

manpower training and the older worker; and demonstration projects in six communities designed to communicate some innovative techniques in job development, employment counseling, and retraining of workers in this age group.

In addition, we have developed monographs and pamphlets to aid community groups, and a documentary film, "The Wise Years Wasted," to dramatize the plight of the older worker. We are in the process of establishing a National Institute of Industrial Gerontology to carry out further scientific research on the occupational aspects of aging, as well as industrial retirement.

In the category of "older" persons, we include the approximately 55 million Americans aged 45 and over, more than a quarter of the Nation's population; approximately 37 million are between 45 and 65; approximately 18 million are 65 and over. This division corresponds roughly to the pre- and post-retirement phases of the life cycle.

Of course, this is a rough boundary, since on the one hand, the trend toward early retirement means that many persons under 65 have already left the labor market, while on the other hand, approximately one-fifth of those 65 and over are employed.

The older worker problem is often masked by statistics on labor force participation, which show that the unemployment rate for all workers 45 and over is no higher than the average for the labor force as a whole.

However, a finer breakdown of the older worker category shows that, for men, employment reaches its peak before age 45 (i.e., well before "retirement" age) and declines steadily thereafter.

TABLE 1.—*Labor force participation rates for men aged 16 and older, 1966*

Age:	Percent of men employed
16 to 24.....	69
25 to 44.....	97
45 to 49.....	96
50 to 54.....	94
55 to 59.....	90
60 to 64.....	78
65 to 69.....	43
70 plus.....	18

If an older person loses his job, he has a harder time finding a new one. In 1964, the unemployment of persons 45 and over lasted an average of 19.4 weeks, as compared with 11 weeks for those under 45, and, in 1966, when older workers represented 24.7 percent of the labor force, they made up 34.3 percent of the long-term unemployed (6 months or more), an increase of 4.1 percent from 1965.

A disproportionate number of older persons are employed in fields characterized by relatively low earnings, and declining demand—in particular self-employment, which accounts for almost a fifth of the men aged 45 to 64, as compared to less than 10 percent of those under 45; and agriculture, which employs almost twice as many older as younger men.

Retirement trends themselves work to the disadvantage of the older person who is still in the labor force.

Since 1956 (when amendments to the Social Security Act made retirement at age 62 possible although with actuarially reduced bene-