, as defined by the Bureau of the Census, is in general that residing in cities and other incorporated places having 2,500 inhabitants or more. The remainder of the population is classified as rural, and is subdivided into the rural-farm population, which comprises all rural residents living on farms, and the rural-nonfarm population, which comprises the remaining rural population.

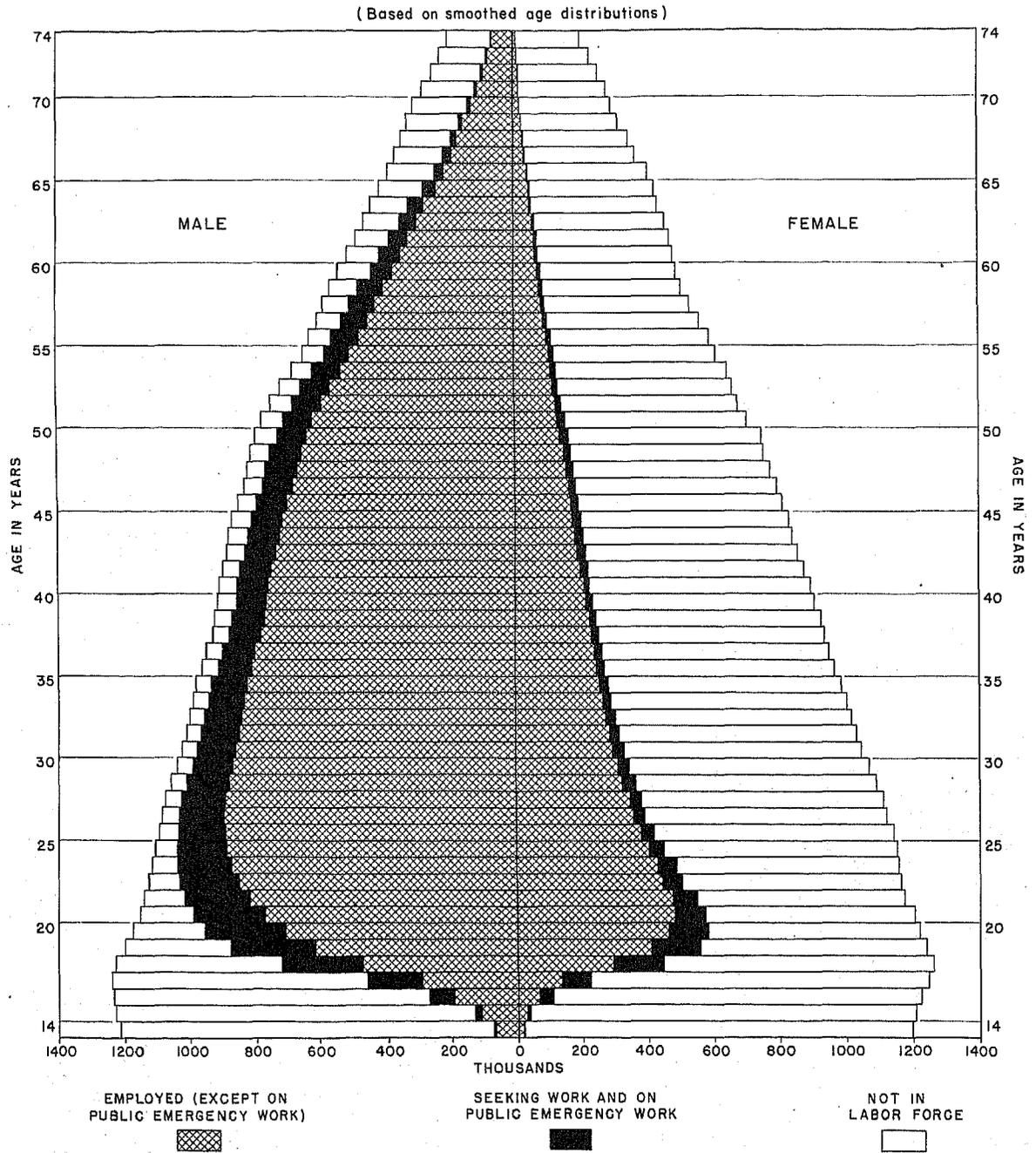
Availability of unpublished data.—Some of the data obtained from the tabulations upon which the tables in this report are based have not been published, because larger sampling errors are to be expected in the more detailed cross-classifications for categories containing only a small number of persons. For this reason, some of the more detailed tables are presented for the United States only, and statistics for nonwhites in the Northeastern States, the North Central States, and the West

¹ The 1940 Population Census schedule is reproduced in Part 1 of Volume III and Part 1 of Volume IV of the Sixteenth Census Reports on Population. The instructions to enumerators are also reproduced in these volumes.

² At the time this report goes to press (June 1945) the reports referred to in this paragraph are in various stages of completion, and it is possible that changes may be made before publication.

THE LABOR FORCE—SAMPLE STATISTICS

DIAGRAM I.—EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PERSONS 14 TO 74 YEARS OLD, BY SINGLE YEARS OF AGE AND SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES: MARCH 1940



SOURCE: TABLE I

have been omitted from most of the tables. All of the statistics that are presented for the United States are available, however, in unpublished form for each region.

Some of the data are presented only for employed persons; these data have been tabulated also for persons seeking work and for persons on public emergency work. Statistics on duration of unemployment are available for persons on public emergency work and for new workers, by age, although only the data for wage or salary workers seeking work have been published. Tabulations of months worked in 1939 by age, which are presented here only for the total of wage or salary workers (excluding those on public emergency work), are available for each class-of-worker category, by employment status during the census week.

Such of the unpublished figures as are considered reliable can be obtained upon request, for the nominal cost of transcribing or reproducing them. Requests for such unpublished statistics, addressed to the Director of the Census, Washington, D. C., will receive a prompt reply, which will include an estimate of the cost of preparing the data.

LABOR FORCE CLASSIFICATION

In the 1940 Census of Population, persons 14 years old and over were classified on the basis of their activity during the census week of March 24 to 30, 1940, into two large groups: (a) Persons in the labor force, including those at work for pay or profit or at unpaid family work; those with a job or business from which they were temporarily absent; those on public emergency work; and those seeking work; and (b) persons not in the labor force. The latter group includes persons reported as engaged in own home housework, in school, or unable to work; seasonal workers for whom the census week fell in an off-season, and who were not seeking work; others not employed, nor on public emergency work, nor seeking work; all inmates of penal and mental institutions and homes for the aged, infirm, and needy, regardless of their activity during the census week; and persons for whom employment status was not reported. For more detailed descriptions of the categories of persons in the labor force, see "Employment status categories," below.

The labor force classification of the population 14 years old and over, by sex, is summarized for the United States and for urban and rural areas, in table I. Of the 101,015,740 persons 14 years old and over, 52,966,280 were in the labor force during the census week, and 48,049,460 were not in the labor force. The labor force was composed of 39,958,800 males, representing 79.1 percent of the male population 14 years old and over, and 13,007,480 female workers, or 25.8 percent of the female population 14 years old and over (table I). The proportion of women in the labor force was considerably larger in urban than in rural areas.

Table I. LABOR FORCE STATUS OF PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES, URBAN AND RURAL: MARCH 1940

[Statistics based on a 5-percent sample]

AREA AND SEX	Population 14 years old and over	IN LABOR FORCE		Not in labor force
		Number	Percent	
Total.....	101,015,740	52,966,280	52.4	48,049,460
Urban.....	59,672,080	32,719,820	54.8	26,952,260
Rural-nonfarm.....	20,078,720	9,767,260	48.6	10,311,460
Rural-farm.....	21,264,940	10,479,200	49.3	10,785,740
Males.....	50,548,840	39,958,800	79.1	10,585,040
Urban.....	28,896,340	23,018,900	79.7	5,877,440
Rural-nonfarm.....	10,261,940	7,698,960	75.0	2,562,980
Rural-farm.....	11,885,560	9,240,940	81.2	2,144,620
Females.....	50,471,900	13,007,480	25.8	37,464,420
Urban.....	30,775,740	9,700,920	31.5	21,074,820
Rural-nonfarm.....	9,816,780	2,058,800	21.1	7,748,480
Rural-farm.....	9,879,880	1,288,260	12.5	8,641,120

Several considerations affect the interpretation of the 1940 census total of persons in the labor force. In the first place, the census week fell in a season during which agricultural employment was at a comparatively low level. In the summer and early fall, the rural-farm labor force is considerably greater than in March. In the second place, there were 1,987,140 persons for whom employment status was not reported. These have been classified as not in the labor force, since available evidence indicates that the majority of them were probably engaged in own home housework or in school. Some of the group, however,

would probably have been classified as in the labor force, if full information had been obtained. Finally, accurate data on labor force status are hard to obtain for certain population groups, especially for women, children, and aged persons, and for unpaid family workers.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Age and sex.—Age and sex classifications form an essential framework for the analysis of labor supply, because these two personal characteristics tend to determine the normal economic activities of individuals. A classification by sex is therefore shown in all of the detailed tables in this report, and most of the tables include classifications by age. The age classification is based on age of the person at his last birthday before April 1, 1940, that is, age in completed years. In the 1940 census tabulations the category "age unknown" has been eliminated. When the age of a person was not reported, it was estimated on the basis of other information on the population schedules, such as marital status, school attendance, employment status, age of other members in the family, etc.

The labor force status of the population in March 1940, by single years of age from 14 to 74, is illustrated in diagram 1. In the male population, the number in the labor force was very small at ages 14 and 15, but grew much larger in the succeeding ages, and constituted a majority of the male population at 18 years of age. At age 25 only a small group of males remained outside the labor force. Between the ages of 25 and 60 years, the number of men not in the labor force was small, consisting mostly of disabled men and inmates of institutions. At ages over 60, the margin of men not in the labor force grew slightly wider at each successive age, as increasing numbers retired or were forced out of the labor market by old age or disability. At 74 years of age only a very small number of men remained in the labor force.

In the female population, the number in the labor force reached a maximum at 20 years, at which age nearly half of the women were in the labor force. After age 22 the female labor force was smaller in each successive year of age, as increasing numbers of women entered the group engaged in own home housework. At age 45 only one-third as many women were in the labor force as at age 20, and in the ages 65 and over the labor force included only a very small number of women.

In rural-farm areas, boys and girls tend to enter the labor force at an earlier age than in urban areas. For males 15 years old, for example, the proportion in the labor force in March, 1940, was 22.0 percent in rural-farm areas, and only 4.9 percent in urban areas (table 1). This difference is attributable partly to a tendency for young people to leave school earlier in rural than in urban areas, and partly to the comparatively favorable opportunities for farm boys and girls to do part-time work while they are still in school. Nearly half of the persons under 20 years of age in the rural-farm labor force were unpaid family workers, many of whom were employed only part time after school hours.

For farm women between 17 and 67 years of age the proportion in the labor force was lower than for women in nonfarm communities. For each residence group, the proportion of women in the labor force was highest at age 20, when 58.8 percent of urban, 38.7 percent of rural-nonfarm, and 25.9 percent of rural-farm women were in the labor force. These differences are due partly to the relatively limited opportunities for the full-time employment of women in farming areas, partly to the more arduous household duties of women on farms, and partly to the larger numbers of children in farm families. A great many women in farming areas, of course, are engaged to some extent in farm work, if only in minor chores, and many of them are seasonal workers who enter the labor force for full-time work at certain times of the year.

The departure of men from the labor force because of disability and retirement begins earlier and proceeds more rapidly in urban and rural-nonfarm areas than in the farm population. In the age group 60 to 64 years, only 77.1 percent of the urban males were still in the labor force, but 88.1 percent of the rural-farm men in this age group were still workers. The point at which no more than half of the men remained in the labor force was reached at 68 years of age in the cities, but not until 75 years on the farms (table 1). This difference can be attributed largely to the fact that opportunities for employment of older workers in agriculture are relatively good, especially for farm operators, who can continue even at an advanced age to operate their farms, with the help of their families or by means of hired labor.

Certain difficulties in the labor force classification of women, children, and aged persons should be considered in in-

terpreting census figures on the labor force status of the population according to sex and age. Since most women are normally engaged at least to some extent in home housework, those with part-time jobs may sometimes have been reported as engaged in own home housework and not in the labor force. Likewise, some women who had lost their jobs and were keeping house while looking for another employment opportunity may have been classified as engaged in own home housework instead of as seeking work. The difficulty in classification was especially great in rural-farm areas, where it is often very hard to distinguish between work for pay or profit or unpaid family work on the one hand, and incidental farm chores and own home housework on the other.

Many students working part time after school hours were probably reported as in school and not in the labor force, and it was doubtless difficult in many cases to determine whether a person attending school was also seeking work. A very large proportion of the persons on the NYA Student Work Program were probably reported as in school instead of on public emergency work. On the other hand, a considerable number of students in farming areas who performed only incidental farm chores after school may have been included in the labor force as unpaid family workers.

