

# Social Characteristics and Employment Status of Urban Workers

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IN THIS ARTICLE, the first of a series on the family composition and income of persons in the labor market, consideration will be given to the age, sex, and employment status of such persons according to their marital status and the type of household<sup>1</sup> in which they live. Information on these factors is available from the family composition study, which is based on data from the National Health Survey of 1935-36. Of the 1.9 million urban adults<sup>2</sup> canvassed, 57 percent were in the labor market<sup>3</sup>—that is, they were either currently occupied in regular employment, employed at work relief, or seeking work—at the time of the survey.

Definitions used by the National Health Survey<sup>4</sup> in enumerating persons in the labor market were as follows: persons reported employed on the day that the household in which they lived was enumerated included those engaged in gainful employment whether or not at usual occupation and whether the wages were in money or kind; persons not actually working on the day of the visit—for such reasons as illness, temporary disability, vacation, or a strike—but who had a job to which they would return; persons not actually working on the day of the visit because their work was part-time or irregular; and workers on PWA, CCC, and nonrelief positions in the WPA. Persons reported employed at work relief included persons receiving relief on the day of the visit in

the form of wages for duties performed; these were individuals taken from the relief rolls and paid at security rates. Persons reported as seeking work included those without a job on the day of the visit, but who were seeking work, were expecting to seek work, or would obtain work whenever it was available; also persons who had never worked, if they were at that time looking for work.

The application of the findings from the survey is limited by the effects of the changes in employment opportunities which have since taken place. The influence of these changes is probably most marked in the proportion of families that are in multi-family households and in the proportion of persons in the labor market. Nevertheless, the interrelationships of the factors of marital status, sex, employment status, and household type may be of social and economic interest at the present time.

Another limitation of these data is the evidence of some understatement of the number of job seekers among women who were not actually employed at the time of the canvass.<sup>5</sup> The magnitude of this error cannot be determined, but the error may be responsible in some measure for the lesser proportion of job seekers among women in general and particularly among married women. It is also possible that the relationship between household type and employment status of women may be somewhat colored by this error.

## *Proportion of Gainful Workers*

Almost nine-tenths of the men in the urban population included in the family composition study, and three-tenths of the women, were reported to be in the labor market (table 1). The ratio of gainful workers to all persons at a given age level was highest for men in the age group

<sup>1</sup> See National Health Survey: 1935-36, *Characteristics of the Urban Unemployed*, Population Series, Bulletin D, U. S. Public Health Service (1938), p. 8: "While enumerators were instructed to enter as workers all who were engaged in gainful work or seeking work, it is entirely possible that many or even most enumerators felt there should be a homemaker in all or nearly all families although the instructions gave no indication that such need be the case. The existence of this situation would operate to reduce the number of women seeking work . . ."

\* Bureau of Research and Statistics, Division of Health and Disability Studies. This article, the tenth in a series, is based on findings from the study of family composition in the United States, which utilizes data from schedules of the National Health Survey and is conducted as Work Projects Administration Project No. 165-2-31-42 under the supervision of the Bureau of Research and Statistics. Data are preliminary and subject to revision.

<sup>1</sup> Households are classified as single-family or multi-family according to whether the household consists of one or more than one bio-legal family. A bio-legal family is so defined as to make it possible to identify, within a household, the members of the family whose relationship to the head, by blood or law, constitutes a legal claim on him for support; it includes (a) one or both spouses and their unmarried children, if any, including adopted or foster children, living together as a family unit; (b) unmarried sisters and brothers, including adopted or foster brothers and sisters, living together as a family unit; or (c) persons living in extra-familial groups or by themselves, who are considered as separate one-person families.

<sup>2</sup> For purposes of this study, an adult is defined as a person aged 16 or over.

<sup>3</sup> Of the total U. S. population of 1930 in ages 16 and over, 57 percent were reported as gainfully occupied. *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930, Population*, Vol. IV, p. 40.

<sup>4</sup> "Manual of Composite Instructions."

25-44 and for women in the youngest age group, 16-24. About 68 of every 100 men in ages 16-24 were in the labor market, about 98 of every 100 in ages 25 to 59, and about 50 of every 100 in ages 65 and over. The proportion of women in the labor market decreased progressively with age, from a high of 46 out of every 100 women in ages 16-24 to a low of 6 out of every 100 aged 65 or over. This decline in the proportion of women workers as they advance in age may be due in part to a change in their marital status, and for women with children, in part to the fact that their children are older and have entered the labor market.

*Age distribution of gainful workers.*—For each sex, approximately half of the total number of gainful workers were between 25 and 44 years of age (table 1). On the other hand, although men and women aged 16-45 were found in approximately equal proportions in the total urban sample, 82 percent of women workers and only 66 percent of men workers were under 45.

*Household type.*—The data on gainful workers have been examined to determine whether the organization of the households in which the indi-

viduals live is a differential factor in the proportion of persons in the labor market and in their employment status. Households consisting of only one bio-legal family (single-family households) included two-thirds of the adults in the urban sample but only somewhat more than one-half of the gainful workers. The fact that relatively more of the adults are gainful workers in multi-family households is largely attributable to the greater proportion of women workers in those households.

Single-family households have a slight excess of adult men and a slightly greater proportion of men in the labor market; the multi-family households have some excess of women and a markedly higher ratio of women workers to all women. No doubt, the higher proportion of children, especially young children, per adult in the single-family household is in a large measure responsible for the proportionately fewer women workers in single-family households.

