Job Seekers Registered at Public Employment Offices, April 1941 *

SINCE THE Bureau of Employment Security made its survey of registrants at public employment offices in April 1940, vast changes have taken place in the national economy. Between July 1940 and April 1941, the month of the most recent inventory, the Government had awarded $20 billion in contracts and had disbursed $5.9 billion for defense purposes. Nearly three-fourths of the amount spent was for airplanes, ships, and other military equipment and supplies; the rest went into construction of cantonments, industrial plants, and housing for workers drawn to centers of defense activity. Production of durable goods, which had declined most sharply during the depression and had lagged behind the general recovery since 1933, suddenly began to exceed production of nondurable goods. Plants idle for years were reopened, and new plants were built. Hundreds of thousands of workers of all types were needed, especially in the skilled manufacturing occupations, for which there had been little demand during the past decade. Between April 1940 and April 1941, it is estimated, total employment in the country increased 1.6 million; more than a million men were withdrawn from the labor force into the armed services; and total unemployment declined 2.2 million.

The constantly increasing demand for workers created shortages in many of the skills that can be acquired only with training and experience; some of the less skilled occupations were also affected, as workers from such fields as domestic service and agriculture were siphoned off to better-paid unskilled jobs in factories. These changing aspects of the labor market resulted in changed employment standards. Employers became more willing to accept older workers; a real demand appeared for young inexperienced workers to be trained on the job; women were employed for work formerly considered men's provinces; employment opportunities for Negroes increased. All these developments might be expected to be reflected in the composition of the labor supply available at public employment offices.

Unfortunately, few water-tight comparisons can be made between the 1940 and 1941 inventories because of different methods employed in making the two surveys. The period during which an application remains active varies among the States from 30 to 90 days or more. For the 1941 inventory, however, States were instructed to include only those registrants in the active file who had been in contact with their local offices on or after March 1, thereby excluding many registrants who are ordinarily included in the active file. The 1940 inventory had no comparable requirement, although local offices had previously cleared their files of all registrations of persons believed not actively seeking work. The two procedures do not yield identical results. Although various States in 1941 counted all persons who had reported to local offices on or after March 1, even though their registrations had lapsed, the effect of this misinterpretation on the total inventory was probably negligible.

Registrants were classified as "available" or "unavailable" in the 1941 survey, while no such distinction was made in the 1940 count. For the 1941 inventory, no registrant was considered available if he was already employed at his primary occupation; if he was temporarily unemployed but waiting to be called back to his regular job or only partially employed and not interested in being referred to a job; or if he was physically handicapped or so undependable as to be unsuitable for employment under current labor-market conditions. All other registrants were considered available and were classified either as "with a job" or "without a job." Registrants classified as "available—without a job" included not only the unemployed but also any worker currently employed at a temporary job or anticipating a lay-off of at least 4 weeks beginning prior to April 26; WPA and NYA workers; CCC enrollees; and students who did not have a job but expected to be available for work by July 1, 1941.

Only available registrants in the 1941 survey were classified according to age, sex, and race; as a result, about 8 percent of all registrants were excluded from comparison with the 1940 data.

* Prepared in the Research and Statistics Division, Bureau of Employment Security.

Moreover, comparison of occupations and occupational groups is limited by fundamental differences between the job classifications used in the 2 years.

The Survey as a Measure of Labor Supply

While the active file is a good indication of available labor supply, it is not a complete measure. Not all unemployed workers are registered at public employment offices, nor are all the registrants unemployed. As public agencies, the offices accept applications for work from all who wish to register with them. Although registration is required of unemployment compensation claimants, WPA workers, and employable relief recipients, it is voluntary for all other persons, employed and unemployed. Consequently, the proportion of the unemployed who are actually registered at the public employment offices varies with factors affecting each of these groups.

In April of both 1940 and 1941, registrations included in the survey were equal to nearly two-thirds of the total number of unemployed workers. An undetermined proportion of the applicants at public employment offices, however, are employed; in the 1941 inventory the proportion was somewhere between 5 and 10 percent. Since the inventory was taken at the conclusion of an intensive recruitment campaign, it is probable that the proportion of employed workers included in the file was then at a peak.