For persons 65 years and over, and to some extent for those 65 to 64 years old, it was difficult to draw the line between able-bodied persons seeking work and disabled and retired persons no longer in the labor force. Moreover, many men in these age groups at the time of the census had been forced into retirement because of their inability to compete with younger workers, although they were still able and willing to work. These prematurely retired workers should be considered as part of the nation's unused labor supply, although they were not actively seeking work at the time of the census.

Color.—Because of the great differences between whites and nonwhites in economic status, occupational characteristics, and employment status, all of the detailed tables for the United States and for the South include separate statistics for nonwhites, that is, for the total of Negroes, Indians, Chinese, Japanese, and other nonwhite races. Statistics on employment status by age and sex are also shown for nonwhites in the Northeastern States, the North Central States, and the West, but most of the tables for these three regions do not include data for nonwhites because of the relatively small nonwhite population in these regions. The great majority of the nonwhites are Negroes, except in the West, where there are many Indians, Chinese, and Japanese. Persons of Mexican birth or ancestry who were not definitely Indian or of other nonwhite race were returned as white in 1940. Such persons were designated as Mexican in 1930 (but not in prior censuses), and were included in the general class of "Other races."

In the nonwhite population, children, women, and aged persons participate in the labor market to a much greater extent than do the whites in the same age and sex groups. The tendency for nonwhite youths to enter the labor market at a comparatively early age is shown by the fact that 46.1 percent of the nonwhite boys 16 and 17 years old were in the labor force during the census week, as contrasted with 27.4 percent of the white boys of these ages (table 1). There is also a greater tendency for nonwhite children in rural-farm areas to be employed part time while attending school, which accentuates the difference between the figures for the two color groups.

Nonwhite women showed a marked tendency to remain in the labor force longer than white women. The proportion of nonwhite women in the labor force was almost the same in all of the age groups between 20 and 44 years, whereas for white women, the proportion in the labor force reached a maximum at age 20, and was much smaller in each succeeding age group. This difference can be attributed partly to economic factors, and partly to the fact that nonwhite women are employed largely as domestic servants and farm laborers—occupations in which opportunities for the employment of older women are comparatively favorable.

In rural areas, nonwhite men showed a tendency to remain in the labor force somewhat longer than white men. In the age group 65 to 69 years, 82.8 percent of the nonwhite and 75.3 percent of the white men in rural-farm areas were still in the labor force. The age of retirement for men in urban areas, on the other hand, tended to be somewhat earlier for nonwhites than for whites. This difference was probably due partly to poor health conditions among the urban nonwhites, causing a high disability rate for aged nonwhite men, and partly to the insecurity of employment resulting from the comparatively low proportion of self-employed workers and employers in the urban nonwhite labor force.

The household composition of the population plays a large part in determining the normal size of the labor force. The normal role of an individual as a breadwinner, a homemaker, or a dependent is often fixed so rigidly by his age and family relationship that it cannot easily be adjusted to changes in labor market conditions. The data on labor force status according to household relationship shown in this report illustrate the relation between family responsibilities and employment, and indicate the family problems involved in a major expansion of the labor force.

Household relationship classification.—The classification by household relationship is based on the marital status of the individual and his relationship to the head of the household in which he lived. The following relationship categories are shown in the tables in this report:

(1) **Head of private household.**—The term "private household," as used in the 1940 census, includes the related family members and the unrelated lodgers, servants, or hired hands who live in the same dwelling unit and share common housekeeping arrangements. A person living alone, or a small group of unrelated persons sharing the same living quarters as "partners" is also counted as a private household. A family residing permanently or for an indefinite period in an apartment hotel is counted as a private household.

One person in each private household was designated as the household head, that is, the person regarded as the head by the members of the household. The head of a private household is usually a married man and the chief breadwinner or "economic head" of the family. In some cases, however, the head is a parent of the chief earner or is the only adult member of the household. If both husband and wife were present in the household, the husband rather than the wife was to be designated as the head. Some heads were persons living alone, who may have had no dependents, and some were unattached individuals sharing living accommodations with "partners."

(2) **Wife of head.**—This category comprises the wives of heads of private households.

(3) **Other relative of head.**—This group includes sons, daughters, parents, grandchildren, brothers and sisters, and all other persons (except wives) related by blood, marriage, or adoption to the head of the household in which they lived. Persons 14 to 17 years old are classified separately from adult relatives 18 years old and over.

(4) **Not relative of head.**—This category comprises lodgers, servants, and other persons living in private households but not related to the household head.

(5) **Not in private household.**—This category comprises persons living in quasi households, including inmates of penal and mental institutions and homes for the aged, infirm, and needy; residents, other than inmates, of such institutions; and other persons not in private households, such as residents of boarding or lodging houses, the transient population of a hotel, and persons living in schools, hospitals, labor camps, military and naval posts, monasteries, and convents.

The last two groups are combined in some of the tables in this report to form the category "Not relative of head, or not in private household." Each of the categories is further classified by marital status, to show more precisely the status of the individual in the family and to give a clearer indication of probable responsibility for dependents. The few married women with husbands present who were classified as household heads are not shown separately; these cases resulted from occasional errors in classification.

The statistics on household relationship given here differ from family statistics in that the data shown here are classifications of individuals, rather than of entire families as units. Statistics for families are presented in other publications, in which the labor force status of family heads, wives, and other family members is presented in relation to the composition and characteristics of the family.

Marital status classification.—In the classification by marital status four classes are distinguished: (a) Single, (b) married, spouse present, (c) married, spouse absent, and (d) widowed or divorced. A person was classified as "married, spouse present" if the person's husband or wife was reported as a member of the household in which the person was enumerated. The group "married, spouse absent" consists of married persons whose spouses were not living in the same household at the time of the census. The latter group includes, therefore,

married persons whose families had been broken by separation (often preceding divorce), immigrants whose husbands or wives were left abroad, husbands or wives of persons enumerated as inmates of institutions, and other married persons whose usual place of residence was not the same as that of their husbands or wives, including soldiers, sailors, men in labor camps, etc., and their wives. In most of the tables in this report, married persons with spouse absent are combined with widowed and divorced persons, since separated spouses are likely to be more or less financially independent.

The number of men classified as married with wife present was slightly greater than the number of women classified as married with husband present. The difference is due partly to the presence of some wives under 14 years of age, who are not included in the tabulations shown in this report; but it is due mainly to minor errors in the processing of the returns. For similar reasons, the number of male heads of households classified as married with wife present was slightly greater than the number of women shown as wives of household heads.

The number of women in the marital status category "married, husband present" is considerably greater than the number in the relationship group "wife of head." The difference is made up of married relatives with husbands present, such as married daughters and daughters-in-law of heads, and of married women not living in private households.

Labor force status of household relationship groups.— The percentages in the labor force for persons in each relationship group, by age and sex, are summarized in table II.

Table II. PERCENT OF POPULATION IN THE LABOR FORCE, BY HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIP, AGE, AND SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES: MARCH 1940

[Statistics based on a 5-percent sample. Percent not shown where base is less than 2,000]

SEX AND HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIP	Total, 14 years and over	14 to 17 years	18 to 24 years	25 to 34 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 64 years	65 and over
Male	79.1	18.8	81.3	95.1	94.6	88.7	41.8
Head of private household.....	90.0	65.6	97.7	98.4	97.3	91.8	48.6
Married, wife present.....	91.8	66.7	98.3	98.5	97.6	92.8	52.1
All other.....	75.0	55.4	93.0	95.5	93.5	84.4	36.0
Relative of head.....	61.2	18.4	77.9	92.7	88.9	74.8	17.2
Married, wife present.....	88.4	58.3	98.0	93.2	88.1	71.1	20.6
All other.....	56.7	16.4	77.0	92.5	89.2	75.4	16.3
Not relative of head, or not in private household.....	70.6	26.2	80.7	81.8	78.2	70.3	25.7
Female	25.8	7.9	44.0	33.3	27.2	20.2	6.1
Head of private household.....	29.6	35.7	73.8	73.1	66.1	40.4	8.6
Single.....	65.6	36.9	86.2	89.8	85.5	62.7	17.0
Married, widowed, and divorced.....	34.3	-	56.9	64.9	61.6	36.6	7.6
Wife of head.....	18.5	5.2	14.4	15.4	14.2	8.9	2.5
Other relative of head.....	34.8	7.2	54.2	61.7	56.9	29.8	2.8
Married, husband present.....	22.3	7.0	21.1	29.9	26.9	13.4	1.8
All other.....	36.3	7.2	58.4	70.9	64.4	32.3	2.9
Not relative of head, or not in private household.....	64.7	27.7	78.0	77.5	71.8	61.3	20.9

The great majority of the men between the ages of 18 and 64 in all relationship groups were in the labor force, but the proportion in the labor force was greatest for married heads of households with wife present. The percentage of such heads in the labor force was in the neighborhood of 98 percent in the age groups between 18 and 44 years; in the groups under 18 and 45 and over it was much greater than the corresponding figure for males in other relationship categories. The high proportions in the labor force among married heads were probably due partly to the tendency for men no longer in the labor force to be reported as relatives, instead of household heads, if there were other workers in the family.

Only 75.0 percent of the male heads who were single, widowed, divorced, or married with wife absent from the household were in the labor force during the census week. Most of those who were not in the labor force were probably disabled men supported by their children or other relatives, and retired men living on pensions or other independent income. The proportion of such men in the labor force is probably subject to some change in response to variations in the condition of the labor market, but their number is not large enough to affect greatly the total labor force.

Unmarried sons and other unmarried relatives of heads were the only important group in the male population in which there was much room for increase in the proportion in the labor force. Of the 4,723,600 male relatives 14 to 17 years old, only 18.4

percent were in the labor force, and many of these had only part-time jobs while they were attending school. Of the 3,682,680 unmarried male relatives 18 to 24 years old, 77.0 percent were in the labor force. The corresponding percentage for the 341,140 married male relatives with wife present, such as married sons and sons-in-law, was 93.0 percent.

Among the few male relatives of heads in the age groups over 25 years, the proportion in the labor force was uniformly somewhat lower than for household heads. Sons and brothers of heads predominate among the male relatives between the ages of 25 and 44. In the age groups 45 and over a considerable number of fathers of heads, forced by disability and economic necessity to live with their children, are included in the group.

Males not related to household heads or not in private households constituted a comparatively small group made up mostly of lodgers, hired farm hands in rural areas, and inmates of institutions. The percentage of these men in the labor force is probably not greatly affected by changes in the demand for labor.

The employment of women is much more directly related to family status than that of men, since women's household duties tend to interfere with work outside of the home. The proportion in the labor force is high among women whose home responsibilities are comparatively light, such as women living alone, unmarried daughters living with their parents, and women living as lodgers, etc. For women with greater homemaking duties, such as wives and other married relatives of heads, the proportion in the labor force tends to be much lower.

Shifts from the status of daughter or single woman living alone to that of housewife were the principal cause of the retirement of women from the labor force during the age period 18 to 44 years. For women who continued to live with their parents or other relatives, or who lived alone as heads of one-person families, the proportion in the labor force was not much smaller in the age groups 35 to 44 years than in the younger groups. For all women taken as a total, however, the percentage in the labor force was progressively lower in each successive age group because of the larger proportions of wives in the upper age classes.

Wives of household heads were the principal reserve of potential labor supply. In 1940 there were 26,295,660 wives of heads, of whom only one-eighth were in the labor force. In the age group 18 to 24 years, only 14.4 percent of the wives were in the labor force, as contrasted with 86.2 percent for single female heads in this age class. Almost all wives have some homemaking responsibilities, which would interfere at least to some extent with their employment outside the home. Those who have young children are especially unlikely to enter the labor market unless they can make some provision for the care of the children while they work. This limitation upon the labor supply is particularly important for wives under 35 years of age, who are most likely to have young children in their families. Statistics on labor force status of women according to number of children are presented in the report entitled, "The Labor Force--Sample Statistics, Employment and Family Characteristics of Women."

Daughters and other female relatives of heads are a group comparatively free of home duties, especially if they are unmarried. There were 7,983,180 female relatives between the ages of 18 and 64 who were unmarried (that is, single, widowed, or divorced), or married with husband absent; of these, 4,618,480, or 57.9 percent, were in the labor force. For married daughters, daughters-in-law, and other married female relatives of heads the proportion in the labor force was considerably less. The proportion was substantially greater, however, for these married relatives than for wives of household heads, partly because married women sharing the homes of others are less likely to have children, and partly because they may be able to share housekeeping responsibilities with other women in the home.

The women who participated in the labor market to the greatest extent were those who lived alone. Two-thirds of the single female heads were in the labor force in 1940. Between the ages of 18 and 44 years, the proportion of workers in this group was nearly 90 percent. Most of these were self-supporting young women, living alone or with unrelated "partners," and most of them had little or no responsibility for housekeeping. The proportion of such women in the labor force is probably subject to little variation.

