

In general, the groups with the shorter average duration are also the ones with the higher rates of unemployment. That is, a larger proportion of their numbers in the labor force is subject to unemployment, but is unemployed a shorter period of time in any given spell. The unemployment rate for teenage boys is three times that for adult men 25 years and over. Youngsters are in the process of adjusting to the labor market and experience a good deal of unemployment in the course of finding or changing jobs during the year. This kind of unemployment is apparently shorter, however, than that experienced by regular workers who lose their jobs.

Marital status

Married men living with their families report a lower rate of unemployment over the course of a calendar year than do other men, and also less long-term unemployment. About a third of the married men with unemployment or layoff had lost as much as 15 weeks of working time during 1957 as compared with two-fifths of the single men 20 years of age and over, and nearly one-half of all other men (widowed, divorced, separated, etc.). In part, these differences could be related to the age distributions of the various marital groups. Those who are widowed, divorced, or married but living apart from their wives tend to be older and because of age alone would have greater difficulty in finding another job once unemployed. More recent data from the 1959 monthly surveys show, however, that married men have shorter average duration of unemployment age by age than other men who had been (but are not currently) married. Apparently, the marital status of men is itself a factor which leads to less unemployment, in part, because responsibilities exert more pressure on such men to find and hold a job, in part, because men who are married have other personal characteristics which make them more employable.

Marital status makes little difference in the average duration of unemployment among women, and none at all in the extent of long-term unemployment. About one-third of both married and single unemployed women (among single women only those age 20 and over are included in the comparison) had 15 weeks or more of unemployment in 1957 and one-third of each group also reported short duration unemployment, i.e., less than 5 weeks of unemployment.

Color

The average monthly rate of unemployment for nonwhite workers was twice that of white workers in 1957 (8 percent versus 4 percent), the usual relationship in most postwar years. There was also a slightly greater tendency for nonwhite workers than white workers to be among the long-term unemployed (table I-5). The difference in duration shows up much more sharply in the work experience data because the nonwhites not only have higher unemployment rates, but are more subject than the whites to repeated spells of unemployment. As a result, 44 percent of the nonwhites who experienced any unemployment were long-term unemployed (on an annual basis) as compared with 33 percent of the whites (table I-6).