

# We asked... You told us

## Industry, Occupation, and Class of Worker

The Census Bureau conducts a census of population and housing every 10 years. This bulletin is one of a series that shows the questions asked in the 1990 census and the answers that you, the American people, gave. Each bulletin focuses on a question or group of questions appearing on the 1990 census questionnaires.

### Industry

In question 28 on the 1990 census forms, we asked people to write in the name of the company or employer for which they worked (28a) and the type of activity engaged in by the company or employer (28b), and to mark the broad industry sector of the company or employer (28c). You told us that:

- Services was the broad industry group employing the largest number of Americans in 1990. The 37.9 million persons working for service-related concerns of all kinds accounted for about a third of the Nation's 115.7 million employed persons 16 years and over.
- Within the broad services sector, workers were concentrated in health services (9.7 million employed), educational services (9.6 million), and business and repair services (5.6 million) (see chart).
- The second largest industry group was manufacturing, which had 20.5 million workers, or 18 percent of all employed persons. Following closely at third was retail trade, with 19.5 million workers, or 17 percent of the workforce.

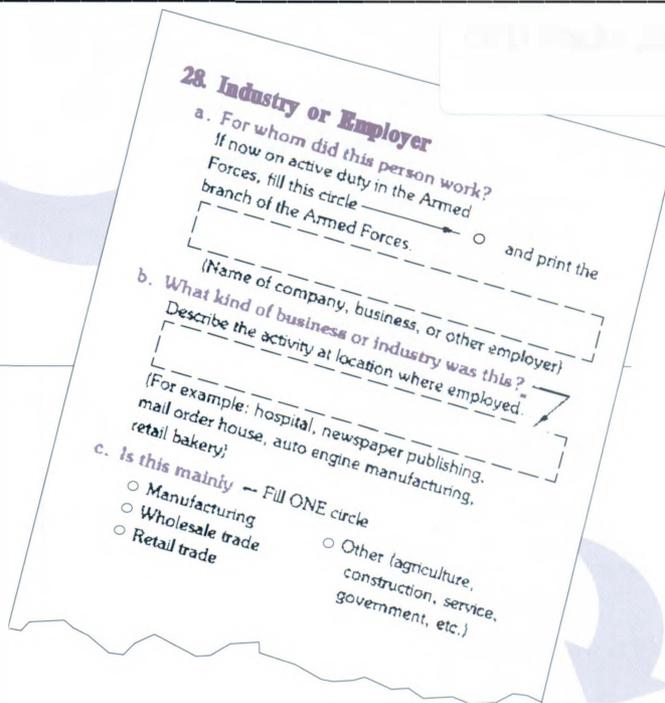
### Want to Know More?

Consult the series of 1990 census reports, CP-2, *Social and Economic Characteristics*, and CP-S-1-1, *Detailed Occupation and Other Characteristics From the EEO File for the United States*, at a large public or university library. Also for sale by Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO). Call:

- Customer Services at the Census Bureau, **301-457-4100**, for ordering information about the GPO reports listed above or to order copies of CQC bulletins or other Census Bureau products
- Karen Mills, **301-457-3953**, for general information on CQC bulletins
- 301-763-8574**, for more information on industry, occupation, and class-of-worker data

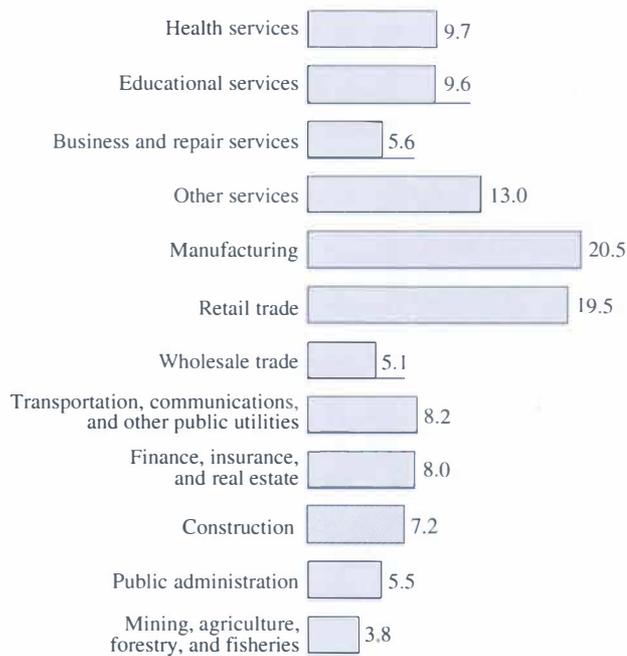
*Census Trivia:* According to the 1990 census, which State had the highest percentage of government workers (Federal, State, and local government combined)? Which State had the lowest? (Answer on reverse.)

Note: The data on industry, occupation, and class of worker are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability.



### About a Third of American Workers Were Employed in Service Industries

Major Industry Group of Employed Persons 16 Years and Over: 1990 (In millions)



### Who Uses This Information? Just a few examples:

- Businesses and government agencies to file affirmative action plans
- Government agencies to formulate policy and develop programs for employment, training, and occupational forecasting
- Corporations and individuals to develop business plans and as an aid in determining demographic characteristics of an area where they plan to start a business

## Occupation

In question 29, we asked people to write in the kind of work they did (29a) and their most important activities and duties (29b). You told us that:

- More Americans worked in administrative support, including clerical positions in 1990 than in any other broad occupation group—nearly 19 million or about 16 percent of the employed (see bar chart). This group encompassed a myriad of jobs such as secretary, bank teller, mail carrier, data entry keyer, payroll clerk, insurance adjuster, and meter reader (to name just a few).
- Machine operators, fabricators, and laborers was the second largest occupation group, employing 17.2 million workers or 15 percent of the workforce. Persons in this group worked as printing press operators, dry cleaning machine operators, welders, truck drivers, garbage collectors, and many others.
- The third largest group was professional specialty occupations, which numbered 16.3 million, or 14 percent of all employed. Persons with these jobs were, for example, engineers, doctors, lawyers, teachers, and artists.