Married, widowed, and divorced female heads of households were an elderly group; most of them were widows, three-fourths were over 45, and nearly one-third were over 65 years of age. Largely because of their age, only a little over one-third of the married, widowed, and divorced female heads were in the labor force.

The high percentage in the labor force for women in the group, "Not relative of head, or not in private household," is due partly to the fact that this group included servants "living in," all of whom were in the labor force.

TRENDS IN SIZE AND COMPOSITION OF THE LABOR FORCE

Major trends since the beginning of the century in the size of the national labor force and its personal characteristics are shown by a comparison of the proportions of persons in the labor force in various classes of the population in 1940 with similar data for gainful workers in 1930 and 1900. Although detailed comparative data from previous censuses are not included in this report, such comparisons for urban and rural areas and for regions can be made by reference to the publications for 1930 and earlier censuses. Limited comparisons by age, sex, color, and marital status are presented below.

Comparability of 1940 data on the labor force with previous census data for gainful workers.—The 1940 data on the labor force are not directly comparable with the census statistics for gainful workers in 1930 and earlier years, partly because of differences in definition and partly because of differences in the types of questions upon which the data were based. The gainful worker statistics were obtained by means of questions regarding occupation rather than employment status. "Gainful workers" were persons reported as having a gainful occupation, that is, an occupation in which they earned money or a money equivalent, or in which they assisted in the production of marketable goods, regardless of whether they were working or seeking work at the time of the census. The labor force is defined in the 1940 census on the basis of activity during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, and includes only persons who were at work, with a job, seeking work, or on public emergency work in that week. The following are the most important types of persons for whom the 1940 labor force classification differs from the gainful worker classification in earlier censuses:

a. Seasonal workers.—Seasonal workers not working nor seeking work at the time of the census were not included in the 1940 labor force. Such persons were counted as gainful workers in earlier censuses if they reported an occupation.

b. New workers.—Persons without work experience seeking work were included in the 1940 labor force; most such persons were excluded from gainful workers in earlier censuses.

c. Inmates of institutions.—In 1940, all inmates of certain types of institutions were excluded from the labor force. In earlier censuses such persons were counted as gainful workers if they did regular work in the institution.

d. Retired and disabled persons.—Persons unable to work and retired persons were excluded from the labor force in 1940. In earlier censuses many such persons reported their former occupations and were counted as gainful workers.

Some persons who were actually in the labor force at the time of the 1940 census were not counted as such because they failed to answer the employment status questions; likewise, in earlier censuses many persons who were actually gainful workers were omitted from the figures because they failed to report their occupations.

These differences probably do not seriously affect the comparison of the total labor force in 1940 with the total number of gainful workers in 1930 and earlier years, since the groups classified as in the labor force but not counted as gainful workers at least partly offset the groups included among gainful workers that were excluded from the 1940 labor force. For particular age and sex classes of the population, however, the number returned as in the labor force in 1940 may have been far different from the number that would have been counted as gainful workers if the 1930 procedure had been used.

The 1940 labor force figures are restricted to persons 14 years old and over, whereas the number of gainful workers shown in earlier censuses included persons 10 years old and over. The number of workers 10 to 13 years old has become relatively small and no longer justifies the additional burden of enumeration and tabulation necessary to retain the 10-year age limit. In making comparisons between the 1940 labor force data and the gainful worker statistics in earlier census reports, the slight difference in age limits should be taken into consideration. The statistics shown in this report for earlier censuses have been adjusted to exclude those 10 to 13 years old.

Changes in census dates affect the comparison of 1940 data with those for earlier years. In 1900 the census was taken as of June 1, whereas in 1910 it was taken April 15, and in 1920, January 1; in both 1930 and 1940, the census date was April 1. These changes may have had a pronounced effect, especially in

agricultural areas, on the size of the group returned as gainful workers.

Labor force trends by age and sex.—In 1930, 84.1 percent of the males 14 years old and over were reported as gainful workers; in 1940, only 79.1 percent were classified as in the labor force. The corresponding figures for females were 24.3 percent in 1930 and 25.8 percent in 1940. These differences indicate a continuation of the trends in earlier decades toward decreasing participation in the labor market on the part of males and increasing participation on the part of females (table III).

Table III. PERCENT OF POPULATION IN THE LABOR FORCE, MARCH 1940, AND PERCENT GAINFUL WORKERS, 1900 AND 1930, BY AGE AND SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES

[Statistics based on a 5-percent sample. 1900 and 1930 totals for persons 14 years old and over include persons of unknown age]

SEX AND AGE	1940	1930	1900	CHANGE	
				1930 to 1940	1900 to 1930
Male, 14 and over.....	79.1	84.1	87.7	-5.0	-3.5
14 and 15 years.....	8.1	12.6	49.4	-4.5	-30.3
16 to 20 years.....	54.1	60.8	76.8	-6.7	-16.0
21 to 24 years.....	89.8	91.7	98.1	-1.9	-1.4
25 to 34 years.....	95.1	97.3	96.3	-2.2	+1.0
35 to 44 years.....	94.5	97.6	96.5	-3.0	+1.0
45 to 54 years.....	92.0	95.5	95.5	-4.5	+1.0
55 to 64 years.....	88.9	90.2	90.0	-6.8	+0.2
65 years and over.....	41.8	58.3	68.4	-16.5	-10.1
Female, 14 and over.....	25.8	24.3	20.4	+1.5	+3.9
14 and 15 years.....	2.3	5.8	18.2	-3.5	-12.4
16 to 20 years.....	31.0	34.0	32.3	-3.0	+1.7
21 to 24 years.....	45.0	41.8	30.8	+3.2	+11.0
25 to 34 years.....	38.3	27.8	19.9	+5.5	+7.9
35 to 44 years.....	27.2	22.6	15.6	+4.6	+7.0
45 to 54 years.....	22.5	20.4	14.7	+2.1	+5.7
55 to 64 years.....	16.8	16.1	13.2	+0.7	+2.9
65 years and over.....	6.1	8.0	9.1	-1.9	-1.1

For males in every age class, the percentage in the labor force in 1940 was below the corresponding percentage of gainful workers in 1930, but the difference was greatest among boys 14 to 20 and men 55 years of age and over. Sharp decreases in the proportions of workers among boys under 21 years old continued a long-term decline for this age group, which is associated with the extension of child-labor legislation and advancing educational standards. Even greater decreases for men 55 years of age and over represented a continuation of the trend toward earlier retirement, which has been in progress for many decades. For men between 25 and 44 years of age, the proportion in the labor force in 1940 was only slightly lower than the 1930 percentage of gainful workers. In previous decades, the percentage for men in this age class remained nearly constant, increasing very slightly between 1900 and 1930. The change between 1930 and 1940 for this group was probably due mainly to differences in the questions and definitions used. The amount of the decline for males 14 to 20 and for those 55 years old and over was also probably affected by differences in the questions and definitions used.

In the female population, decreases between 1930 and 1940 in the proportion of workers were confined to the age classes 14 to 20 and 65 years and over. Substantial increases occurred in the age groups between 21 and 44 years, and slight increases in those between 45 and 64 years. These increases were in accord with the long-term trend toward increasing employment of women, which has been in progress for at least half a century. Among the factors associated with this trend are decreases in the birth rate, increasing urbanization, and the introduction of modern housekeeping aids.

Trends in the nonwhite labor force.—In the nonwhite population, the percentages in the labor force decreased both for males and for females, and the decrease for males was much greater than that in the white population. Of nonwhite males 14 years old and over, 88.1 percent were gainful workers in 1930 and only 80.0 percent were in the labor force in 1940; the corresponding percentages for whites were 83.7 in 1930 and 79.0 in 1940 (table IV). Sharp declines occurred in the percentages for nonwhite males 14 to 17 and 65 years old and over. The percentages for nonwhite women declined in all age classes except those between 25 and 34 years, in which the 1940 proportions in the labor force were about the same as the 1930 proportions of gainful workers. For white women, by contrast, the percentages increased in all of the age groups from 18 to 64 years.

INTRODUCTION

TABLE IV. PERCENT OF POPULATION IN THE LABOR FORCE, MARCH 1940, AND PERCENT GAINFUL WORKERS, 1930, BY AGE, SEX, AND COLOR, FOR THE UNITED STATES
 [1940 statistics based on a 5-percent sample. 1930 totals for persons 14 years old and over include persons of unknown age. 1930 figures for white include Mexicans who were classified as nonwhite in the 1930 Census Reports]

SEX AND AGE	TOTAL			WHITE			NONWHITE		
	1940	1930	Change, 1930 to 1940	1940	1930	Change, 1930 to 1940	1940	1930	Change, 1930 to 1940
Male, 14 and over.....	79.1	84.1	-5.0	79.0	83.7	-4.7	80.0	88.1	-8.1
14 years.....	5.8	9.2	-3.4	4.6	6.8	-2.2	14.8	28.9	-14.1
15 years.....	10.5	16.3	-5.8	8.9	13.6	-4.8	24.1	38.5	-14.4
16 years.....	22.0	32.7	-10.7	20.0	30.2	-10.2	38.4	53.2	-14.8
17 years.....	37.1	49.9	-12.8	35.0	47.9	-12.9	54.4	65.7	-12.3
18 and 19 years.....	65.9	70.7	-4.8	65.0	69.4	-4.4	73.1	80.7	-7.6
20 to 24 years.....	88.1	89.9	-1.8	88.0	89.6	-1.6	88.5	93.0	-4.5
25 to 29 years.....	94.8	97.0	-2.2	95.1	97.1	-2.0	92.1	96.3	-4.2
30 to 34 years.....	95.4	97.6	-2.2	95.7	97.7	-2.0	92.7	96.7	-4.0
35 to 39 years.....	95.1	97.7	-2.6	95.4	97.8	-2.4	92.9	97.0	-4.1
40 to 44 years.....	94.1	97.6	-3.5	94.3	97.6	-3.3	91.7	97.1	-5.4
45 to 49 years.....	92.9	97.2	-4.3	93.1	97.2	-4.1	90.6	97.1	-6.5
50 to 54 years.....	91.0	95.7	-4.7	91.1	95.6	-4.5	89.9	96.6	-7.7
55 to 59 years.....	87.9	93.0	-5.1	87.9	92.8	-4.9	87.7	95.4	-7.7
60 to 64 years.....	79.0	86.3	-7.3	78.9	86.3	-7.4	80.5	92.2	-11.7
65 to 69 years.....	59.4	75.7	-16.3	59.0	74.9	-15.9	64.3	87.1	-22.8
70 to 74 years.....	38.4	57.5	-19.1	38.0	56.5	-18.5	43.7	75.2	-31.5
75 years and over.....	18.2	32.3	-14.1	17.8	30.8	-13.0	23.5	53.3	-29.8
Female, 14 and over.....	25.8	24.3	+1.5	24.5	22.3	+2.2	37.6	41.8	-4.2
14 years.....	1.6	4.0	-2.4	1.0	2.4	-1.4	5.9	16.5	-10.6
15 years.....	3.1	7.6	-4.5	2.2	5.9	-3.7	9.8	20.7	-10.9
16 years.....	8.8	17.0	-8.2	7.8	15.5	-7.7	16.3	27.9	-11.6
17 years.....	18.0	27.5	-9.5	17.1	26.6	-9.5	24.5	34.3	-9.8
18 and 19 years.....	40.1	40.5	-0.4	40.6	40.4	+0.2	36.7	40.8	-4.1
20 to 24 years.....	45.6	42.4	+3.2	45.7	42.0	+3.7	44.9	45.5	-0.6
25 to 29 years.....	35.5	31.0	+4.5	34.2	29.0	+5.2	46.1	46.1	-
30 to 34 years.....	30.9	24.4	+6.5	29.1	22.0	+7.1	46.2	46.0	+0.2
35 to 39 years.....	28.3	23.1	+5.2	26.1	20.4	+5.7	45.7	46.6	-1.1
40 to 44 years.....	26.0	21.9	+4.1	24.0	19.3	+4.7	44.3	46.9	-2.6
45 to 49 years.....	23.7	21.0	+2.7	21.9	18.4	+3.5	41.8	46.2	-4.4
50 to 54 years.....	21.2	19.7	+1.5	19.8	17.4	+2.4	37.6	44.7	-7.1
55 to 59 years.....	18.5	17.3	+1.2	17.4	15.6	+1.8	33.6	41.5	-7.9
60 to 64 years.....	14.8	14.7	+0.1	13.9	13.2	+0.7	27.8	37.6	-9.8
65 to 69 years.....	9.5	11.4	-1.9	8.8	10.2	-1.4	18.5	31.8	-13.3
70 to 74 years.....	5.1	7.6	-2.5	4.8	6.7	-1.9	9.5	22.9	-13.4
75 years and over.....	2.3	4.0	-1.7	2.1	3.3	-1.2	4.9	13.0	-8.1

These trends greatly reduced the differential between the two racial groups in the extent of participation in the labor market on the part of children, older men, and women 25 years old and over. The tendency toward equalization of the white and nonwhite percentages in the labor force was attributable partly to the migration of Negroes into urban areas, where the employment of children and aged workers is much less common than in rural areas. An important factor tending to reduce the differential for children 14 to 17 was the increase in school attendance of nonwhite children. On the other hand, the differences in the questions and definitions used in the two censuses may have affected the classification of nonwhites differently from that of whites.