The effect of the March–April registration drive on the composition of the active file is difficult to determine. At the end of March, when the recruitment campaign was 2 weeks old, the active file contained 5.2 million applications—70,000 more than a month earlier. By the end of April, 2 weeks after the close of the active campaign, the file had declined to 5.1 million. During these 2 months, 3.4 million new and renewed applications had been received, 800,000 placements had been made, and 2.6 million applications had been removed from the active file, either because the applicants had reported finding jobs for themselves or because they had failed to renew their applications before the expiration of the validity period.

With such rapid turn-over, the composition of the active file may change considerably in a short time. In the occupations most in demand, the change in number of workers actually available is likely to be even more rapid than can be determined from the regular monthly count. There seems little doubt, for instance, that the number of workers available in skilled and semiskilled occupations was exaggerated in this year's inventory, not

Chart 1.—*Percentage distribution by major occupational group of job seekers available at public employment offices, by State, April 1941*

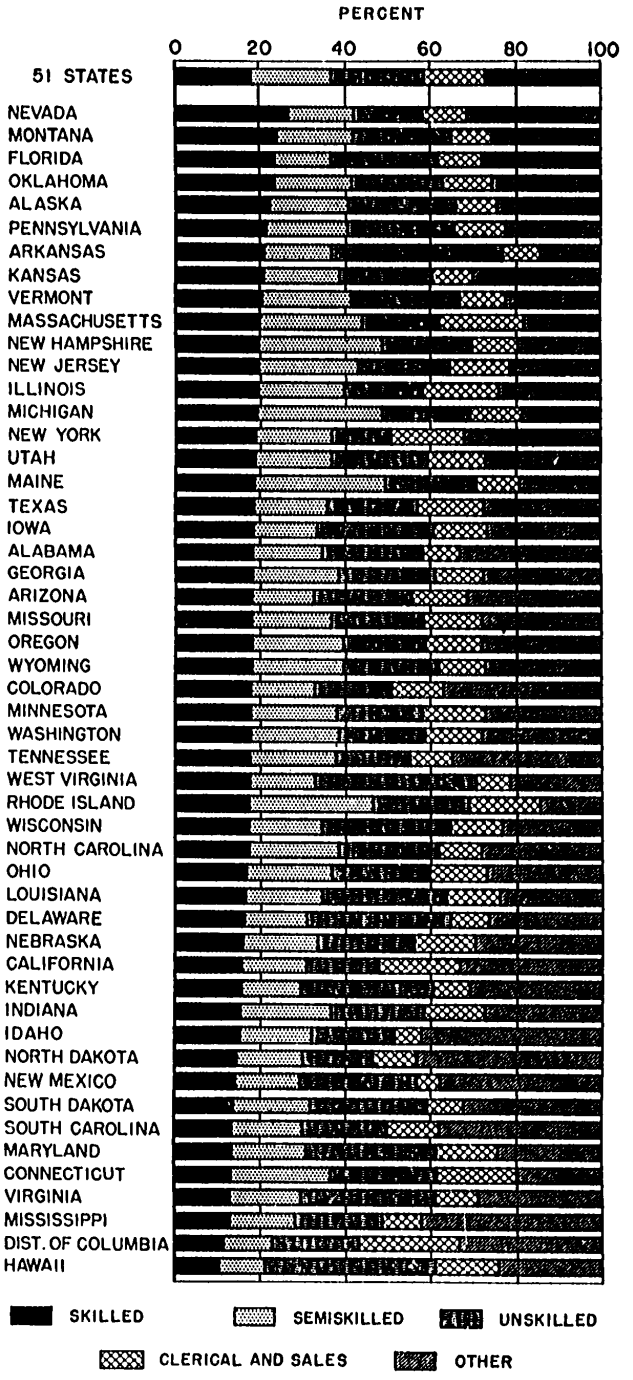


Table 1.—*Number of job seekers registered at public employment offices, April 1940 and April 1941, by major occupational group*

