

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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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)

Wage or Salary Income
in 1939

Prepared under the supervision of

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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

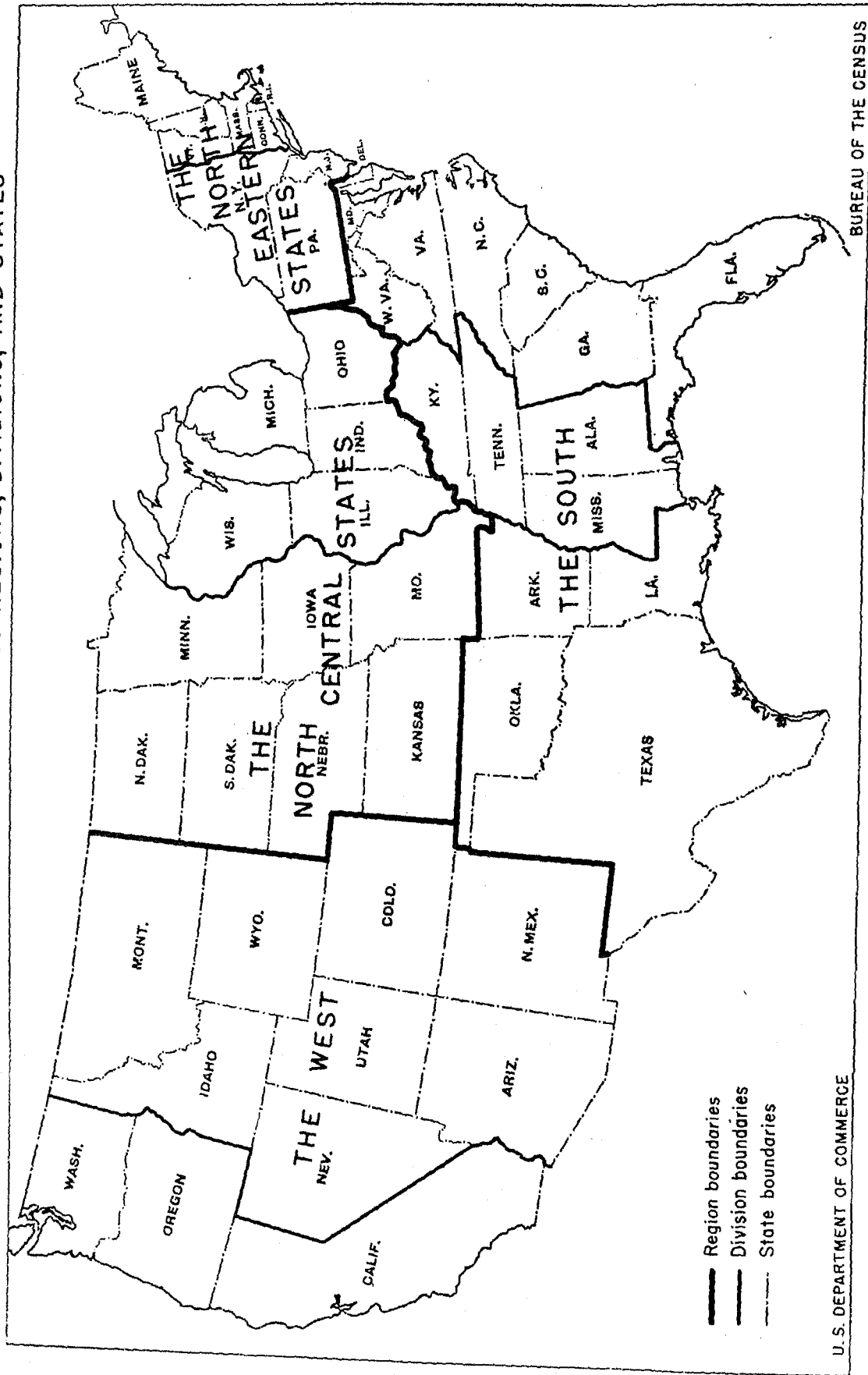
- I Data for Small Areas, by States.
Supplement: Block Statistics for Cities.
- II General Characteristics of Housing, by States.
- III Characteristics by Monthly Rent or Value, by States.
- IV Mortgages on Owner-Occupied Nonfarm Homes, by States.
Special Reports.