Increase of married women in the labor force.—Increased employment of married women has been the principal source of the rise in the proportion of workers in the female population, which has continued at least since 1870. During the first thirty years of this century, the percentage of married women gainfully occupied more than doubled, rising from 5.6 percent in 1900 to 11.7 percent in 1930. There was also some increase in the employment of unmarried women. The proportion for single women 14 years old and over rose from 40.9 to 46.1 percent.³ The influx of married women into the labor market continued at an even faster rate between 1930 and 1940 than in earlier decades. During this decade the proportion of workers among married women jumped from 11.7 to 15.2 percent. The acceleration of the historic trend was probably due mainly to further declines in the birth rate, and to the tendency toward smaller homes and the spread of household conveniences such as washing machines and vacuum cleaners, which greatly lighten the burden of housekeeping. Moreover, during this decade of large-scale unemployment, some married women may have been forced to work because their husbands lost their jobs.

Among single women, the proportion in the labor force in 1940 was about the same as the proportion of gainful workers in 1930.

³ The data on marital status of the female population and of female gainful workers, presented in the census reports for 1930 and earlier years, refer to women 15 years old and over. The percentages quoted here for women 14 years old and over in 1900 and 1930 have been estimated on the assumption that all females 14 years of age were single.

Among widowed and divorced women, the percentage declined from 34.4 in 1930 to 29.7 in 1940. This decline was due partly to the fact that a relatively large proportion of widowed and divorced women are in the age class 65 years and over, in which the percentage of workers was falling off for all classes of the population. The decline for widowed and divorced women may have resulted also partly from differences in the questions and definitions used in the 1930 and 1940 censuses.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Employment status categories.—The employment status categories of persons in the labor force are defined below:

Employed (except on public emergency work).—The group classified as employed includes two subgroups: (a) "At work"—persons who worked for pay or profit at any time during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, in private work or nonemergency Federal, State, or local government work, or assisted without pay on a family farm or in a family business; and (b) "With a job but not at work"—persons not actually at work and not seeking work during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, but with jobs, businesses, or professional enterprises from which they were temporarily absent because of vacation, illness, industrial dispute, bad weather, or lay-off not exceeding 4 weeks with definite instructions to return to work on a specific date. The group "Employed (except on public emergency work)" includes not only employees but also proprietors, farmers, other self-employed persons, and unpaid family workers.

On public emergency work.—This category includes persons who, during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, were at work on, or assigned to, public emergency work projects conducted by the Work Projects Administration (WPA), the National Youth Administration (NYA), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), or State or local work relief agencies.

Seeking work.—This category represents persons without work of any sort in the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, who were actively seeking work during that week. It also includes persons not actively seeking work because there was no work to be had, such as unemployed workers in one-industry communities in which the plants were shut down; and persons not actively seeking work because of temporary illness.

The group seeking work is subdivided into experienced workers and new workers, the latter being persons who had not previously worked full time for one month or more. (See "New workers," below.)

Table V. EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF PERSONS IN THE LABOR FORCE, FOR THE UNITED STATES, URBAN AND RURAL: MARCH 1940

[Statistics based on a 5-percent sample]

EMPLOYMENT STATUS	United States	Urban	Rural-nonfarm	Rural-farm
Total in labor force.....	52,966,280	32,719,820	9,767,260	10,479,200
Employed (exc. on emerg. work)....	45,381,360	27,718,980	8,045,740	9,616,640
At work.....	44,203,740	26,981,100	7,770,400	9,452,240
With a job but not at work.....	1,177,620	737,880	275,340	164,400
On public emergency work.....	2,452,440	1,381,460	676,280	394,700
Seeking work.....	5,132,480	3,619,380	1,045,240	467,860
Experienced workers.....	4,401,500	3,088,340	906,060	407,100
New workers.....	730,980	531,040	139,180	60,760
Percent Distribution				
Total in labor force.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employed (exc. on emerg. work)....	85.7	84.7	82.4	91.8
At work.....	83.5	82.5	79.6	90.2
With a job but not at work.....	2.2	2.3	2.8	1.6
On public emergency work.....	4.6	4.2	6.9	3.8
Seeking work.....	9.7	11.1	10.7	4.5
Experienced workers.....	8.3	9.4	9.3	3.9
New workers.....	1.4	1.6	1.4	0.6

The distribution of the labor force by employment status is shown in table V for the United States and for urban and rural areas. During the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, 85.7 percent of the labor force in the United States were employed (except on public emergency work). The proportion employed was greatest in rural-farm areas, where 91.8 percent of the labor force were employed; only 84.7 percent of the urban, and 82.4 percent of the rural-nonfarm labor force were employed. The comparatively high percentage employed in the rural-farm labor force is attributable mainly to the fact that farmers and unpaid family farm workers are relatively free from the risk of complete unemployment.

There were 5,132,480 persons, or 9.7 percent of the labor force, who were seeking work during the census week. Of these, 3,619,380 were in urban areas, 1,045,240 were in rural-nonfarm, and 467,860 were in rural-farm areas. The geographical distribution of persons seeking work was affected by migration of unemployed workers. Some of the persons seeking work in urban areas, and probably also some of those in rural-nonfarm communities, had migrated from farms to look for jobs.

Misclassification of persons on public emergency work.— In the interpretation of the data for persons on public emergency work, allowance must be made for the misclassification in the census returns of considerable numbers of public emergency workers. The number of persons reported in the census as on public emergency work in the United States (according to the complete count of the census returns) was 2,529,606, whereas the number recorded on the pay rolls of the Federal emergency work agencies at about the time of the census was 2,906,196 excluding the NYA Student Work Program, and 3,377,978 including that program. The amount of misclassification varied greatly from State to State. Among the factors that were responsible for the misclassification were confusion on the part of the enumerators and respondents regarding the classification of certain types of public emergency work, and reluctance on the part of some persons to report that they were on emergency work.

The most common type of misclassification was the reporting of emergency workers as "at work" rather than as "on public emergency work." Persons on the NYA Student Work Program were very frequently returned as in school and not in the labor force. There is also evidence that a considerable number of emergency workers were classified as seeking work. Since the amount of misclassification undoubtedly differed considerably among various age and sex groups, the census data on personal characteristics and household relationships of persons on public emergency work should be used with caution.

Number of unemployed.— The total number of unemployed, as usually defined, includes (1) persons seeking work and without any form of public or private employment, and (2) those on public emergency work programs established to provide jobs for the unemployed. Because of the misclassification of public emergency workers, the census total of these two groups understates

the amount of unemployment. More satisfactory figures can be obtained by adding to the census figures for persons seeking work, the number of persons on pay rolls of the Federal emergency work agencies at the time of the census. This procedure (using the number of persons seeking work shown by the complete count of the census returns) yields a total of 8 million unemployed during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, if persons on the NYA Student Work Program are excluded, or 8,471,788 if the persons on that program are regarded as unemployed.

These unemployment figures tend to be understated by the number of persons on State or local emergency work programs (for which adequate statistics could not be obtained), and by the number of unemployed persons among those whose employment status was not reported. They tend to be overstated to the extent that some of the agency pay-roll figures apply to a period longer than a single week, and to the extent that workers on Federal emergency work projects were reported as seeking work. The available evidence on the importance of these factors indicates that their net effect upon the total volume of unemployment was small.

New workers.— Persons seeking work are subdivided into experienced workers and new workers, the latter being persons who had not previously worked full time for one month or more at a single job. Persons seeking work for whom a report on work experience was lacking were classified as experienced workers. New workers represent a serious problem in periods of large-scale unemployment, because lack of work experience is one of the chief handicaps of young people trying to gain a foothold in the labor market at such times. The total seeking work in March 1940, included 4,401,500 experienced workers and 730,980 new workers; practically all of the latter were under 25 years of age (table 19). The proportion of new workers was greatest in urban areas; in rural-farm areas only six-tenths of 1 percent of the labor force were new workers seeking work, since most farm youths had had opportunity to gain experience on the home farm.

Experienced labor force.— Some of the tables in this report present data for the experienced labor force, which includes employed persons, persons on public emergency work, and persons seeking work other than new workers.

Personal characteristics of employed and unemployed workers.— The relationship between age and unemployment at the time of the census is illustrated in diagram 2, which shows the percentages seeking work and on public emergency work for various age groups of the labor force. The impact of unemployment was most severe upon young people and upon those approaching the age of retirement. The proportion unemployed was greatest for persons 16 and 17 years old; 35.4 percent of the labor force in this age group were reported as seeking work or on public emergency work. Large proportions of the unemployed youths under 20 were new workers who had never held a full-time job for one month or more. Of persons 55 to 64 years old in the labor force, 14.6 percent were unemployed. Unemployment rates were considerably lower in the age classes between 25 and 44 years. The age differences in unemployment rates reflect the difficulties encountered by inexperienced young workers trying to gain a foothold in the labor market during this period, and by older workers handicapped in the competition for jobs by old age and disability.

A considerable amount of unemployment among young people is almost inevitable in the process of leaving school and entering the labor force, even in times of relatively full employment. At the time of the 1940 census, the number of persons annually entering the labor force, at each single year of age in the group 14 to 19 years, exceeded the number who found jobs at that age, so that the number reported as seeking work or on public emergency work was greater for each successive age (diagram 1). The turning point was reached at age 20, when the increase in the number of young persons employed exceeded the increase in the labor force, so that the number seeking work or on public emergency work was less than in the preceding year of age.

From 20 to about 35 years of age, the number of males unemployed grew smaller in each succeeding age. Between the ages of 35 and 55, it remained almost constant, but since the number of men in the labor force was smaller in each successive age, the unemployed formed a growing proportion of the labor force. Between about 55 and 65 years, the number of unemployed men began to decrease from age to age, but the number in the labor force decreased more rapidly, so that the unemployed continued to increase as a percentage of the labor force. After about age 65, the age-to-age decrease in unemployment exceeded the