Major occupational group	Number (in thousands)		Percentage change
	April 1940	April 1941	
Total	5,084	4,397	−13.5
Skilled	980	805	−17.8
Semiskilled	1,011	843	−16.6
Unskilled	1,054	936	−11.2
Professional and managerial	169	168	−.6
Clerical and sales	658	594	−9.6
Service	625	561	−10.3
Agricultural, fishery, and forestry	443	315	−28.9
Unassigned [1]	144	175	+21.3

[1] Represents recent students, persons without work experience, and persons with occupation unspecified.

only by errors in procedure but also by the likelihood that many workers who filed applications in response to the registration campaign soon found jobs for themselves and neglected to report the fact to the employment office, thus leaving their applications in the active file to be counted as representing available workers. Later data indicate that within a few months after the April inventory the supply of available workers qualified for jobs in defense industries had shrunk considerably; it is likely that subsequent monthly counts may show that the supply has been augmented by registrations of workers from industries where priorities have forced curtailment of employment.

Other factors must be considered in interpreting the inventory as a measure of labor supply. Since only primary registrations [1] were included and a worker was counted in only one occupation even though he might be fully or partially qualified in several others, the number of registrants qualified in any one occupation is understated. Moreover, the number of available registrants in any occupation or locality may overstate the number of workers who could be placed in jobs. Even in the face of active labor demand there are workers who are difficult to place because they lack suitable training, recent experience, or some particular combination of skills, or are unwilling to move to another community; placements are also affected by an applicant's age, sex, or race or by his religion, foreign birth, or lack of citizenship. Although some of these registrants may find jobs as employer specifications are relaxed or as the workers become better trained, others will continue unemployed even though jobs remain unfilled and new entrants into the labor market, such as housewives and youths, are hired by industry. The age, sex, and race distributions in the 1941 inventory give some indication of the placeability of registrants.

[1] A primary registration is made in the occupation in which an applicant seems best qualified. However, in many offices the greater prospect of placement in certain occupations undoubtedly influenced the interviewer to assign primary occupations in which the applicants were not fully qualified.

Total Registrations and Available Registrants

Nearly 4.4 million registrants were included in the occupational count of April 1941. The decline from 5.1 million at the time of the 1940 inventory reflects both the increased industrial activity and employment resulting from the defense program and the effect of the maximum 57-day validity period prescribed for the 1941 count.

A comparison of the number of registrants in each of the major occupational groups in both surveys is shown in table 1. Any conclusions drawn from these data are necessarily tempered by all the qualifications already discussed.

The effect of the defense program is evident to some extent in the changes from 1940 to 1941. When the 1941 inventory was taken, all agricultural States were reporting a diminishing supply of farm help resulting from the flow of agricultural workers into more lucrative defense employment. Corroborating these reports, the inventory revealed a decline of 29 percent in registrations of workers identified with agriculture, forestry, and fishery. The next greatest declines were in the skilled and semiskilled occupational groups, which have borne the brunt of defense demand. These two categories declined 18 and 17 percent, respectively. Registrations in an unassigned group that included recent students and persons without work experience increased 21 percent, reflecting undoubtedly the numbers of inexperienced workers who registered because they hoped to get defense jobs.

All but 340,000 of the 4.4 million registrants were available for placement either immediately or after some training. The proportion varied among the States from 75 percent in West Virginia to virtually 100 percent in Arkansas and the District of Columbia. More than 90 percent of the registrants in all except 11 States were immediately available for jobs. Variations among the major occupational groups were not signifi-

