

30 EXTENT AND NATURE OF FRICTIONAL UNEMPLOYMENT

This approach toward measurement of long-term unemployment does not alter the previously observed comparisons by sex and color. The rates of unemployment among men are higher than among women in every age group, as is the proportion of long termers among the unemployed. Similarly, the proportion of unemployed is higher in the nonwhite than in the white labor force. This fact, taken together with the longer duration of those nonwhite workers who become unemployed, results in a rate of long-term unemployment (as a percentage of those who worked at any time during the year) three times that of white workers.

When viewed in this broader context, however, construction workers fare the worst of any industry group in terms of long-term unemployment. Some 14 percent of those whose longest job was in that industry during 1957 had 15 weeks or more of unemployment as compared with only 4 percent for all workers. Farm wage workers had the second highest rate of long-term unemployment (10 percent). In these two groups, the especially high rates of unemployment (one-third and one-fifth, respectively) combine with a high proportion who are hit several times during the year to produce an especially high rate of long-term unemployment, even though each individual spell may be comparatively brief.

On the other hand, public administration workers and the nonfarm self-employed have the smallest overall incidence of long-term unemployment. This is the case despite the fact that a high proportion of those who do become unemployed remain out of work for over 15 weeks, and results from the fact that only a small proportion of these kinds of workers ever become unemployed at all.

In terms of occupation, the fact that unemployment is a much more serious problem for blue-collar than for white-collar workers again is brought out more sharply. The unemployment rate for blue-collar workers is three times that of white-collar workers; the rate for unskilled laborers is nearly eight times that of professional, technical, and managerial workers. Blue-collar workers with any unemployment are also more likely to be out of work two or more times. For the year as a whole, $7\frac{1}{2}$ percent of all blue-collar workers had 15 or more weeks of unemployment as compared with $1\frac{1}{2}$ percent of all white-collar workers.

APPENDIX I TO CHAPTER I

SOURCE OF DURATION AND TURNOVER DATA

Monthly estimates of the duration of unemployment have been compiled from the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey for nearly two decades. Each respondent identified as unemployed in the survey is asked the number of continuous weeks he was looking for work (through the survey week). Duration also reflects the time that respondents would have been looking for work except for temporary illness, or belief that no work was available in their line or in the community. For persons on layoff, duration of unemployment represents the number of full weeks since the termination of their most recent employment.

The current duration of unemployment, as measured in the monthly surveys, is not necessarily the final duration for any given spell of unemployment. Current duration and final duration are the same only for those persons who actually find a job or leave the labor force immediately after the survey week. Another limitation is that the data represent only the most recent unbroken spell of unemployment. It is useful, therefore, to supplement the current survey data with information from surveys of work experience. These work history surveys measure the extent of employment and unemployment over the course of an entire calendar year. They reflect all spells of unemployment and the aggregate amount