The ratio of men workers to all men was slightly higher for single-family than for multi-family households (table 1 and chart 1). The differences in the ratios became more pronounced when the

**Table 1.—Persons 16 years and over in the labor market as percent of all adults, by age and sex, and percentage distribution by age and sex according to type of urban household**

[Preliminary data, subject to revision]

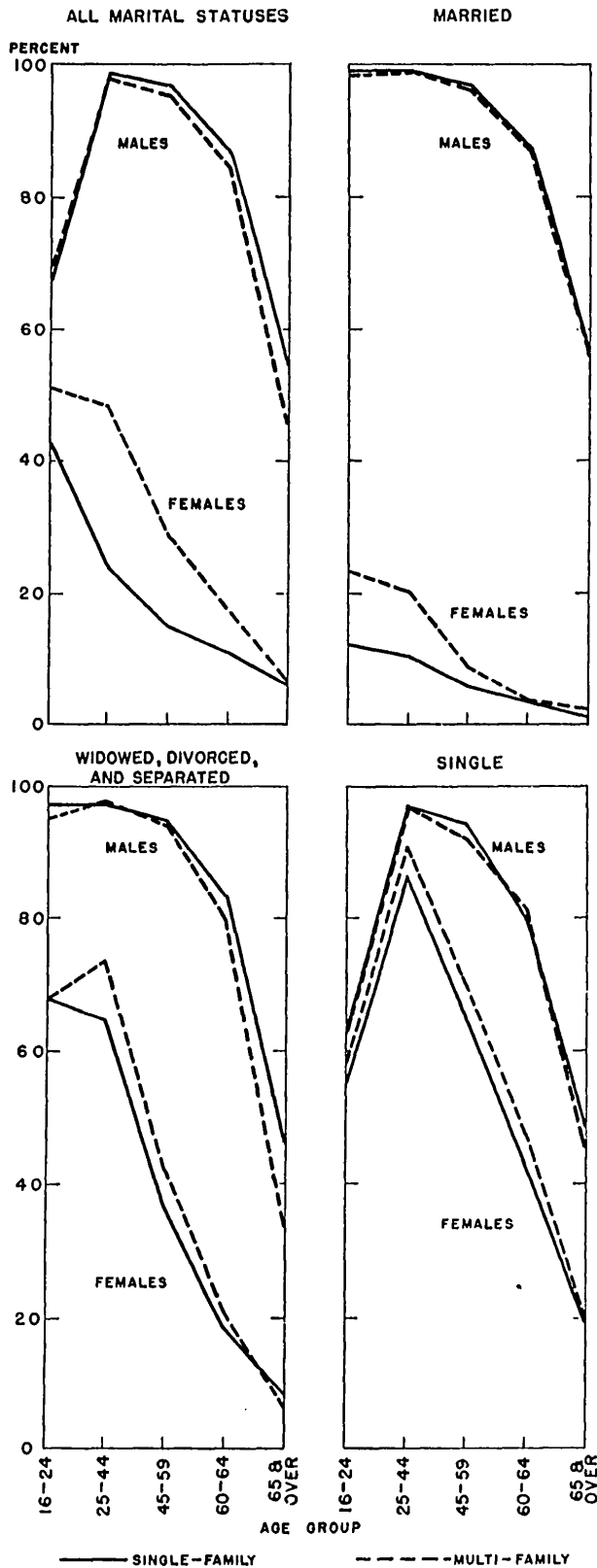
Age of person (years)	Persons in labor market as percent of all adults			Percentage distribution of persons in labor market				
				By age			By sex	
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>All households</b>								
16 and over <sup>1</sup> .....	56.9	87.6	20.4	100.0	100.0	100.0	72.8	27.2
16-24.....	55.8	67.9	45.6	21.2	16.3	34.4	65.8	44.2
25-44.....	63.2	98.0	31.4	49.2	49.9	47.3	73.8	20.2
45-59.....	57.9	96.4	10.8	22.2	25.2	14.0	82.8	17.2
60-64.....	47.9	86.3	13.9	3.7	4.3	2.1	84.0	16.4
65 and over.....	20.1	50.4	0.4	3.6	4.2	1.8	80.4	13.0
<b>Single-family households</b>								
16 and over <sup>2</sup> .....	55.9	88.5	24.9	100.0	100.0	100.0	77.1	22.9
16-24.....	54.6	67.6	42.9	21.0	16.5	39.1	58.0	41.4
25-44.....	50.4	98.8	23.0	49.1	50.1	45.4	78.8	21.2
45-59.....	57.2	96.8	14.8	22.0	25.7	12.3	87.5	12.5
60-64.....	49.7	87.1	10.8	3.6	4.0	1.6	80.3	19.7
65 and over.....	30.8	54.7	0.0	3.1	3.0	1.3	90.4	9.0
<b>Multi-family households</b>								
16 and over <sup>3</sup> .....	59.0	85.5	37.7	100.0	100.0	100.0	64.6	35.5
16-24.....	58.5	68.7	50.9	20.5	16.0	28.7	50.3	49.7
25-44.....	72.0	98.2	48.5	49.3	49.2	49.6	64.3	35.7
45-59.....	59.2	95.5	29.0	21.3	24.2	16.0	73.3	26.7
60-64.....	45.3	84.9	17.7	4.2	5.0	2.7	77.0	23.0
65 and over.....	21.6	44.9	0.7	4.3	5.4	2.4	80.8	19.2

<sup>1</sup> Includes 3,560 persons of unknown age.

<sup>2</sup> Includes 1,661 persons of unknown age.

<sup>3</sup> Includes 1,899 persons of unknown age.

**Chart 1.—Persons aged 16 years and over in the labor market as percent of all adults, by sex, age, marital status, and type of urban household**



factor of age was considered. The percentages of workers in the two types of households were in close agreement for ages 25-44, but thereafter the differences widened progressively, so that, for the age group 65 and over, 55 percent of the men in single-family households were in the labor market and 45 percent of the men in multi-family households. In some measure this progressive widening may be attributed to the fact that, in any given age group, men in multi-family households have a higher average age than those in single-family households. This situation holds particularly for men aged 65 and over.

In each type of household the percentages of gainful workers among women declined sharply with increasing age. This decline is largely the reflection of a change in the marital status. Proportionately fewer married women were reported in the labor market.

Comparison of the percentages of women workers in single and multi-family households shows a striking difference for the two types. In each age group the proportion of workers was greater for multi-family than for single-family households. Among women aged 25-64, only one-fifth of those in single-family households were in the labor market, in contrast to two-fifths of those in multi-family households. Among aged women, the percentages were about the same for both types of households.