DIAGRAM 2.- PERCENT OF LABOR FORCE SEEKING WORK AND ON PUBLIC EMERGENCY WORK, BY AGE, FOR THE UNITED STATES: MARCH 1940

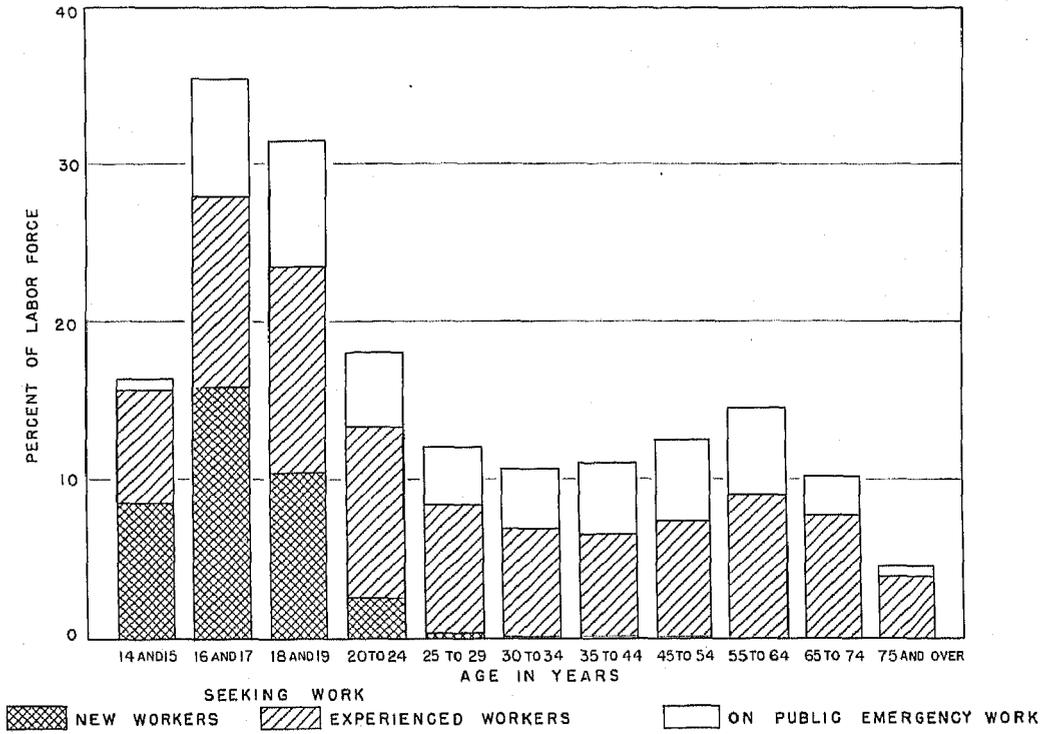
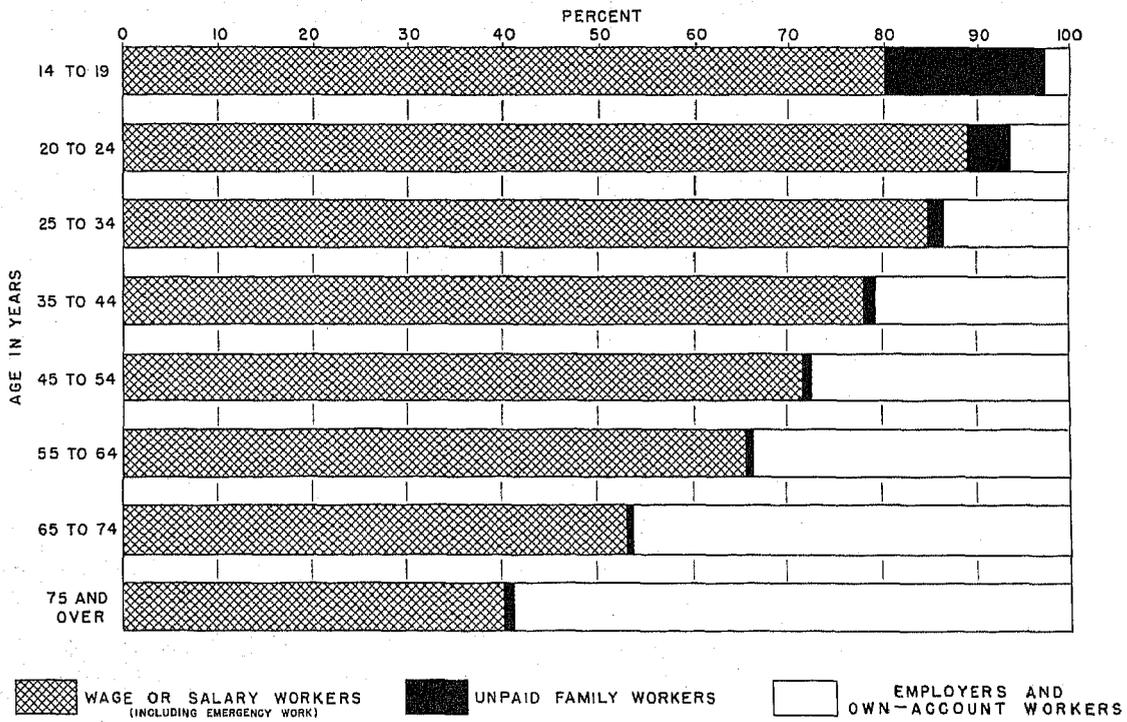


DIAGRAM 3.- PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY CLASS OF WORKER FOR THE EXPERIENCED LABOR FORCE, BY AGE, FOR THE UNITED STATES: MARCH 1940



decrease in the labor force, so that both the number and the proportion unemployed dwindled to small figures at ages over 70.

The unemployed do not include older men who had given up the search for jobs because they could not compete with younger workers. Men who lost their jobs at ages over 65 tended to retire from the labor force, so that at the upper limit of the age scale, the labor force was composed almost exclusively of employed workers, the majority of whom were employers and self-employed persons not subject to the risk of being dismissed.

For women, the variations in unemployment from age to age were somewhat different from those for men, because women tended to leave the labor force at an earlier age. The majority of the women in the labor force, employed and unemployed alike, were under 30 years of age. Between 30 and 60 years, the number of unemployed women became gradually smaller at successive ages, remaining at an almost constant proportion of the female labor force. At ages 60 and over, the decrease from age to age in the number of women unemployed was greater than the decrease in the female labor force, so that the proportion of women unemployed fell off.

Unemployment rates were higher for nonwhites than for whites. Persons reported as seeking work or on public emergency work represented 16.8 percent of the nonwhite labor force, and 14.0 percent of the white (table 11). This differential in the incidence of unemployment in the two racial groups existed in spite of the fact that a relatively large part of the nonwhite population lives in farming areas, where it was comparatively easy to find some work, if only as an unpaid helper on the family farm. The difference was much greater in urban areas, where 23.1 percent of the nonwhite and only 14.5 percent of the white labor force were reported as unemployed. In rural-farm areas, the unemployment rate was lower for nonwhite workers than for whites.

Unemployment was especially severe among nonwhite workers in the Northern cities. In urban areas of the North Central States, 33.8 percent of the nonwhite labor force were seeking work or on public emergency work, as compared with 13.7 percent for the whites (table 14). Nonwhites in Northern cities were handicapped in the competition for employment by the preference of most employers for white workers, and by their comparative lack of education and skill. Large proportions of them were unskilled laborers and domestic service workers—occupations in which unemployment rates were comparatively high.

Household relationships of employed and unemployed workers.—Statistics on employment status of persons in the labor force by household relationship are given in this report in order to indicate the incidence of unemployment among workers with dependents. Additional information on this subject is presented in the publications giving statistics for families.

Unemployment was comparatively uncommon among household heads, most of whom were breadwinners responsible for supporting a family, and among self-supporting groups such as lodgers and other nonrelatives of heads. Only 11.1 percent of the male heads of households in the labor force were reported as seeking work or on public emergency work, whereas the corresponding figure for male relatives of heads was 23.8 percent, and for female relatives (other than wives), 19.7 percent. Moreover, the proportion unemployed was considerably lower for male heads who were married and living with their wives, of whom 10.7 percent were unemployed, than for other male heads, of whom 15.6 percent were unemployed (table 19).

These differences are attributable partly to the fact that most of the relatives of heads were young persons, but by no means all of the differential was due to this factor, since the proportions unemployed in each separate age class were much higher for male relatives than for household heads. Special consideration for persons with dependents on the part of employers hiring and laying off workers was probably an important cause of the differences. Other factors were the relatively high proportion of employers and own-account workers among household heads, and differences in the occupational characteristics of workers in the various relationship categories.

Wives of household heads presented an exception to the rule of comparatively high unemployment rates for the relationship groups composed primarily of dependents; only 6.3 percent of the wives in the labor force were reported as seeking work or on public emergency work. The figures for wives seeking work were probably reduced by a tendency on the part of some enumerators to return wives as engaged in own home housework and not in the labor force if they were not actually employed during the census week, neglecting the possibility that they might have been also seeking work.

The proportion of unemployed workers responsible for the support of dependents is an important consideration in the

analysis of the economic impact of unemployment, and of the resulting need for public assistance. In March 1940, 43.4 percent of the persons reported as seeking work or on public emergency work were household heads; 44.8 percent were sons, daughters, and other relatives, except wives, of heads; and 2.7 percent were wives of heads. The remaining 9.1 percent were boarders, lodgers, residents of institutions, and other persons not related to household heads. A relatively large proportion of the unemployed heads of households were on public emergency work because preference in emergency work assignments was usually given to the principal family breadwinners.

CLASS OF WORKER AND MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUP

Class-of-worker categories.—In the tables in this report giving statistics by class of worker, the experienced labor force is subdivided into wage or salary workers, employers and own-account workers, and unpaid family workers. For employed workers and for persons on public emergency work, the classification by class of worker refers to their current work or job during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940. For experienced workers seeking work, it refers to the last job of 1 month or more. New workers are not classified by class of worker. The composition of each category is described below:

Wage or salary workers.—This class consists of persons who in their current or last job, worked as employees for wages or salary (in cash or kind). It includes not only factory operatives, laborers, clerks, etc., who worked for wages, but also persons working for tips or for room and board, salesmen and other employees working for commissions, and salaried business managers, corporation executives, and government officials. All persons whose current or latest jobs were on public emergency work are classified as wage or salary workers.

Employers and own-account workers.—This group consists of persons who, in their current or latest work, operated their own business enterprises. It includes not only the owner-operators of large stores and manufacturing establishments, but also small merchants, independent craftsmen, farmers, professional men, peddlers, and other persons conducting enterprises of their own. It does not include managers paid to operate businesses owned by other persons or by corporations; such workers are classified as wage or salary workers. Enumerators were instructed to classify as employers, persons who employed one or more wage or salary workers in their business enterprises, and to return as own-account workers those who employed no helpers. Examination of the returns revealed, however, that many enumerators had failed to distinguish properly between these two groups, and therefore, the two categories are combined.

Unpaid family workers.—This class is composed of persons who assisted without pay on farms or in stores or other enterprises operated by other members of their families. The great majority of unpaid family workers are farm laborers. The class-of-worker composition of the labor force, by sex, is shown in table VI. Wage or salary workers constituted 77.0 percent of the labor force in March 1940. The labor force was composed of 40,774,860 wage or salary workers (including 2,452,440 persons reported as on public emergency work), 10,021,500 employers and own-account workers, 1,438,940 unpaid family workers, and 730,980 new workers.

Table VI. CLASS OF WORKER OF PERSONS IN THE LABOR FORCE, BY SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES: MARCH 1940

[Statistics based on a 5-percent sample]

CLASS OF WORKER	NUMBER			PERCENT DISTRIBUTION		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
In labor force.....	52,966,280	39,958,800	13,007,480	100.0	100.0	100.0
Experienced labor force:						
Wage or salary workers.....	40,774,860	29,461,740	11,313,120	77.0	73.7	87.0
Employed (exc. emerg.) or seeking work.....	38,322,420	27,459,200	10,864,220	72.4	68.7	83.5
On public emergency work.....	2,452,440	2,009,540	442,900	4.6	5.0	3.5
Employers and own-account workers.....	10,021,500	9,038,100	983,400	18.9	22.6	7.5
Unpaid family workers.....	1,438,940	1,020,640	418,300	2.7	2.6	3.2
New workers.....	730,980	488,820	242,160	1.4	1.1	2.2

In rural areas, the class-of-worker composition of the labor force differs enormously from that in urban areas, because of differences in occupational characteristics and in the organi-

zation of trade and industry. In urban areas, wage or salary workers formed 88.6 percent of the experienced labor force, and only 10.8 percent were employers and own-account workers (table 11). In rural-nonfarm areas, employers and own-account workers constituted 14.2 percent of the experienced labor force; in such areas there are many small merchants and independent blacksmiths, carpenters, repairmen, etc. In rural-farm areas, 49.7 percent of the experienced labor force were employers and own-account workers, the great majority of whom were farmers; and 11.1 percent of the experienced labor force were unpaid family workers. In urban and rural-nonfarm areas the proportion of unpaid family workers was negligible.

In some cases it was difficult for enumerators to determine accurately the class of worker. Wage or salary workers in some occupations, such as salesmen working for commissions, were hard to distinguish from own-account workers, either on the basis of the form of compensation or of relationships with employers. Some enumerators tended to return as employers, employees such as executives, managers, and foremen, who were responsible for hiring and dismissing other workers. Unpaid family workers were sometimes classified as own-account workers by enumerators who regarded all workers in the family enterprise as partners. The returns were carefully edited with reference to the occupation and industry returns and other information given on the schedule, but not all of the inaccuracies could be corrected. The class-of-worker data should therefore be interpreted with some caution.

In the tables in this report, persons for whom class of worker was not reported have been included among private wage or salary workers, unless there was evidence to the contrary. In Volume II of the Reports on Population, the number of employed workers (except those on public emergency work) for whom class of worker could not be determined was shown separately for each State, city, and county. The number of employed persons for whom class of worker could not be determined was 239,108, or 0.5 percent of the total employed, according to the complete count of the census returns.

Employment status of class-of-worker groups.— The risk of complete unemployment is far greater for wage or salary workers than for employers, own-account workers, and unpaid family workers because the latter groups become totally unemployed only when they (or their relatives operating the family enterprise) are forced out of business. Thus 16.2 percent of the wage or salary workers in the United States were seeking work or on public emergency work during the census week, while only 2.3 percent of the employers and own-account workers and 1.5 percent of the unpaid family workers were seeking work (table 11). The comparative immunity of self-employed workers to total unemployment does not necessarily mean that their economic situation was favorable, since they may have made very small gains or even suffered heavy losses while they remained in business. Similarly, many of the unpaid family workers may have contributed little to the profits of the family enterprise. Unpaid family work was often little better than a makeshift activity for sons and daughters of farmers and of other self-employed workers when they could not find other employment. Because of these differences in unemployment risks, the class-of-worker composition of the labor force should be taken into account in the analysis of data on employment status.