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 has 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 statistics on the amount of wage or salary income and the receipt of other income in 1939 for persons 14 years old and over in the United States. The data are shown in combination with various economic and personal characteristics of the population, and provide a considerable body of information regarding the adequacy of employment and the economic well-being of the people. 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, Dr. Selma Fine Goldsmith, and Alice B. Korstange. The sampling procedures were under the direction of Dr. W. Edwards Deming, Mathematical Adviser.

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



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WAGE OR SALARY INCOME IN 1939

INTRODUCTION

GENERAL

This report presents data on amount of wage or salary income in 1939 and on the receipt of other income in 1939 for persons 14 years old and over, based on tabulations of a five-percent sample of the returns of the Sixteenth Decennial Census of Population, taken in April 1940.¹ The income data are shown in combination with certain personal and economic characteristics, such as age, sex, color, household relationship, months worked in 1939, employment status as of the census week of March 24 to 30, 1940, class of worker, and industry. Statistics are presented for the United States, regions, divisions, States, and for cities of 250,000 or more.

Many of the tables are confined to persons classified as wage or salary workers in March 1940, the class for which the data on wage or salary income are the most significant and which accounted for the great bulk of the recipients of wages or salaries in 1939. Most of the tables show separate distributions by amount of wage or salary income for persons who had no income from other sources, and for persons who had such other income. The distributions are more significant for persons having no other income than for persons having other income. For the latter group the data present only an incomplete picture of income distribution, whereas for the group having no other income they represent a very close approximation to a distribution by size of total income.

RELATED REPORTS

Volume III of the Sixteenth Census Reports on Population, entitled "The Labor Force," presents statistics on wage or salary income in 1939, based on complete tabulations of the census returns. These statistics pertain to the experienced labor force classified by occupation and employment status. In order to show the relationship between income and amount of employment, the data are presented not only for the total number of workers but also for those who worked full time (12 months) during 1939. Part 1 of Volume III presents the data for the United States as a whole and for the four regions, and Parts 2 to 5 present the data for States and for cities of 100,000 or more.

Another report in the series "The Labor Force - Sample Statistics" appears under the title "Employment and Family Characteristics of Women." This report shows labor force status of women by marital status and number of children, according to age, education, and other personal and family characteristics, and includes statistics on wage or salary income and receipt of other income in 1939 for the husbands of married women 18 to 64 years of age, for the United States and regions, and for metropolitan districts of 1,000,000 or more.

Statistics for families will be presented in a separate series of publications. The specific titles of the reports that contain income data and a brief summary of the subjects covered are given below.²

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 family head, for the United States and regions, urban and rural (with color for the South), and for cities of

1,000,000 or more. The characteristics of the family that are included are size, number of children, number of earners, months worked in 1939 by earners, and class-of-worker composition; the characteristics of the family head are sex, age, marital status, employment status, major occupation group, class of worker, and wage or salary income received in 1939. Family wage or salary income is also cross-classified by wage or salary income of the individual earners in the family. Statistics on wage or salary income of the head in combination with wage or salary income of the wife, by receipt of other income by the head, are presented for normal families.

Families - General Characteristics: Characteristics of families and of family heads. Statistics on family wage or salary income and receipt of other income in 1939, by tenure, are presented for States, cities of 100,000 or more, and metropolitan districts of 200,000 or more.

Income and Rent: Data on wage or salary income and receipt of other income in 1939 for urban and rural-nonfarm families classified by tenure and rent, and cross-classified by housing characteristics, family characteristics, and characteristics of the head, for regions and metropolitan districts of 1,000,000 or more.

Tenure and Rent: Data for urban and rural-nonfarm families classified by tenure and rent, and cross-classified by family characteristics and characteristics of the head. This report includes statistics on family wage or salary income and receipt of other income in 1939, by tenure and rent, for regions, cities of 1,000,000 or more, and metropolitan districts of 500,000 or more.

Size of Family and Age of Head: Characteristics of families (including family wage or salary income and receipt of other income in 1939) and of family heads, by type and size of family and age of head, for regions and cities of 1,000,000 or more.

Characteristics of Rural-farm Families: Data for rural-farm families classified by tenure and occupation of the head, and cross-classified by selected housing characteristics, family characteristics (including family wage or salary income and receipt of other income in 1939), and characteristics of the head, for regions and geographic divisions.

GEOGRAPHIC AREAS

Statistics are presented in this report for the United States and for four broad 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. Most of the statistics given here for the United States as a whole are given also for each of the four regions in order to facilitate the analysis of regional variations in income distribution. Certain of the data are also presented separately for the nine geographic divisions, and summary statistics are presented for States and for cities of 250,000 or more.