That the proportionate difference between single-family and multi-family households in numbers of gainful workers should be greater for women than for men is not surprising in view of the higher proportions of women with children in single-family households. But that other considerations are also involved becomes evident upon examination of the magnitude of the differences. These findings add force to the conclusion advanced in an earlier article that consolidation of bio-legal families into multi-family households is an adaptive response to economic pressures. Two or more unrelated families may live together to cut expenses. A family may take in boarders to obtain more income. Aged, widowed, or disabled parents may move in with their children, who are householders, or one family with low earnings or low earning potentialities may move in with another family with high earning potentialities and take over household duties, thus enabling the others more readily to become part of the labor force. The need for earnings to sup-

plement the income of the principal wage earner is relatively greater among families in multi-family units than among those in single-family units, in which there is a more direct obligation on the head of the family to support all members of the family and greater deterrents to having some members, especially the women, become part of the labor force.

### *Marital Status of Gainful Workers*

For both sexes, but obviously to a greater degree for women, the proportion in the labor market was influenced by marital status (table 3). The largest proportion of male workers was found among the married men (95 percent), the smallest among single men (75 percent). The percentage of widowed, divorced, or separated men in the labor market was almost as low as that of the single men (77 percent). Among women the lowest proportion of gainful workers was found among the married (11 percent) and the highest among the single women (65 percent), while 38 percent of the widowed, divorced, and separated were in the labor market.

*Marital status and age.*—A higher proportion of workers among married men was found for each age group. The differences according to marital status were slight, however, except in the youngest age group, in which 99 percent of the married men and 63 percent of the single men were in the labor market. In the age group 16-24, probably most of the married men and only somewhat less than half of the single men were between the ages of 21 and 24. The older mean age of married men under 25 is undoubtedly responsible in a measure for the higher percentage of workers. Marriage itself indicates the assumption of responsibility, and, even if the age factor were completely accounted for, a marked association is to be expected between marital status and participation in the labor market.

Among men aged 25-44, the proportion of workers ranged from 97 percent of the single men to 99 percent of the married men. With advancing age, the percentages decreased and the range became progressively wider.

Among men aged 65 and over, there were fewest gainful workers among the widowed, divorced, and separated (37 percent) and most among the married (57 percent). At this end of the age scale, also, the age interval is too broad to show

the variations with respect to marital status, independent of age. Except for this group, the proportion of workers among single men aged 16-24 was the lowest observed.

The fact, already noted, that single women had the highest concentration of gainful workers, and married women the lowest, held for each age group except the youngest, 16-24. In this group there were more workers among the widowed, divorced, and separated women. This variation in the ranking of the relative concentration of workers in the respective marital-status groups may be due in part to the higher average age of widowed, divorced, and separated women than of single women aged 16-24; but more particularly it may indicate the response to the greater need for self-reliance among the divorced and separated.

For women under 45 years of age, the ratios of widowed, divorced, and separated persons in the labor force to all women of that marital status were similar to the corresponding ratios for single women. Among persons aged 60 and over, the ratios for widowed, divorced, and separated women were closer to those for married women, although the range was wide.

*Marital status and household type.*—The organization of the household also affects more closely the entrance of women into the labor market than of men. There were relatively more workers among men in single-family households, group by group, than in multi-family households. Among women, on the other hand, the percentages of workers were higher throughout for groups from multi-family households, except for widowed, divorced, or separated women aged 16-24 and 65 or over. The differences in the percentages were greatest among married women and least among single women (see chart 1). In the age groups 16-24 and 25-44 the proportion of married women in the labor market was about twice as large for multi-family as for single-family households. The differences diminished with age, suggesting that caring for young children was the major differential factor.

### *Employment Status of Persons in the Labor Market*

The discussion thus far has been concerned with social characteristics of persons in the labor force. Data on the employment status of the 1,056,297 persons in the urban labor market are presented in

tables 2 and 3. It should be remembered that the data for this study were collected by a house-to-house canvass during 1935-36; the major portion of the households were canvassed during the winter months. Therefore, the unemployment rates given reflect the situation of the labor market as of that time. It is believed, however, that the relative risks of unemployment among persons of each age group, sex, and marital status and from households of differing structure have some permanency independent of time. If this assumption is warranted, an analysis of these relationships is instructive, despite the time lapse.

About one-sixth of the urban labor force was reported as seeking work during the winter of 1935-1936.<sup>6</sup> An additional 5 percent were employed on work relief, and 78 percent were employed—that is, engaged for profit or pay at work other than work relief (table 2). The relative difficulty of obtaining work encountered by the young and the aged is readily apparent. In the age group 16-24, which has the largest proportion of new workers, only 66 of every 100 gainful workers were em-

ployed and 30 were seeking work. In the group aged 25-44—generally considered the most productive years—almost 84 of every 100 persons in the labor market were employed and only 11 were looking for work. Of every 100 gainful workers aged 60 or over, about 72 were employed and about 22 were seeking work.

The same ranking of percentages held for gainful workers of each sex. However, among those who reported themselves as gainful workers, a relatively smaller proportion of men was employed—77.6 percent in contrast to 79.4 percent of the women—and likewise a somewhat smaller percentage was seeking work. These differences may be the result of the erroneous reporting of the employment status of women, to which reference has been made. It would seem in general that women who were not gainfully employed were probably not as likely to consider themselves in the labor force as were unemployed men. It is probable that the understatement of the extent of unemployment among women was greatest among married women in single-family households and least among single women in multi-family households.