The figures shown in table 11 do not provide the basis for a precise comparison of the unemployment rates for the various class-of-worker groups, because persons on public emergency work, who are by definition wage or salary workers, are included in the proportion unemployed for wage or salary workers, although some of them may have been employers, own-account workers, or unpaid family workers before they became unemployed. Allowance for this factor, however, would not greatly affect the contrast between the unemployment rates of wage or salary workers and other workers.

The importance of the relationship between the employment status distribution of the labor force and its class-of-worker composition is illustrated by table VII, which presents percentages of unemployed for the labor force in urban and rural areas, contrasted with the corresponding percentages for wage or salary workers.

In rural-farm areas the proportion of the total labor force reported in the census as unemployed was much smaller than in urban areas because the majority of the rural-farm workers were employers, own-account workers, and unpaid family workers. For wage or salary workers, the proportion reported as seeking work and on public emergency work in rural-farm areas was considerably greater than that in urban areas.

It should also be borne in mind that the opportunity to work as an unpaid helper on the family farm when other work failed

tended to reduce the volume of total unemployment in farming areas. Many of the unpaid family workers in rural-farm areas would have been engaged in other work if more paid jobs had been available on neighboring farms or in industry and trade.

Table VII. PERCENT SEEKING WORK OR ON EMERGENCY WORK, FOR ALL PERSONS IN THE LABOR FORCE AND FOR WAGE OR SALARY WORKERS, BY SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES, URBAN AND RURAL: MARCH 1940

[Statistics based on a 5-percent sample]

AREA	PERCENT OF LABOR FORCE SEEKING WORK OR ON PUBLIC EMERGENCY WORK		PERCENT OF WAGE OR SALARY WORKERS SEEKING WORK OR ON PUBLIC EMERGENCY WORK	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
United States.....	14.7	13.3	17.6	13.4
Urban.....	16.1	13.6	15.5	12.2
Rural-nonfarm.....	18.7	13.7	20.3	13.0
Rural-farm.....	7.8	11.3	19.6	14.0

Personal characteristics of class-of-worker groups.— There is a tendency for workers to shift from jobs as employees to independent work as employers and own-account workers as they grow older. This tendency is illustrated in diagram 3. Very few persons under 25 years of age were employers or own-account workers during the census week, but in the succeeding age groups the proportion of such workers was progressively larger, so that at ages of 75 years and over they constituted 58.8 percent of the experienced labor force. The shift was most pronounced in rural-farm areas, where the proportion of employers and own-account workers was 4.6 percent in the age group 14 to 19 years, and 36.4 percent in the group 75 years old and over (table 11). In urban areas, the corresponding figures were 1.3 percent in the group 14 to 19 years and 36.6 percent in the group 75 years old and over. The shift was more marked for male than for female workers. In all of the age classes, the majority of the women in the labor force were wage or salary workers.

The high proportion of employers and own-account workers in the upper age groups was attributable mainly to shifts of individual workers from jobs as employees to the operation of independent enterprises, but it was probably also due partly to the tendency for self-employed workers and employers to remain in the labor force longer than wage or salary workers.

Nonwhite workers tended to be employed as wage or salary workers, or as unpaid family workers, to a greater extent than whites; few nonwhites were employers or own-account workers. In urban areas, only 7.4 percent of the nonwhite experienced workers, as compared with 11.2 percent of the whites, were employers and own-account workers. In rural-farm areas, the nonwhite labor force included a smaller proportion of self-employed workers, and a much larger percentage of unpaid family workers than the white labor force. Unpaid family workers constituted 38.2 percent of the nonwhite and only 10.8 percent of the white females in the rural-farm experienced labor force. The corresponding figures for males were 13.3 percent for nonwhites and 9.6 percent for whites. Most nonwhite farmers are engaged in relatively small farming operations, in which they rely to a large extent upon family labor.

Household relationships of class-of-worker groups.— The majority of employers and self-employed workers are heads of households. Employers and own-account workers made up 32.4 percent of the male and 22.6 percent of the female heads of households who were employed (except on public emergency work) during the census week. The corresponding proportion for male relatives of heads was 12.4 percent; for wives of heads it was 11.0 percent, and for female relatives other than wives, only 3.4 percent (table 27). The tendency for employers and own-account workers to be heads of households is explained partly by the fact that both household heads and employers and own-account workers are groups composed primarily of older men, and partly by the fact that in a family enterprise, the person responsible for the operation of the business is likely to be regarded as the household head.

The distribution by household relationship of unpaid family workers differed markedly in urban and rural areas. In rural-farm areas, 91.2 percent of the unpaid family workers employed during the census week were sons, daughters, and other relatives (except wives) of heads, and only 8.2 percent were wives of heads. In urban areas, the employment of children in family enterprises was much less common; here wives of heads, chiefly the wives of retail store proprietors, made up 37.7 percent of

the unpaid family workers. Although many housewives living on farms are engaged at least to some extent in work connected with the farming enterprise, relatively few of them were classified in the census as unpaid family workers, because enumerators were instructed to return as not in the labor force persons engaged only in occasional work or incidental chores. In addition, many housewives doing regular farm work may have been reported as not in the labor force by enumerators who neglected to obtain full information.

A few heads of households are shown in the tables in this report as unpaid family workers. Most of these cases are probably the results of occasional errors in enumeration and in the coding and tabulation of the returns.

Occupations of workers in various household relationship groups.— In order to give additional information regarding the types of employment of workers in various household relationship classes, data on major occupation group are presented in this report for employed workers in each relationship group. The 10 major occupation groups shown here are principal subdivisions of the detailed occupational classification, comprising 451 specific occupation titles, which was used in the 1940 census. The specific occupations in each of the major groups are shown in the tables in Volume III of the Reports on Population, entitled "The Labor Force."

Household heads are employed to a relatively large extent in proprietary, managerial, and skilled-worker occupations, while the majority of the relatives of heads are clerical and sales workers, semi-skilled operatives, domestic and other service workers, and laborers (table 26). These occupational differences are related to differences in the age distribution of workers in the various relationship categories. They were an important factor contributing to the differences in unemployment rates during the census week among various household relationship groups.

Statistics on major occupation group for employed family heads, classified according to characteristics of their families, appear in the reports presenting statistics for families.

PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

Two types of information relating to part-time employment were obtained in the 1940 Population Census: (a) Hours worked during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, for persons at work (except on public emergency work) during that week, and (b) months worked in 1939, for all persons 14 years old and over (except those in institutions). The statistics on these subjects presented here are designed to show the personal characteristics and household relationships of part-time workers, seasonal workers, and others intermittently employed. These figures supplement the data on characteristics of persons who were unemployed during the census week and give additional information on the degree of utilization of available labor supplies.

Hours worked during the census week.— Since the data on hours worked presented in this report are designed for use in the analysis of part-time employment, persons who worked 40 or more hours during the census week, most of whom were presumably employed full time, are presented as a single category. The complete classification, showing hours worked for persons working 40 or more hours, is presented in the report entitled, "The Labor Force—Sample Statistics, Industrial Characteristics."

Of the 44,203,740 persons who were at work (except on public emergency work) during the census week, 7,400,820 were reported as having worked less than 40 hours during the week (table 29). Of these, 3,342,760 worked less than 30 hours, 2,055,640 worked 30 to 34 hours, and 2,002,420 worked 35 to 39 hours.

Several considerations affect the interpretation of these figures as indications of the prevalence of part-time employment during the census week. In the first place, a considerable number of persons working 35 to 39 hours, and some of those working 30 to 34 hours, were full-time workers in industries and localities where the full-time week was less than 40 hours. In the second place, many persons working only a few hours each week did not want more work. In the third place, for some types of workers, such as professional workers, business men, and unpaid family workers, the number of hours worked often could not be accurately determined, because such workers do not usually follow regular schedules of work. Finally, there were 2,751,900 persons at work during the census week for whom the number of hours worked was not reported. For these reasons, the data on hours worked give only a rough indication of the number of persons employed part time. Neverthe-

less, they probably give a reasonably accurate picture of the personal characteristics of part-time workers.

Months worked in 1939.— The data on months worked in 1939 provide a measure of part-time work in terms of a full year, taking account of seasonal and other intermittent employment and of monthly variations in unemployment, which are not taken into account in the statistics relating to activity during the census week. Information on work in 1939 was obtained for all persons 14 years old and over (except those in institutions), including persons not in the labor force as well as those who were in the labor force during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940. The reports were made in terms of equivalent full-time weeks of work for pay or profit, including public emergency work and unpaid family work. A full-time week was defined as the number of hours locally regarded as full time for the given occupation and industry. Paid vacations (except the summer vacations of school teachers who did no other work during the summer), and other absences with pay, were counted as time worked.

The returns for weeks worked in 1939 have been converted into months in the tables in this report, because a large proportion of the reports were only approximate, and did not represent valid statements of the precise number of weeks of work.⁴ The groupings of months worked that are used in this report are listed below with their equivalents in terms of weeks worked as reported.

Number of months worked	Reported number of weeks worked
Without work in 1939.....	0 weeks
With work in 1939:	
Less than 2 months.....	1 to 6 weeks
2 months.....	7 to 10 weeks
3 months.....	11 to 14 weeks
4 and 5 months.....	15 to 23 weeks
6 to 8 months.....	24 to 35 weeks
9 to 11 months.....	36 to 49 weeks
12 months.....	50 to 52 weeks

The data on months worked in 1939 for persons 14 years old and over, classified by employment status during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, are summarized in table VIII. There were 50,800,680 persons, representing 50.9 percent of the population 14 years old and over (excluding inmates of institutions), who reported that they had worked in 1939. The actual total of persons who had worked at some time during that year was probably somewhat greater than this figure, since information on work in 1939 was not obtained for persons in institutions during the census week, and since there were 11,114,860 persons 14 years old and over not in institutions for whom reports on this subject were lacking. Most of the persons for whom months worked were not reported, and the great majority of the 37,957,860 persons reported as without work in 1939, were not in the labor force during the census week. There is evidence that, for persons not in the labor force at the time of the census, the data on work in 1939 were incomplete, and that many of those who failed to report, or were reported as not having worked, had actually been employed at some time in the year. (See the report entitled "Characteristics of Persons Not in the Labor Force.")

The group reported as having worked in 1939 was made up of 30,458,000 persons who worked twelve months and 20,342,680 who worked less than twelve months. Those who worked less than the full year included persons who were seeking work at some time in 1939; persons employed part time during all or a part of the year; new entrants into the labor force who began to work in 1939; persons who became disabled, retired, or otherwise withdrew from the labor force during that year; seasonal workers

⁴ This lack of precision was evidenced by a marked tendency for enumerators to report weeks worked in multiples of four, indicating that they had ascertained the approximate number of months worked, and multiplied by four to obtain the number of weeks. In converting the returns to months, it was necessary to take account of the slight error that resulted from the enumerators' procedure of multiplying the number of months by four instead of by four and one-third. The class intervals were so chosen that the weekly equivalent of any given number of months would always fall in the same interval, whether the conversion was made on the basis of four or four and one-third weeks per month. Thus, 9 months might be figured incorrectly as 36 weeks or correctly as 39 weeks, but both figures fall in the group 36 to 49 weeks, which is equivalent to 9 to 11 months. In the case of 12 months, however, this procedure was not used, since it was apparent that enumerators had seldom used 48 weeks as the equivalent of 12 months.

