

Section 3.—Employment, Earnings and Hours*

Subsection 1.—Historical Commentary

Monthly reports on employment have been furnished for many years to the Dominion Bureau of Statistics by establishments usually employing 15 persons or over in the following major industrial divisions: forestry; mining; manufacturing; construction; transportation, storage and communication; public utility operation; trade; finance, insurance and real estate; and certain branches of the service industry, mainly hotels and restaurants, laundries and dry-cleaning plants, recreational and business services. The surveys relate to all sectors of the eight industrial divisions first named. To supplement the employment record that goes back to 1921, monthly statistics of weekly payroll disbursements have been collected since 1941, permitting calculation of per capita weekly wages and salaries. Subsequently, these series were carried back, on an annual basis only, to 1939. The current survey was further extended in the late months of the War to include information on earnings and hours of wage-earners for whom industrial establishments can furnish statistics of hours actually worked and paid for during periods of absence. Commencing in 1946, monthly figures of employment have been published separately for men and women. Additional and more detailed data on earnings and hours of work of both wage-earners and salaried employees are collected annually from manufacturers for one week in the autumn; this series yields separate figures for men and women in the two categories.

The statistics obtained monthly since 1941 relate to all paid workers on the staffs of respondents and their pay for services rendered or during absence-with-pay in their last pay periods in the month, except that casual employees on strength for less than one day in the pay period are omitted. Statistics for owners are excluded by definition, even though they receive part of the return on their investment in the form of salaries. The earnings include wage and salary payments for straight-time and overtime work, shift differentials, regularly paid production, incentive and cost-of-living bonuses and commissions. Payrolls and hours reported for periods exceeding one week are reduced to weekly equivalents.

Although the surveys are restricted to establishments usually employing 15 persons or more, they include high but variable proportions of all paid workers at work in the covered industries as enumerated in the 1951 Census. The estimates of coverage range from 45 p.c. in the included service groups to 92 p.c. in manufacturing and 96 p.c. in mining, with the industrial composite figure relating to 79 p.c. of the total number in the industries surveyed. It is also estimated that the establishments contributing to the monthly record employed 62 p.c. of the total number of paid workers enumerated in all industries, including those in agriculture, fishing and trapping, education, health, government and other services excluded from the surveys, as well as employees of small establishments in the covered industries for which monthly data cannot be obtained.

Industrial employment, payrolls and per capita earnings generally reached all-time high levels in 1957, although evidences of weakness in some fields as compared with recently preceding years then became apparent, particularly in the latter months. The annual index of employment (1949=100) was 122.9, having risen almost without interruption from 1939 when the figure was 60.1. The increase in payrolls in the same period was even more noteworthy. The 1957 index (also on the 1949 base) was 194.5, greatly exceeding that of 32.9 in 1939. Average weekly wages and salaries mounted from \$23.44 in that year to \$67.70 in 1957, or by almost 289 p.c., while the consumer price index advanced from 63.2 to 121.9 in 1957. Income tax rates also increased substantially. The upward movement in employment and earnings during the 18-year period extended in greater or lesser degree to all industries surveyed and to all areas. The increase in employment in manufacturing was nearly 107 p.c., and that in the durable goods component, 171 p.c. Particularly impressive advances from 1939 took place in public utility operation, construction, services and trade. The gains in the period generally are associated not only with a rising standard of living but also with a growing population.

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