*Employed and unemployed persons.*—At each age

**Table 2.—Percentage distribution by employment status of persons 16 years and over in the labor market, according to age, sex, and type of urban household**

[Preliminary data, subject to revision]

Age of person (years)	Total			Male			Female		
	Employed	On work relief	Seeking work	Employed	On work relief	Seeking work	Employed	On work relief	Seeking work
All households									
16 and over <sup>1</sup> .....	78.1	5.4	16.5	77.6	6.4	16.0	79.4	2.9	17.7
16-24.....	65.8	3.7	30.5	62.9	5.2	31.9	69.5	1.8	28.7
25-44.....	83.0	5.5	10.9	83.0	6.3	10.7	85.2	3.1	11.7
45-59.....	79.5	6.9	13.6	78.8	7.4	13.8	82.9	4.7	12.4
60-64.....	73.6	6.5	19.9	72.3	6.9	20.8	80.8	4.5	14.7
65 and over.....	71.0	4.8	24.2	69.2	5.0	25.8	82.0	3.5	13.9
Single-family households									
16 and over <sup>1</sup> .....	77.7	6.0	16.3	77.9	6.8	15.3	77.1	3.3	19.6
16-24.....	63.5	3.9	32.6	61.6	5.3	33.1	66.3	1.8	31.9
25-44.....	84.0	6.1	9.9	83.6	6.8	9.6	85.4	3.5	11.1
45-59.....	79.6	7.5	12.9	79.3	7.7	13.0	81.4	6.3	12.3
60-64.....	73.0	7.1	19.9	72.6	7.2	20.2	76.1	6.5	17.4
65 and over.....	69.8	5.5	24.7	69.0	5.5	25.5	76.7	5.0	17.7
Multi-family households									
16 and over <sup>1</sup> .....	78.8	4.4	16.8	77.0	5.5	17.5	82.1	2.4	15.5
16-24.....	70.4	3.4	26.2	65.9	5.1	29.0	75.0	1.7	23.3
25-44.....	82.9	4.3	12.8	81.8	5.2	13.0	85.0	2.6	12.4
45-59.....	79.3	5.7	15.0	77.4	6.6	16.0	84.3	3.2	12.5
60-64.....	74.0	5.5	19.9	71.8	6.2	22.0	84.2	3.1	12.7
65 and over.....	72.8	3.9	23.3	69.5	4.4	26.1	86.6	2.1	11.3

<sup>1</sup> Includes persons of unknown age.

level the proportion of women who were employed was higher than the corresponding proportion of men.

The factor of age seems to have been most important among persons seeking work. Of the gainful workers aged 16-24, 32 percent of the men and 29 percent of the women were seeking work. In the other age groups the proportion of men seeking work increased steadily with age, from 11 percent of those 25-44 years old to 26 percent of those aged 65 and over. Among women the proportions rose from 12 percent of those aged 25-44 to 15 percent among those aged 60-64 and then declined slightly for women aged 65 and over.

*Persons on work relief.*—For both men and women, the proportion of gainful workers who were on work relief was greatest in the age group 45-59 and next largest in the age group 60-64. The lowest proportions of men on work relief were in the oldest and the youngest age groups—the ages in which were found the lowest proportions of employed men. For the youngest group, this situation probably reflects the public attitude favoring aid to men with families. The low proportion for the aged reflects in part the lack of nonmanual relief projects for old men and possibly in part their lessened family responsibilities. Among women the lowest proportions on work relief were for the younger age groups—16-24 and 25-44. In each age group the proportion of gainful workers who were employed at relief work was larger among men than among women.

*Employment status in relation to household organization.*—When the employment status of gainful workers in single-family and multi-family households is considered, certain differences are found according to sex. The percentages of men who were employed were slightly higher in single-family than in multi-family households—78 and 77 percent, respectively—and the proportions on work relief were also higher. In general, the proportion of men in a specified employment status appeared to be approximately the same for both types of household.

Among women the relationships with respect to household type and employment status were reversed. In single-family households 77 percent of the workers were employed, in multi-family households 82 percent. This fact leads to the

inference that women in single-family households who are in the labor market are forced there, to a greater extent than women in multi-family households, by necessity rather than by any special qualification for work. Again, the proportions on work relief were larger in single-family than in multi-family households.

When the age of employed men is considered, the widest differences in the proportions from the two types of households are found in the youngest age group; in this age group the proportion who were employed was considerably smaller in single-family households. With increasing age, however, differences with respect to household type were on the whole less marked; the smallest difference was among men aged 65 and over. In the intermediate ages, from 25 to 64, the proportions who were employed were larger in single-family than in multi-family households.

Among women gainful workers, also, age was found to be an important factor. At each age level except 25-44,<sup>7</sup> the proportion of employed women was lower for single-family than for multi-family households. This situation is in part the effect of the differences between the two types of households with respect to their economic composition and with respect to the marital status of women. The proportion of employed gainful workers at each age level results from the interaction of such factors as the need for money in the household, the differences in the rates of employment for the respective marital-status groups, and the age and sex composition of the household, to mention some of the more obvious forces. The proportion of women workers who were employed was markedly lower in single-family than in multi-family households for the age group 16-24 and even lower for the group 65 and over.

The proportions of persons in the labor market or in a specified employment status reflect relative economic need of the family, the earning potentialities of the individual, the obstacles in the path of employment, and the traditional position of the individual in the family and in the community. Data from the canvass show clearly (table 3) that proportionately more aged men than aged women were in the labor market. Likewise, one-fourth of the aged men in the labor market were seeking work, in contrast to one-seventh of the aged

<sup>7</sup> The enumerative error in reporting unemployed women as homemakers may account for this apparent anomaly.

Table 3.—Persons 16 years and over in the labor market as percent of all adults and percentage distribution by employment status, according to sex, age, marital status, and type of urban household

[Preliminary data, subject to revision]