Practically all of the statistics in this report are presented separately for urban and for rural areas of the United States. In addition, statistics for rural-farm and rural-nonfarm areas are presented separately in table 10. 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, without regard to occupation, and the rural-nonfarm population, comprising the remaining rural population.

¹ The 1940 Population 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 (early in 1943) the reports referred to in this paragraph are in various stages of completion, and it is possible that minor changes in titles may be made before publication.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND CLASS OF WORKER

The classification by employment status in the 1940 Census of Population was obtained from questions regarding the activity during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, of all persons 14 years old and over. These questions permitted a classification into two large groups: (a) Persons in the labor force, including those at work, those with a job but temporarily absent from work, those on public emergency work, and those seeking work; and (b) persons not in the labor force, including those engaged in own home housework, those in school, those unable to work, inmates of institutions, other persons not in the labor force, and those whose employment status was not reported.

All persons 14 years old and over.—A summary of wage or salary income data by receipt of other income is shown in table I, above, for all persons 14 years old and over other than those in specified institutions. The table is presented in terms of broad wage or salary income intervals above \$1000 because the more detailed intervals shown for the labor force in later tables were not tabulated for persons outside the labor force. Of the 99,900,000 persons 14 years old and over (except those in institutions), 40,000,000 reported that they received some wages or salaries during 1939, 48,800,000 reported no income from these sources, and 11,100,000 failed to report whether or not they received wage or salary income. Probably relatively few of this last group actually received wage or salary income, since 8,400,000 of them were not in the labor force, and 1,700,000 were persons in the labor force other than wage or salary workers or persons on public emergency work (tables I and II).

A total of 70,900,000 of the 99,900,000 persons 14 years old and over reported that they did not receive income amounting to \$50 or more from sources other than wages or salaries during 1939. The remaining 28,900,000 either reported that they received other income or failed to report. Although no count of the persons who failed to report is available, it is estimated that the number of such persons was approximately 6 or 7 million. At least half of those who failed to report on the receipt of other income were housewives and students who probably had no such income.

Persons in the labor force.—The various categories of persons in the labor force are defined more precisely 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.

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. 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.

In this report the income data for persons classified as being on public emergency work are presented separately from the data for private or nonemergency government workers, since both the wage rates and the amount of employment of the former group were determined by the policies of the various emergency

work programs. In interpreting the data for persons on public emergency work, it should be remembered that since the classification was based on activity during the census week, a considerable portion of the wage or salary income reported by these persons may have been derived from nonemergency employment during 1939. Conversely, the data for private or non-emergency government workers include some wages or salaries derived from public emergency work during 1939.

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. The group seeking work was subdivided into experienced workers and new workers, the latter being persons who had not previously worked full time for one month or more. Persons seeking work for whom a report on work experience was lacking were classified as experienced workers.

Experienced persons in labor force (except on public emergency work).—This category includes employed persons (except on public emergency work) and persons seeking work other than new workers.

Tables 7 and 10 show data for all experienced persons in the labor force (except on public emergency work). Tables 3 to 6, 8, 9, 11, and 12 are limited to those experienced persons (except on public emergency work) who were classified as wage or salary workers in March 1940.

The data for employed persons (except on public emergency work) and for persons seeking work have been combined in the present report, since the distinction between the two groups is based on activity during the week of March 24 to 30, 1940, whereas the income data refer to the calendar year 1939. Many persons who were seeking work at the time of the census had been employed throughout 1939, and many of those who were employed at the time of the census had worked only intermittently during 1939. Income statistics for the two employment status categories are available, separately, in unpublished form. (See "Availability of unpublished data" below.)

Class-of-worker distribution of the labor force.—The experienced labor force is further subdivided according to class of worker in the census classification. 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 one month or more. 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. Persons in the labor force for whom class of worker was not reported have been included among wage or salary workers, unless there was evidence to the contrary.

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.

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.

Since relatively few employers, own-account workers, and unpaid family workers received wages or salaries in 1939, the statistics for these class-of-worker groups are not shown separately in this report.

Statistics on wage or salary income and receipt of other income in 1939 for the labor force are shown in table 1. These statistics are summarized below in table II, which presents data for the following major groups of workers: Wage or salary workers engaged in private or nonemergency government work; persons on public emergency work; and other persons in the labor force (i.e., employers, own-account workers, unpaid family workers, and new workers). Table II shows, for each of these major groups, distributions by wage or salary income and by receipt of other income in 1939.