DIAGRAM 4.—PERCENT REPORTING LESS THAN 40 HOURS WORKED DURING THE WEEK OF MARCH 24-30, 1940, BY HOURS WORKED, FOR PERSONS AT WORK, BY AGE AND SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES

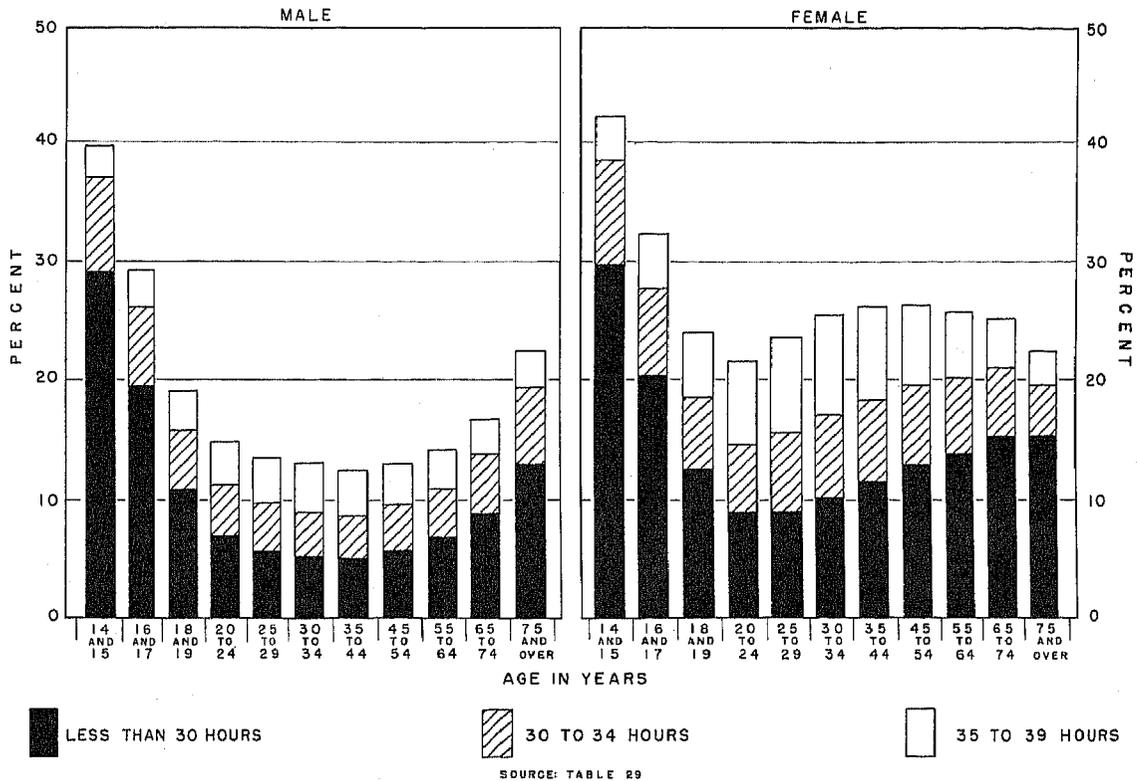
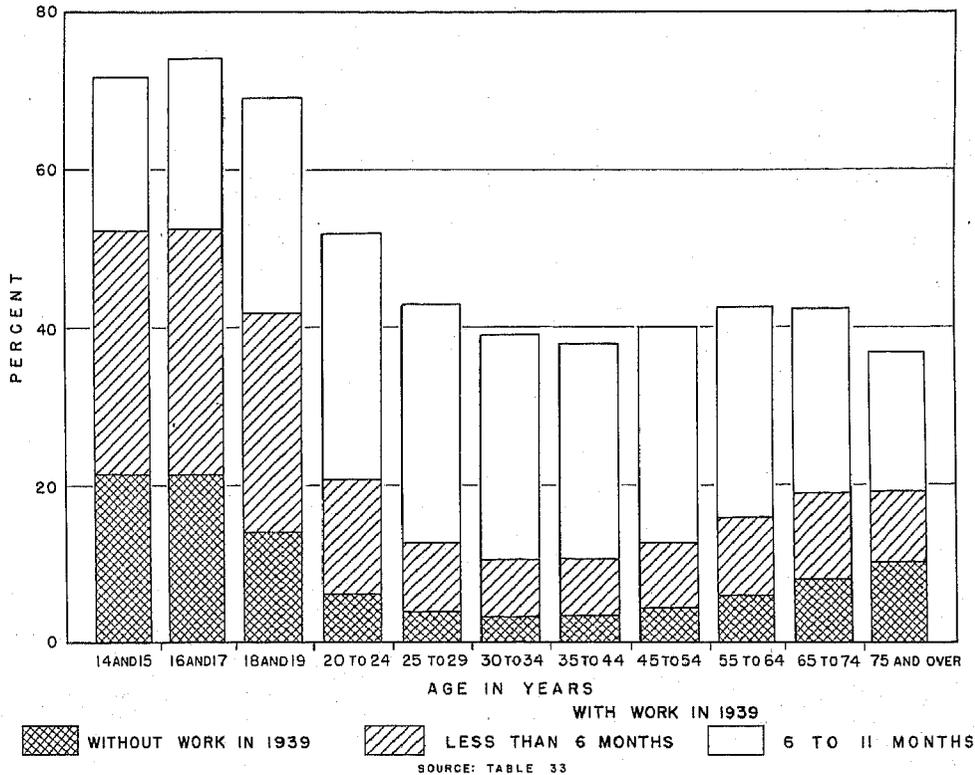


DIAGRAM 5.—PERCENT REPORTING LESS THAN 12 MONTHS WORK IN 1939 BY MONTHS WORKED, FOR PERSONS WHO WERE WAGE OR SALARY WORKERS IN MARCH 1940, BY AGE, FOR THE UNITED STATES



regularly employed for only a part of the year; and miscellaneous intermittent workers, such as women who took temporary jobs and withdrew from the labor market when not employed. Of the persons who reported that they had worked in 1939, but had worked less than twelve months, 8.2 percent were not in the labor force during the census week.

Table VIII. MONTHS WORKED IN 1939 BY PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER (EXCEPT PERSONS IN INSTITUTIONS), BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS IN MARCH 1940, FOR THE UNITED STATES

MONTHS WORKED IN 1939	Population 14 years and over (exc. in institutions)	IN LABOR FORCE, MARCH 1940				Not in labor force, March 1940
		Total	Employed (exc. on emergency work)	On emergency work	Seeking work	
Total.....	99,878,400	52,966,280	45,981,360	2,452,440	5,132,480	46,907,120
Without work in 1939	87,957,860	3,425,360	1,581,760	177,140	1,716,460	84,532,500
With work in 1939...	50,800,680	49,171,080	42,914,480	2,207,580	3,049,020	2,689,600
Less than 2 months	954,080	675,280	366,920	85,680	222,680	278,800
2 months.....	1,097,160	847,600	508,220	85,440	258,940	249,560
3 months.....	1,361,400	1,138,840	714,640	123,460	300,740	222,560
4 or 5 months.....	2,677,960	2,372,540	1,606,880	252,440	518,720	305,440
6 to 8 months.....	6,445,160	6,098,240	4,659,980	564,880	868,380	351,920
9 to 11 months.....	7,806,900	7,556,700	6,482,680	597,940	476,080	280,200
12 months.....	30,456,000	29,486,680	28,878,660	497,740	418,480	971,120
Work in 1939 not reported.....	11,114,860	1,369,840	935,120	67,720	367,000	9,745,020
Percent Distribution						
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Without work in 1939	88.0	6.5	3.4	7.2	33.4	78.6
With work in 1939...	50.9	90.9	94.6	90.0	59.4	5.6
Less than 2 months	1.0	1.3	0.8	3.5	4.3	0.6
2 months.....	1.1	1.6	1.1	3.5	4.9	0.5
3 months.....	1.4	2.2	1.6	5.0	5.9	0.5
4 or 5 months.....	2.7	4.5	3.5	10.3	10.0	0.7
6 to 8 months.....	6.5	11.5	10.3	23.0	16.9	0.8
9 to 11 months.....	7.8	14.3	14.3	24.4	9.3	0.5
12 months.....	30.5	55.7	68.0	20.3	21.1	2.1
Work in 1939 not reported.....	11.1	2.6	2.1	2.8	7.2	20.8

The relation between unemployment during the census week and idleness during the preceding year is illustrated by the fact that 84.8 percent of the persons seeking work at the time of the census reported that they had not worked, or had worked less than a full year in 1939; 33.4 percent reported no work in 1939 and 25.2 percent had worked, but less than six months. Of employed workers (excluding those on public emergency work), on the other hand, only 35.0 percent reported that they had not worked, or had worked less than twelve months, and only 3.4 percent reported no work in 1939.

These figures give only an approximate indication of the number of months during which the persons were unemployed in 1939, because of three complications. In the first place, the number of months worked includes months on public emergency work, so that some of the persons reporting twelve months worked in 1939 may have been unemployed during the whole year. In the second place, some of the months in which persons did not work may have represented periods during which they were not in the labor force. Finally, months worked were to be reported in terms of equivalent full-time months, so that for persons working short hours the number of months worked in 1939 may have been less than the number of months during which they had some employment. The last consideration is especially important for persons on public emergency work, since the hours of work on public emergency projects were usually considerably less than those in nonemergency employment.

For employers, own-account workers, and unpaid family workers, data on months worked in 1939 are less significant and less reliable than those for wage or salary workers. For this reason, the detailed tables in this report showing months worked according to personal characteristics and household relationship are presented only for wage or salary workers (excluding those on public emergency work). Even for this class-of-worker group, the figures represent only an approximate statement of the amount of work in 1939. Accurate reports frequently could not be obtained for persons who worked intermittently at many separate times during the year. In many cases the information was not obtained from the worker himself, but from a relative or other member of the household who may not have been able to report accurately the amount of employment in 1939. The data for wage or salary workers, however, are believed to be accurate enough to provide a valid description of the characteristics of persons who worked only a part of the year 1939.

Personal characteristics of part-time workers.—The relationship between part-time employment and age is shown in diagram 4, in terms of hours worked by persons at work during the census week, and in diagram 5, in terms of months worked in 1939 by wage or salary workers. Both diagrams indicate that part-time work was most prevalent among workers under 20 years of age, and was also comparatively common among persons nearing the age of retirement. The relation between age and part-time work was similar to that between age and unemployment during the census week (diagram 2), except in the age groups 65 years and over. In these oldest groups, part-time employment tended to increase with advancing age, while unemployment declined because of retirements from the labor force.

The exceedingly high proportion of persons under 20 years old who worked less than 30 hours during the census week was due largely to the employment of students in part-time jobs outside of school hours. The large proportion of wage or salary workers under 20 years old who worked less than three months in 1939 represents partly young persons employed after school hours, partly those employed during school vacations, and partly young persons who had entered the labor force as full-time workers since the beginning of 1939.

Very few men 25 to 54 years of age were employed less than 30 hours during the census week or worked less than six months in 1939, but part-time work for women in these age groups was fairly common. Such women often held part-time jobs in stores, schools, etc., in addition to keeping house, and many of them were seasonal workers.

The relatively large proportions of persons engaged in intermittent and short-time employment at ages of 55 years and over was probably attributable mainly to a high incidence of temporary disabilities, and to physical handicaps which force some older workers to work only a few hours a week, or a few weeks a year. The proportion of persons with a job but not at work during the census week was also considerably greater among older than among younger workers (table 12).

Among nonwhite workers, the proportions employed part time, like the proportions unemployed, were considerably greater than among whites. Persons working less than 40 hours represented 17.6 percent of the nonwhite males, as compared with 13.7 percent of the white males, at work (except on public emergency work) during the census week (table 29). In the case of females, the difference was even greater; the percentages working less than 40 hours were 32.7 percent for nonwhite and 23.6 percent for white women. These differences were due partly to the occupational distribution of the nonwhites, comparatively large proportions of whom were employed as unpaid family workers on farms and as domestic servants. The proportions of wage or salary workers who worked less than six months in 1939 were also considerably greater in the case of nonwhites than in the case of whites (table 33).

Household relationships of part-time workers.—Part-time, seasonal, and other intermittent employment in 1939, like unemployment at the time of the census, were most common among workers in the household relationship groups that are composed mainly of dependents. For example, 55.7 percent of the male relatives of household heads and 50.2 percent of the female relatives (other than wives) who were wage or salary workers at the time of the census, reported that they had not worked, or had worked less than twelve months in 1939. For male heads of households, the corresponding figure was only 36.4 percent (table 34). For wives of household heads, the proportion not working or working less than twelve months (51.7 percent) was even higher than for other female relatives although comparatively few wives were reported as unemployed during the census week.

Statistics on hours of work during the census week were not tabulated by household relationship.

DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT

Data on duration of unemployment are shown in this report for wage or salary workers seeking work, by age, color, and sex. No statistics on this subject are presented here for employers, own-account workers, unpaid family workers, or new workers seeking work, nor for persons on public emergency work. For such workers, data on duration of unemployment are less significant and less reliable than those for wage or salary workers seeking work; moreover, comparatively large proportions of the workers in these groups failed to report duration of unemployment.

Duration of unemployment for wage or salary workers seeking work represents the length of time (up to March 30, 1940) during which they had been seeking work or working on public emergency projects; that is, the length of time since the end of

the last full-time private or nonemergency Government job of one month or more.

Duration of unemployment was reported on the 1940 census schedules in terms of weeks, but in this report the data are presented in terms of months.⁵ The classes of duration of unemployment that are used, and their equivalents in terms of weeks as reported, are listed below.

<u>Duration in months</u>	<u>Reported duration in weeks</u>
Less than 1 month.....	Under 3 weeks
1 month.....	3 to 6 weeks
2 months.....	7 to 10 weeks
3 months.....	11 to 14 weeks
4 and 5 months.....	15 to 23 weeks
6 to 8 months.....	24 to 35 weeks
9 to 11 months.....	36 to 49 weeks
12 to 23 months.....	50 to 99 weeks
24 to 35 months.....	100 to 149 weeks
36 to 59 months.....	150 to 249 weeks
60 or more months.....	250 or more weeks

The median duration of unemployment of wage or salary workers who were seeking work at the time of the census was seven months. (The median duration is the number of months which divides the group into two equal parts, one-half having been unemployed for a shorter period and one-half for a longer period than the median.) The median duration of unemployment is shown in diagram 6 for wage or salary workers seeking work, classified by age. Up to age 35, the median duration was about six months, but in each successive age group above 35 years the median was greater, and it exceeded fourteen months in the age class 75 years and over.