Age and marital status	Total						Male						Female					
	All adults	In labor market					All male adults	In labor market					All female adults	In labor market				
		Number	As per cent of all adults	Percentage distribution by employment status				Number	As per cent of all male adults	Percentage distribution by employment status				Number	As per cent of all female adults	Percentage distribution by employment status		
				Em-ployed	On work relief	Seek-ing work				Em-ployed	On work relief	Seek-ing work				Em-ployed	On work relief	Seek-ing work
All households																		
16 years and over <sup>1</sup> .....	1,856,465	1,056,297	56.9	78.1	5.4	16.5	877,443	768,629	87.6	77.6	6.4	16.0	979,022	287,668	29.4	79.4	2.9	17.7
Married.....	1,108,248	583,517	52.7	83.8	6.5	9.7	554,175	524,595	94.7	82.9	7.0	10.1	554,073	58,922	10.6	91.6	2.5	5.9
Widowed? <sup>2</sup> .....	240,405	117,062	48.7	72.0	7.5	20.5	63,000	49,194	77.3	68.9	8.4	22.7	176,805	67,868	38.4	74.3	6.9	18.8
Single.....	507,812	355,718	70.0	70.8	2.9	26.3	259,668	194,840	75.0	65.6	4.3	30.1	248,144	160,878	64.8	77.0	1.4	21.6
16-24 years.....	401,916	224,368	55.8	65.8	3.7	30.5	184,610	125,309	67.9	62.9	5.2	31.9	217,306	99,059	45.6	69.5	1.8	28.7
Married.....	81,564	32,006	39.2	81.6	8.2	10.2	23,327	23,087	99.0	78.7	10.8	10.5	58,237	8,919	15.3	89.4	1.3	9.3
Widowed? <sup>2</sup> .....	8,792	6,389	72.7	60.1	6.2	33.7	1,505	1,433	95.2	63.4	7.9	28.7	7,287	4,956	68.0	59.2	5.7	35.1
Single.....	311,560	185,973	59.7	63.3	2.8	33.9	159,778	100,789	63.1	59.2	3.9	36.9	151,782	85,184	56.1	68.0	1.6	30.4
25-44 years.....	821,732	519,151	63.2	83.6	5.5	10.9	388,435	383,095	98.6	83.0	6.3	10.7	433,297	136,056	31.4	85.2	3.1	11.7
Married.....	605,279	328,479	54.3	86.7	6.3	7.0	291,430	288,803	99.1	85.9	6.8	7.3	313,849	39,676	12.6	92.5	2.1	5.4
Widowed? <sup>2</sup> .....	69,467	54,002	77.7	72.8	7.9	19.3	18,618	18,205	97.8	72.0	8.3	19.7	50,849	35,797	70.4	73.2	7.7	19.1
Single.....	146,986	136,670	93.0	80.3	2.7	17.0	78,387	76,087	97.1	74.6	4.0	21.4	68,599	60,583	88.3	87.5	1.0	11.5
45-59 years.....	404,595	234,127	57.9	79.5	6.9	13.6	201,070	193,932	96.4	78.8	7.4	13.8	203,525	40,195	19.7	82.9	4.7	12.4
Married.....	304,090	171,470	56.4	81.5	7.0	11.5	167,465	162,386	97.0	81.0	7.1	11.9	136,625	9,084	6.6	90.3	4.7	5.0
Widowed? <sup>2</sup> .....	68,900	37,462	54.4	73.5	8.3	18.2	18,649	17,626	94.5	68.8	10.2	21.0	50,251	19,836	39.5	77.7	6.6	15.7
Single.....	31,605	25,195	79.7	74.3	4.7	21.0	14,956	13,920	93.1	64.8	7.3	27.9	16,649	11,275	67.7	86.1	1.4	12.5
60-64 years.....	82,068	39,309	47.9	73.6	6.5	19.9	38,530	33,243	86.3	72.3	6.9	20.8	43,538	6,066	13.9	80.8	4.5	14.7
Married.....	51,783	27,147	52.4	75.0	6.6	18.4	30,054	26,378	87.8	74.7	6.5	18.8	21,729	769	3.5	85.4	9.0	5.6
Widowed? <sup>2</sup> .....	23,898	8,346	34.9	71.5	6.8	21.7	5,899	4,788	81.2	65.0	8.3	26.7	17,999	3,558	19.8	80.2	4.8	15.0
Single.....	6,387	3,816	59.7	68.3	5.1	26.6	2,577	2,077	80.6	58.7	7.6	33.7	3,810	1,739	45.6	79.8	2.0	18.2
65 years and over.....	142,594	37,166	26.1	71.0	4.8	24.2	63,719	32,098	50.4	69.2	5.0	25.8	78,875	5,068	6.4	82.6	3.5	13.9
Married.....	64,195	23,742	37.0	71.7	5.1	23.2	41,269	23,352	56.6	71.4	5.1	23.5	22,926	390	1.7	86.7	7.2	6.1
Widowed? <sup>2</sup> .....	68,658	10,501	15.3	70.3	4.3	25.4	18,795	7,023	37.4	64.5	4.5	31.0	49,863	3,478	7.0	82.2	3.8	14.0
Single.....	9,741	2,923	30.0	68.3	4.4	27.3	3,655	1,723	47.1	58.5	6.3	35.2	6,086	1,200	19.7	82.4	1.5	16.1
Single-family households																		
16 years and over <sup>1</sup> .....	1,242,349	693,888	55.9	77.7	6.0	16.3	604,141	534,860	88.5	77.9	6.8	15.3	638,208	159,028	24.9	77.1	3.3	19.6
Married.....	830,420	431,777	52.0	83.6	7.1	9.3	415,234	394,878	95.1	82.8	7.4	9.8	415,186	36,899	8.9	92.4	3.1	4.5
Widowed? <sup>2</sup> .....	88,201	40,871	46.3	69.9	10.5	19.6	20,295	16,132	79.5	68.8	10.4	20.8	67,906	24,739	36.4	70.6	10.5	18.9
Single.....	323,728	221,240	68.3	67.7	3.0	29.3	168,612	123,850	73.5	63.4	4.2	32.4	155,116	97,390	62.8	73.0	1.5	25.5
16-24 years.....	275,063	150,128	54.6	63.5	3.9	32.6	130,266	87,999	67.6	61.6	5.3	33.1	144,797	62,129	42.9	66.3	1.8	31.9
Married.....	56,047	20,037	35.8	83.3	9.4	7.3	15,299	15,184	99.2	80.1	11.9	8.0	40,748	4,853	11.9	93.4	1.6	5.0
Widowed? <sup>2</sup> .....	948	667	70.4	55.6	10.7	33.7	74	72	97.3	77.8	4.2	18.0	874	595	68.1	53.0	11.4	35.6
Single.....	218,068	129,424	59.4	60.5	3.0	36.5	114,893	72,743	63.3	57.7	3.9	38.4	103,175	56,681	54.9	64.1	1.8	34.1
25-44 years.....	573,227	340,341	59.4	84.0	6.1	9.9	271,338	268,080	98.8	83.6	6.8	9.6	301,889	72,261	23.9	85.4	3.5	11.1
Married.....	465,265	246,045	52.9	86.5	6.8	6.7	222,668	220,747	99.1	85.7	7.3	7.0	242,597	25,298	10.4	93.0	2.6	4.4
Widowed? <sup>2</sup> .....	24,123	17,023	70.6	69.9	11.8	18.3	4,140	4,042	97.6	75.0	11.3	13.7	19,983	12,981	65.0	68.3	12.0	19.7
Single.....	83,839	77,273	92.2	79.0	2.7	18.3	44,530	43,291	97.2	73.4	4.0	22.6	39,309	33,982	86.4	86.2	1.0	12.8
45-59 years.....	274,419	157,098	57.2	79.6	7.5	12.9	141,914	137,412	96.8	79.3	7.7	13.0	132,505	19,596	14.8	81.4	6.3	12.3
Married.....	229,022	129,977	56.8	81.2	7.3	11.5	127,743	124,001	97.1	80.7	7.4	11.9	101,279	5,976	5.9	90.0	5.5	4.5
Widowed? <sup>2</sup> .....	30,934	15,698	50.7	71.7	10.6	17.7	7,667	7,274	94.9	69.1	11.9	19.0	23,267	8,424	36.2	73.8	9.6	16.6
Single.....	14,463	11,333	78.4	72.8	5.1	22.1	6,504	6,137	94.4	63.6	7.9	28.5	7,959	5,196	65.3	83.8	1.8	14.4