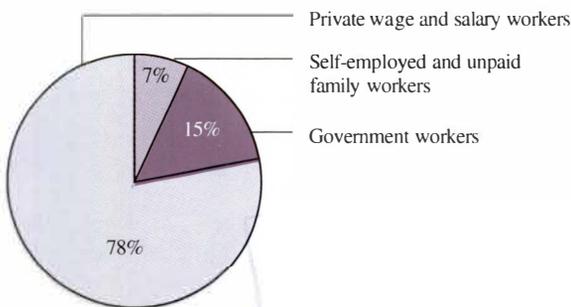
## Class of Worker

Question 30 asked people to mark the type of ownership of their employer or company named in question 28. The information on class of worker referred to the same job as that in the industry and occupation questions.

- By far, the largest share of employed Americans—78 percent—were private wage and salary workers in 1990 (89.5 million) (see pie chart). The vast majority of these workers were employed by for-profit companies and businesses.
- About 15 percent of employed persons, or a total of 17.6 million workers, were in government service. These consisted of 8.2 million local, 5.4 million State, and 3.9 million Federal government employees.
- Self-employed workers numbered 8.1 million and accounted for fewer than 7 percent of the employed. Only about 500,000 persons, or fewer than 1/2 percent, were involved in unpaid work in a family business or farm.

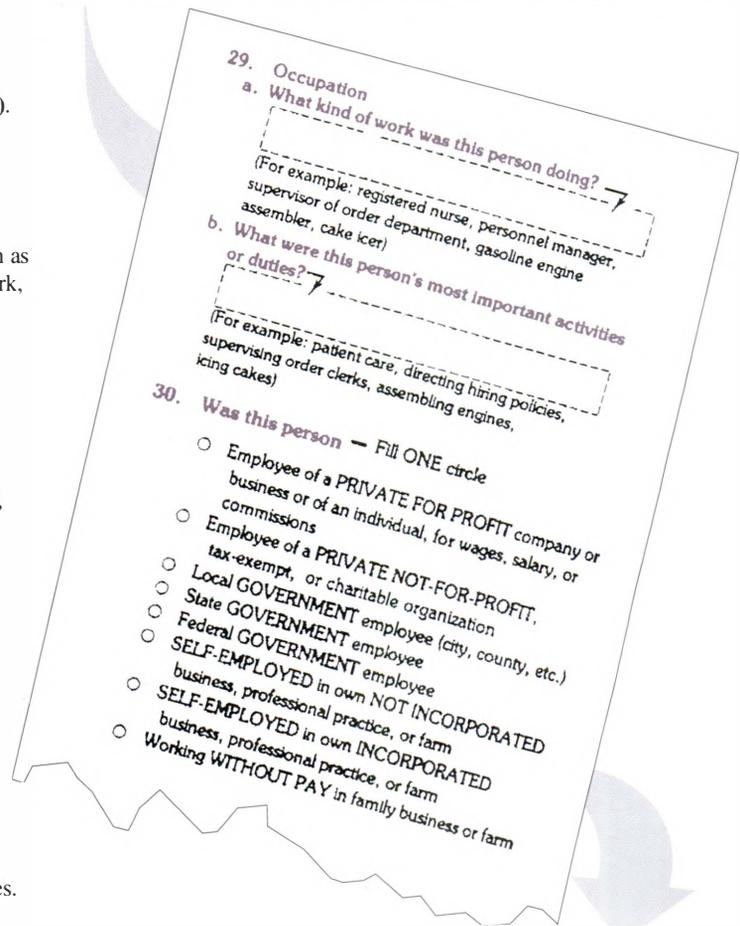
### Most Americans Were Private Wage and Salary Workers

Class of Worker of Employed Persons 16 Years and Over: 1990



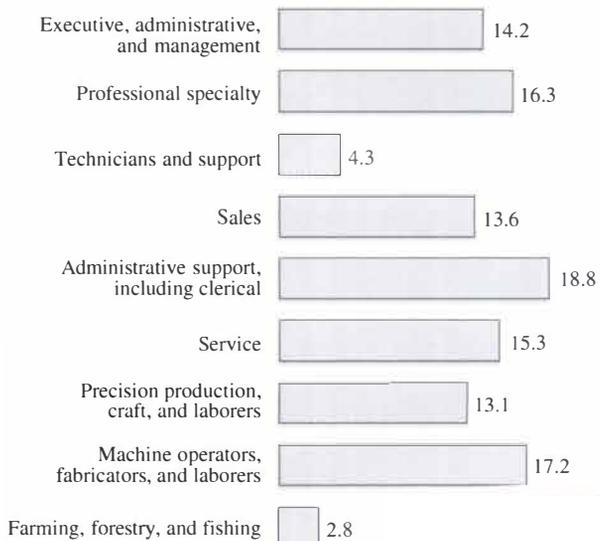
Issued January 1997

U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS



### Americans Were Most Likely to Hold Administrative and Clerical Jobs

Major Occupation Group of Employed Persons  
16 Years and Over: 1990  
(In millions)



*Trivia Answer:* Alaska had the highest percentage of its workforce employed in government jobs (30 percent) in 1990 of any State. Indiana and Pennsylvania were tied with the lowest percentage (12 percent). The District of Columbia had 32 percent.