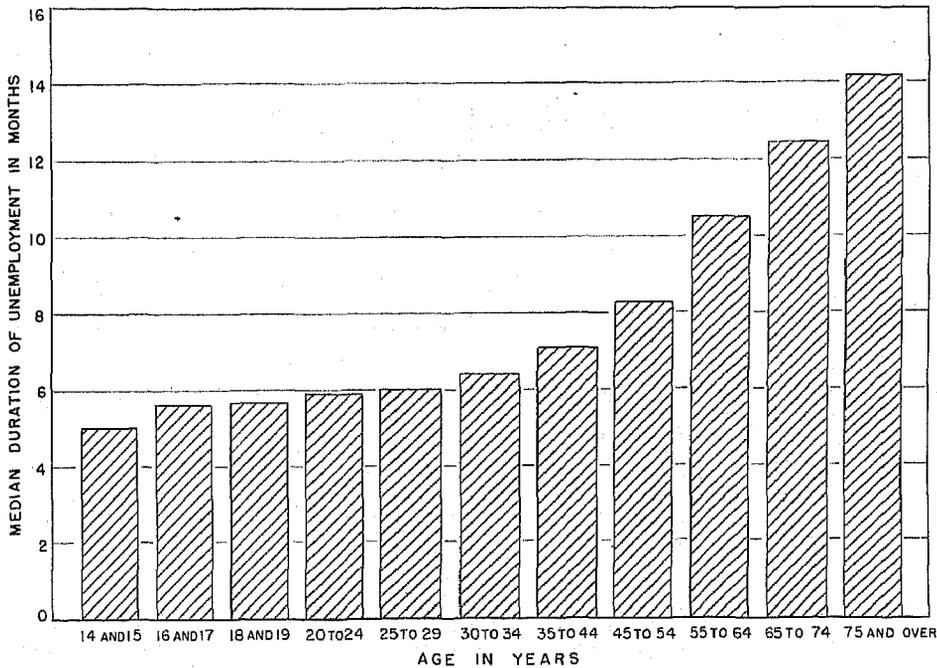
A comparison of the medians shown in diagram 6 and the percentages unemployed for various age groups of the labor force, shown in diagram 2, reveals an important difference between the nature of the unemployment problem of young workers and that of older workers. The high proportions of workers under 25 years old who were unemployed at the time of the census were due to a comparatively rapid turnover in employment, with frequent but relatively short periods of idleness. Among workers 55 to 64 years old, on the other hand, unemployment apparently occurred less frequently, but those who lost their jobs experienced relatively great difficulty in finding another job, and tended to remain unemployed for comparatively long periods.

In the interpretation of these figures, it should be borne in mind that some of the persons seeking work who had been out of work for very long periods, especially in the groups past the normal age of retirement, probably had little or no chance of returning to work. It should also be borne in mind that a considerable proportion of the wage or salary workers seeking work, especially in the age groups under 25 years, failed to report duration of unemployment, and it is probably not safe to assume that the periods of unemployment of persons who failed to report were similar to those which were reported.

CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS WITH A JOB BUT NOT AT WORK

Enumerators were instructed to classify as "with a job but not at work," persons reported as not seeking work who were temporarily idle because of vacation, short illness, bad weather, industrial dispute, or lay-off for a period not exceeding four weeks with definite instructions to return to work on a specific date. Persons reported in this category were classified as employed in the 1940 census tabulations because most of

DIAGRAM 6.— MEDIAN DURATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT FOR WAGE OR SALARY WORKERS SEEKING WORK, BY AGE, FOR THE UNITED STATES: MARCH 1940



SOURCE: TABLE 35

⁵ For a statement of the reasons for the conversion to months and the procedures used, see "Months worked in 1939," above. In addition, there was evidence of a tendency to report very long durations of unemployment in multiples of 50 weeks, indicating that some enumerators had calculated the number of weeks by multiplying a given number of years by 50. To take account of this tendency, the classes designated as 12 to 23 months, 24 to 35, 36 to 59 months, and 60 or more months, representing 1, 2, 3 and 4, and 5 or more years, respectively, were so designed that the weekly equivalent of any given number of years would always fall in the same interval, whether the conversion was made on the basis of 50 or 52 weeks per year.

them were persons who had been idle for only a brief period and would presumably return to work within a short time. In some cases, however, because of misunderstandings on the part of enumerators and informants, persons who had been out of work for relatively long periods were classified as having a job. It was especially difficult for enumerators to make the proper classification for seasonal workers not working at the time of the census, and for persons laid off for long periods on account of industrial breakdowns, lack of orders, etc. The number of persons reported as with a job but not at work was relatively large in seasonal industries and in industries in

which extensive reductions in employment occurred just before the time of the census. In some of the tables in this report, persons with a job but not at work are classified separately in order to permit an analysis of the labor market in terms of actual work or idleness during the census week.

The statistics for persons with a job but not at work, by class of worker and sex, are presented in table IX for the United States, urban and rural. In urban and rural-nonfarm areas, the proportion reported as with a job but not at work was considerably greater for employers and own-account workers than for wage or salary workers. This difference resulted at least partly from the tendency of some enumerators to return as with a job but not at work persons, other than wage or salary workers, who were actually at work during the census week. In rural-farm areas, the percentage reported as with a job but not at work was less for employers and own-account workers (0.9 percent) than for wage or salary workers (2.3 percent), probably because enumerators were instructed to report farmers as at work even though, because of bad weather, temporary illness, etc., they actually did not work during the census week.

Table IX. PERSONS WITH A JOB BUT NOT AT WORK, BY CLASS OF WORKER AND SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES, URBAN AND RURAL: MARCH 1940

[Statistics based on a 5-percent sample]

AREA AND CLASS OF WORKER	NUMBER			PERCENT OF LABOR FORCE		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
United States.....	1,177,620	650,840	326,780	2.3	2.2	2.6
Wage or salary workers.....	846,960	577,900	269,060	2.1	2.0	2.4
Employers and own-account workers.....	297,080	251,940	45,140	3.0	2.8	4.6
Unpaid family workers.....	33,580	21,000	12,580	2.3	2.1	3.0
Urban.....	737,880	506,640	231,240	2.3	2.2	2.4
Wage or salary workers.....	556,500	360,560	195,940	2.0	1.8	2.2
Employers and own-account workers.....	176,020	143,820	32,200	5.1	5.0	5.2
Unpaid family workers.....	5,360	2,260	3,100	2.8	4.2	2.2
Rural-nonfarm.....	275,340	216,300	59,040	2.9	2.8	2.9
Wage or salary workers.....	195,220	147,100	48,120	2.4	2.3	2.7
Employers and own-account workers.....	76,660	67,360	9,300	5.6	5.7	5.2
Unpaid family workers.....	3,460	1,840	1,620	3.7	4.8	2.9
Rural-farm.....	164,400	127,900	36,500	1.6	1.4	3.0
Wage or salary workers.....	95,240	70,240	25,000	2.3	2.1	3.1
Employers and own-account workers.....	44,400	40,760	3,640	0.9	0.8	1.9
Unpaid family workers.....	24,760	15,900	7,860	2.1	1.8	3.5

CHARACTERISTICS OF PERSONS FOR WHOM EMPLOYMENT STATUS WAS NOT REPORTED

The category, "Employment status not reported," includes two groups: (a) Persons reported as not in the labor force but not assigned to any specific category, who constituted about 20 percent of the 1,927,140 persons for whom employment status was not reported; and (b) those for whom enumerators did not obtain enough information to determine whether they were in the labor force, who represented 80 percent of the total. The entire category is included in the total of persons not in the labor force in the 1940 census reports, because most of the persons in the group for whom enumerators did not obtain enough information to determine whether they were in the labor force, were in classes of the population in which the proportion in the labor force is low.

Of the group for whom enumerators did not obtain enough information to determine their labor force status, 40 percent were attending school, 10 percent were 65 years old and over, 20 percent were married women living with their husbands, and only 10 percent were men between the ages of 25 and 64. The majority of the group would probably have been classified as in school or engaged in own-home housework if full information had been obtained. In many cases the failure to obtain the answers to the employment status questions was due to the enumerator's belief that the questions were not applicable to students, housewives, and aged persons.

On the basis of this evidence, it is estimated that probably not more than 500,000 of the persons for whom employment status was not reported would have been classified as in the labor force if full information had been obtained.

Data on age, sex, color, marital status, household relationship, and months worked in 1939 for persons for whom employment status was not reported are presented in the report entitled, "Characteristics of Persons Not in the Labor Force."

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN RESULTS OF SAMPLE TABULATION AND COMPLETE COUNT

The statistics in this report are based on tabulations of a five-percent sample of the 1940 census returns. These figures differ slightly from the results of complete tabulations, which also give data on some of the subjects included in this report. Table X presents the distribution by employment status of persons 14 years old and over in the United States, by sex and urban-rural residence, based on five-percent sample tabulations, and the corresponding figures obtained from complete tabulations, which were published in Part I of Volume III of the Reports on Population. These figures show the magnitude of the adjustments that would be needed to bring the five-percent sample figures in this report into exact agreement with the complete tabulations.

Table X. SAMPLE TABULATION AND COMPLETE COUNT, FOR PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND SEX, FOR THE UNITED STATES, URBAN AND RURAL: MARCH 1940

AREA AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS	MALE		FEMALE	
	Based on complete count	Based on 5-percent sample	Based on complete count	Based on 5-percent sample
UNITED STATES				
Population 14 years and over.....	50,563,748	50,543,840	50,549,176	50,471,900
In labor force.....	39,944,240	39,958,800	12,645,259	13,007,480
Employed (exc. on emerg. work).....	34,027,905	34,102,440	11,183,178	11,278,920
At work.....	33,222,418	33,231,800	10,522,719	10,552,140
With a job but not at work.....	805,487	850,540	315,459	322,780
On public emergency work.....	2,072,094	2,009,540	437,512	448,900
Seeking work.....	3,844,241	3,852,820	1,249,569	1,278,660
Experienced workers.....	3,381,861	3,414,500	944,568	987,000
New workers.....	462,380	438,320	304,981	292,660
Not in labor force.....	10,609,508	10,585,040	37,703,917	37,464,420
URBAN				
Population 14 years and over.....	28,918,796	28,896,840	30,771,879	30,775,740
In labor force.....	22,007,458	22,018,900	9,606,211	9,700,920
Employed (exc. on emerg. work).....	19,278,267	19,324,300	8,314,300	8,394,660
On public emergency work.....	1,110,038	1,077,900	308,202	303,560
Seeking work.....	2,619,158	2,616,700	988,709	1,002,660
Experienced workers.....	2,397,880	2,302,820	749,797	778,820
New workers.....	321,778	307,180	238,912	223,860
Not in labor force.....	5,911,338	5,877,440	21,165,668	21,074,820
RURAL-NONFARM				
Population 14 years and over.....	10,217,317	10,261,940	9,888,481	9,816,720
In labor force.....	7,657,646	7,698,960	2,081,922	2,068,800
Employed (exc. on emerg. work).....	6,204,208	6,259,880	1,753,267	1,785,860
On public emergency work.....	602,584	580,260	99,807	96,080
Seeking work.....	850,759	858,280	178,848	186,420
Experienced workers.....	752,351	765,840	132,865	140,520
New workers.....	98,408	92,440	46,483	45,900
Not in labor force.....	2,559,771	2,562,980	7,806,569	7,748,480
RURAL-FARM				
Population 14 years and over.....	11,417,635	11,385,560	9,938,856	9,879,380
In labor force.....	9,279,236	9,240,940	1,207,126	1,238,260
Employed (exc. on emerg. work).....	8,545,435	8,518,260	1,070,611	1,098,380
On public emergency work.....	359,477	345,380	49,503	49,320
Seeking work.....	374,324	377,300	87,012	90,560
Experienced workers.....	332,150	339,440	63,426	67,660
New workers.....	42,174	37,860	23,586	22,900
Not in labor force.....	2,138,399	2,144,620	8,731,740	8,641,120

The differences between the five-percent sample figures and those obtained from the complete tabulations are due partly to sampling variations and partly to minor errors or biases in coding, card-punching, and machine tabulation. Exact agreement is not to be expected between these tabulations and the corresponding tabulations of a complete count, but the sample data nevertheless indicate the relationships among the various characteristics involved. With regard to the individual numbers in the tables, comparisons thus far made indicate that 95 percent of the numbers above 10,000 will differ from those given by the complete count by less than 5 percent; 95 percent of those between 5,000 and 10,000 will differ by less than 10 percent; and 95 percent of those between 2,000 and 5,000 will differ by less than 20 percent. Somewhat larger variations may occur in the case of numbers below 2,000, but even there the majority of the differences are less than 10 percent.