60-64 years.....	48,502	24,107	49.7	73.0	7.1	19.9	24,731	21,534	87.1	72.0	7.2	20.2	23,771	.573	10.8	76.1	6.5	17.4	
Married.....	36,109	19,183	53.1	74.6	6.9	18.5	21,251	18,674	87.9	74.4	6.8	18.8	14,858	509	3.4	83.7	10.6	5.7	
Widowed <sup>1</sup> .....	9,574	3,307	34.5	67.9	8.8	23.3	2,377	1,981	83.3	63.8	9.9	26.3	7,197	1,326	18.4	74.1	7.2	18.7	
Single.....	2,819	1,617	57.4	63.8	6.2	30.0	1,103	879	79.7	55.0	9.3	35.7	1,716	738	43.0	74.3	2.4	23.3	
65 years and over.....	69,477	21,423	30.8	69.8	5.5	24.7	35,395	19,372	54.7	69.0	5.5	25.5	34,082	2,051	6.0	76.7	5.6	17.7	
Married.....	43,097	16,115	37.4	71.2	5.4	23.4	27,865	15,885	57.0	71.0	5.3	23.7	15,232	230	1.5	87.4	9.1	3.5	
Widowed <sup>1</sup> .....	22,406	4,098	18.3	66.7	5.8	27.5	6,027	2,755	45.7	62.3	5.8	31.9	16,379	1,343	8.2	75.6	6.0	18.4	
Single.....	3,974	1,210	30.4	61.0	5.7	33.3	1,503	732	48.7	52.2	7.5	40.3	2,471	478	19.3	74.5	2.9	22.6	
Multi-family households																			
16 years and over <sup>1</sup> .....	614,116	362,409	59.0	78.8	4.4	16.8	273,302	233,769	85.5	77.0	5.5	17.5	340,814	128,640	37.7	82.1	2.4	15.5	
Married.....	277,828	151,740	54.6	84.2	5.1	10.7	138,941	129,717	93.4	83.2	5.7	11.1	138,887	22,023	15.9	90.1	1.5	8.4	
Widowed <sup>1</sup> .....	152,204	76,191	50.1	73.2	5.9	20.9	43,305	33,062	76.3	68.9	7.4	23.7	108,899	43,129	39.6	76.5	4.7	18.8	
Single.....	184,084	134,478	73.1	75.9	2.9	21.2	91,056	70,990	78.0	69.5	4.4	26.1	93,028	63,488	68.2	83.1	1.1	15.8	
16-24 years.....	126,853	74,240	58.5	70.4	3.4	26.2	54,344	37,310	68.7	65.9	5.1	29.0	72,509	36,930	50.9	75.0	1.7	23.3	
Married.....	25,517	11,969	46.9	78.9	6.1	15.0	8,028	7,903	98.4	75.9	8.7	15.4	17,489	4,066	23.2	84.6	1.1	14.3	
Widowed <sup>1</sup> .....	7,844	5,722	72.9	60.7	5.6	33.7	1,431	1,361	95.1	62.6	8.2	29.2	6,413	4,361	68.0	60.0	4.9	35.1	
Single.....	93,492	56,549	60.5	69.6	2.6	27.8	44,885	28,046	62.5	63.1	4.0	32.9	48,607	28,503	58.6	75.9	1.2	22.9	
25-44 years.....	248,505	178,810	72.0	82.9	4.3	12.8	117,097	115,015	98.2	81.8	5.2	13.0	131,408	63,795	48.5	85.0	2.6	12.4	
Married.....	140,014	82,434	58.9	87.5	4.6	7.9	68,762	68,056	99.0	86.7	5.3	8.0	71,252	14,378	20.2	91.6	1.2	7.2	
Widowed <sup>1</sup> .....	45,344	36,979	81.6	74.1	6.1	19.8	14,478	14,163	97.8	71.1	7.4	21.5	30,866	22,816	73.9	75.9	5.3	18.8	
Single.....	63,147	59,397	94.1	82.0	2.7	15.3	33,857	32,796	96.9	76.1	4.1	19.8	29,290	26,601	90.8	89.2	1.1	9.7	
45-59 years.....	130,176	77,119	59.2	79.3	5.7	15.0	59,156	56,520	95.5	77.4	6.6	16.0	71,020	20,599	29.0	84.3	3.2	12.5	
Married.....	75,068	41,493	55.3	82.8	5.7	11.5	39,722	38,385	96.6	82.1	6.0	11.9	35,346	3,108	8.8	90.8	3.2	6.0	
Widowed <sup>1</sup> .....	37,966	21,764	57.3	74.8	6.6	18.6	10,982	10,352	94.3	68.6	9.0	22.4	26,984	11,412	42.3	80.5	4.4	15.1	
Single.....	17,142	13,862	80.9	75.5	4.3	20.2	8,452	7,783	92.1	65.8	6.8	27.4	8,690	6,079	70.0	88.0	1.1	10.9	
60-64 years.....	33,566	15,202	45.3	74.6	5.5	19.9	13,799	11,709	84.9	71.8	6.2	22.0	19,767	3,493	17.7	84.2	3.1	12.7	
Married.....	15,674	7,964	50.8	76.0	5.8	18.2	8,803	7,704	87.5	75.6	5.8	18.6	6,871	260	3.8	88.8	5.8	5.4	
Widowed <sup>1</sup> .....	14,324	5,039	35.2	73.8	5.5	20.7	3,522	2,807	79.7	65.9	7.1	27.0	10,802	2,232	20.7	83.8	3.4	12.8	
Single.....	3,568	2,199	61.6	71.7	4.2	24.1	1,474	1,198	81.3	61.4	6.4	32.2	2,094	1,001	47.8	83.9	1.7	14.4	
65 years and over.....	73,117	15,743	21.5	72.8	3.9	23.3	28,324	12,726	44.9	69.4	4.4	26.2	44,793	3,017	6.7	86.6	2.1	11.3	
Married.....	21,098	7,627	36.2	72.6	4.6	22.8	13,404	7,467	55.7	72.4	4.6	23.0	7,694	160	2.1	85.6	4.4	10.0	
Widowed <sup>1</sup> .....	46,252	6,403	13.8	72.7	3.3	24.0	12,768	4,268	33.4	65.9	3.7	30.4	33,484	2,135	6.4	86.3	2.4	11.3	
Single.....	5,767	1,713	29.7	73.5	3.4	23.1	2,152	991	46.1	63.2	5.4	31.4	3,615	722	20.0	87.7	.5	11.8	

