

THE MONTHLY REPORT ON THE LABOR FORCE; APRIL 1962

Note: Beginning with the figures for April 1962, information from the 1960 Census of Population replaces that from the 1950 Census in the estimation procedures for the labor force survey. The monthly and annual changes in the labor force data quoted in this release are based on the old April figures, which are comparable with previously published data. The differences between the old and new data are small (see page S-1).

Factory employment and hours of work showed continued strong improvement in April.

With most manufacturing industries reporting better-than-seasonal developments during the month, jobs in this sector rose by 80,000 instead of showing the small decline usual at this time of year. Construction employment expanded sharply during the month after the usual spring pickup had been delayed by bad weather in March. Trade employment continued to show better-than-seasonal improvement for the fourth consecutive month. Altogether, nonfarm payroll employment at 54.7 million was up 675,000 from March to April, or a quarter of a million more than seasonally.

With the gains of the past few months, manufacturing employment has returned to within 200,000 of the level in May 1960, the prerecession peak in general business activity, while trade is now significantly above that level.

The factory workweek continued to improve in April, and at 40.4 hours was at a level which has not been exceeded for this month since 1953. Overtime hours in manufacturing edged up to 2.7 hours, the highest level for April since data became available in 1956.

As announced on May 9, unemployment declined seasonally by 400,000 in April, and at 3.9 million was 1.0 million lower than a year earlier. The seasonally adjusted rate of unemployment of 5.5 percent was virtually unchanged from the preceding 2 months but was well below the 6.9 percent of a year earlier. State insured unemployment declined by 400,000 in mid-April to 1.9 million.

Total employment moved seasonally higher by 700,000 to 66.8 million in April. Nonagricultural employment (including the self-employed, unpaid family workers, and domestics) rose by 450,000 to a record for April of 61.9 million, an increase over the year of 1.2 million.

Agricultural employment increased by 250,000 from March and was virtually the same as a year earlier in April at 5.0 million.

The number of workers on part time for economic reasons declined by 100,000, somewhat more than seasonal, to 2.2 million in April, some 800,000 less than at the same time in 1961.

The total labor force, including the Armed Forces, rose about seasonally again in April to 73.7 million, and was 650,000 higher than a year earlier.