

PATTERNS OF GROSS CHANGES IN LABOR FORCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT

In 1957 and other recent years, an average of 3¼ million persons—mostly housewives, students, and older semiretired men entered the labor force each month (on the average) while an almost equal number withdrew. Of this total of 3¼ million, an average of about 550,000 persons entered the labor market to seek work and thus became unemployed, replacing about the same number of unemployed who left the labor force. Entries into the labor market accounted for close to an average of 20 percent of all the unemployed.

About half of these withdrawals from the labor force occurred after a period of unemployment ranging from 1 week up to 2 months. Only a little over 100,000, on the average, remained unemployed for 15 weeks or longer and then withdrew from the labor force. Many of these were housewives and students rather than year-round labor force members.

Postexhaustion studies of the Bureau of Employment Security show that, under relatively favorable employment conditions, the great majority of exhaustees remain in the labor force even after a rather lengthy spell of unemployment.

One reason why only 550,000 of those entering the labor force become unemployed is that the largest part of the 3¼ million gross changes involves farm employment and part-time jobs. Most of these changes are accounted for by women and teenagers who apparently begin working on farms or at part-time jobs without passing through a stage of unemployment. (See tables II-2 and II-3.)

TABLE II-2. *Gross changes in the labor force, by type of change: Annual average, 1957*

[Numbers in thousands]

Type of change	Total	Male	Female	Percent distribution		
				Total	Male	Female
Civilian labor force.....	67,946	45,882	22,064	-----	-----	-----
Total gross changes.....	3,265	1,148	2,117	-----	-----	-----
Percent of total.....	4.8	2.5	9.6	-----	-----	-----
Total gross changes.....	3,265	1,148	2,117	100.0	100.0	100.0
Type (or source) of change:						
Employment.....	2,716	920	1,796	83.2	80.1	84.8
Agriculture.....	685	272	413	21.0	23.7	19.5
Nonagricultural industries.....	2,030	648	1,382	62.2	56.4	65.3
Full time.....	690	214	476	21.1	18.6	22.5
Part time.....	1,341	434	907	41.1	37.8	42.8
Economic reasons.....	167	57	110	5.1	5.0	5.2
Other.....	1,174	377	797	36.0	32.8	37.6
Unemployment.....	549	228	321	16.8	19.9	15.2

NOTE.—See table II-1.