<sup>1</sup> Includes persons of unknown age.

Includes persons who were divorced or separated.



women workers. When aged women could not find work, it would appear that they dropped out of the labor force, while aged men continued to look for work. The extent to which this contrast results from the error in enumeration cannot be surmised.

**Employment Status in Relation to Marital Status**

A close relationship was found between marital status and the proportion of persons in the labor market who were employed (table 3 and chart 2). With only one exception—aged women from multi-family households—the percentages of employed workers were relatively higher for married persons than for the single or for the widowed, divorced, or separated.

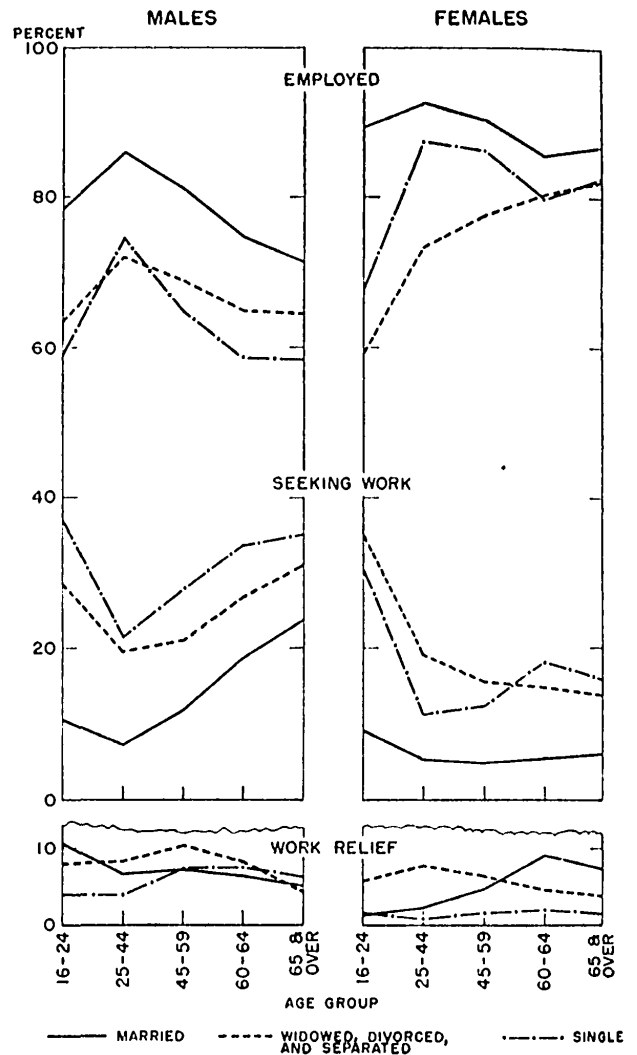
*Employed persons.*—About 84 of every 100 married persons in the labor market were employed at the time of the survey, as compared with 72 of every 100 widowed, divorced, or separated persons and about 71 of every 100 single workers. Unpublished data show that among the latter the proportions who were employed were markedly higher for heads of families than for others.

The proportion of employed gainful workers of each marital status was higher among women than among men. In fact, the proportion of women in the labor force who were gainfully employed was higher than the combined percentages of men who were gainfully employed and those who were on work relief. Again, the extent to which this difference results from incorrect recording of employment status of women cannot be appraised.

The proportions of employed men were lowest among single men except in the age group 25-44, where they were lowest among widowed, divorced, or separated men. In general, the variation in the proportion of employed men from one age group to another is similar for the respective marital statuses. For each marital status, the largest proportion of employed men was at the age level 25-44. Thereafter, the percentages decreased with age, most rapidly among single men and least rapidly among the widowed, divorced, or separated.

In each age group up to age 60, the proportion of employed women was lowest among the widowed, divorced, or separated workers. For women aged 60 or more, the percentages of employed persons were about the same for single

**Chart 2.—Workers of specified employment status from urban households as percent of persons aged 16 and over in the labor market, by sex, age, and marital status**



women as for the widowed, divorced, and separated. For married and single women, as for all male gainful workers, the greatest concentration of employment occurred in the age group 25-44, and thereafter the proportions decreased with age except for an upturn at age 65 and over. The proportion of employed persons among the widowed, divorced, and separated increased progressively with age, from 59 per 100 women in the labor market in ages 16-24 to 82 per 100 for those aged 65 and over.

*Unemployed persons.*—The variations with respect to age in the proportions of unemployed

persons who were seeking work were substantially different among men and women, although for both sexes the lowest proportions of persons seeking work were among the married. Among the men, at each age level, proportionately more single men were seeking work; among women, except in ages 60 and over, the proportions were largest for those who were widowed, divorced, or separated.

The changes, with respect to age, in the proportion of men seeking work were, in general, similar for each marital status, but this was not the case among women. For married women the proportions seeking work decreased with age to the age group 45-59 and thereafter rose gradually; for single women and for the widowed, divorced, and separated, the percentages decreased at a slowing rate with increasing age.

*Persons on work relief.*—The highest proportions of persons on work relief were found, with few exceptions, among the widowed, divorced, and separated and the lowest among single persons. The exceptions were the youngest and the oldest married gainful workers who were relatively more often on work relief.

The proportionate numbers of persons on work relief doubtless reflect work-relief policies as well as relative need in the various segments of the population. Thus single women generally reported relatively the lowest proportions on work relief. Married male gainful workers in ages 16-24 reported the largest percentage engaged on work relief—10.8 percent. Widowed, divorced, or separated persons reported comparatively large proportions on work relief, except in the oldest age groups.

*Employment status and household type.*—When both marital status and age are considered, the proportion of employed male workers in single-family households is generally lower than the corresponding proportion in multi-family households. Exceptions were found for married men aged 16-24, and for widowed, divorced, or separated men under 60.

The generally lower proportion of employed men in single-family households was counteracted, in part at least, by larger proportions of men on work relief. This combination of percentages is evident for married men of all ages, and for those under 45 it was sufficient to result in a smaller proportion of married men in single-family households who reported that they were seeking work.

Differences between single-family and multi-family households in the percentages of either gainful workers or employed gainful workers were wider for women than for men. The proportion of employed workers was higher for women in multi-family households than for those in single-family households, except for the age group 25-44 and for married women in ages under 45 and 65 or more. The exception for the age group 25-44 is explained by the large proportion of married women in this age group. The exception for married women under 45 seems a reflection of the fact that a woman in a single-family household who was not working would tend to be reported as a housewife more often than one in a multi-family household. It is probably not unreasonable to assume that unemployed women in multi-family households sought work more regularly than did married women of the same age from single-family households with only one adult woman.

As was found for men, the proportion of women engaged in relief work was higher for those from single than from multi-family households. The range of differences in the percentages was greater with respect to marital status among women in single than in multi-family households.

The lesser concentration of older employed married women in single-family households was offset by the relatively larger number on work relief, so that the percent of women seeking work was smaller for the married in single-family than for those in multi-family households.<sup>8</sup> Among women other than the married, on the other hand, the proportions seeking work were greater for those in single-family households.

### *Summary and Conclusions*

This report is essentially descriptive in nature. Nevertheless, the variations observed indicate the multiplicity of factors which determine, first, an individual's entry into the labor market and, second, the employment status of those within the labor market.

For many men of mature age, gainful employment would be a social necessity regardless of economic need. The age at which one enters the labor market, however, is controlled in part by the family relationship of the individual, his abilities and aptitudes, the reliance of others on

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 6.

him for support, as well as his social and cultural background and the opportunities for employment. At the other extreme, among the aged, withdrawal from the labor market is determined by employment conditions and the earning potentialities of the individual, his responsibilities, and the sources of livelihood that he may have aside from his own earnings.

For women, the situation is far more complex; the traditional dependence on the male still exists, especially in the case of married women. Childbearing and the care of children and of the home also exert a marked effect in keeping women out of the labor market. But changing mores, economic necessity, and in some instances the drudgery of home work and the desire for independence control the presence of women in the labor market.

The employment status of workers is determined in part by the length and continuity of their stay in the labor market, by their skill, their productiveness in relation to earnings, and, in a measure, by the urgency of their needs. The interaction of these social and economic factors with our production system resulted in an employment pattern for the 1.9 million urban adults reported in this survey which may be summarized as follows:

(1) Fifty-seven percent of the urban adults aged 16 years or more were in the labor force. Fifty-six percent of the adults in single-family households and 59 percent of those from multi-family households were gainful workers.

(2) Eighty-eight percent of the men and 29 percent of the women were reported in the labor force.

(3) Twenty-seven percent of all gainful workers were women. About one-fourth of the gainful workers from single-family households and one-third of those from multi-family households were women.

(4) A greater proportion of the married men was in the labor market than of either widowed, divorced, or separated men or single men. The respective proportions were 95, 77, and 75 per hundred. Among the aged, the ranking of single and of widowed, divorced, or separated was interchanged.

(5) A greater proportion of the single women was in the labor market than of either of the other

two marital groups. A strikingly low proportion of the married women was in the labor force. The ratios were 11 per 100 married women, 38 per 100 widowed, divorced, or separated, and 65 per 100 single women. Except for the age group 16-24, the same ranking was found for each age group.

(6) The ratio of male gainful workers to all men was about the same for single-family and for multi-family households. Among women, there were wide differences in the ratios. The agreement between ratios increased with age. The greatest difference was observed among the ratios for married women.

(7) Seventeen percent of the urban gainful workers during the period covered by the survey were unemployed, 5 percent were at work on relief projects, and 78 percent were employed for pay or profit on nonrelief work.

(8) The largest proportion of employed persons to all gainful workers in a particular age group—84 percent—was found for persons aged 25-44 years.

(9) Although the proportion of employed men at each age level was relatively lower than the corresponding proportion of women, only 16 percent of all men in the labor market were unemployed, as compared with 18 percent of the women in the labor market. The larger proportion for women resulted from the fact that a relatively large number of women gainful workers were under 25, the age group in which the proportion of unemployed persons was greatest.

(10) The proportionate differences between the number of employed gainful workers in single-family and multi-family households were more pronounced among women workers than among men. This situation is attributable in part to the marked differences in composition of the two types of households, with respect to marital status of women workers, and to the fact that marital status is an important differential factor for women.

(11) Although the proportion of married women in the labor market was lower than that of any other group of women, a larger proportion of the married women workers was employed.

(12) Differences between the employment status of women gainful workers in multi-family and single-family households were least for the married and generally most for the widowed, divorced, or separated.