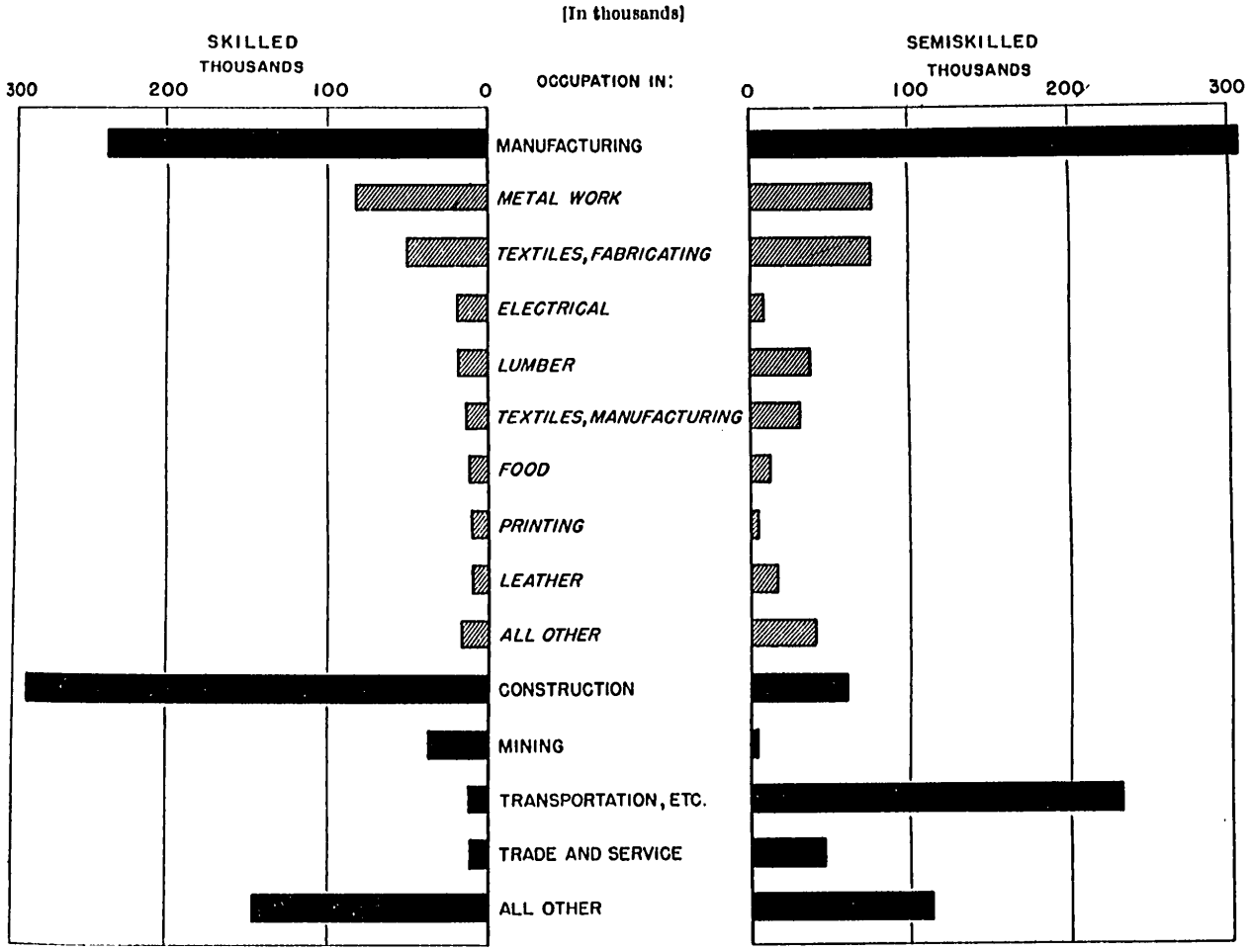
cant; the proportion available ranged from 90 percent in the agricultural, fishery, and forestry occupations to 95 percent in the clerical and sales group.

Nearly 5 percent of all the available registrants already had jobs but were not working in their primary occupation and were willing to accept employment at their highest skill. Within the continental United States, the proportion of available registrants who had jobs varied from 1 percent in Michigan to 12 percent in Montana. In the Territories the proportion was high—11 percent in Alaska and 25 percent in Hawaii. Factors other than job opportunities must have determined the proportion employed at jobs beneath their highest skill, because some of the States with the least industrial development—such as Arizona and Minnesota—had almost as small a proportion of available registrants so employed as did Michigan, a highly industrialized State.

Apparently, the higher the degree of skill or specialization, the greater the proportion of available registrants who have jobs beneath their ability. In the professional and managerial group, 7.4 percent were employed at jobs that did not utilize their highest skill, and 7.0 percent of the skilled applicants were so employed; the ratio for the 394 selected defense occupations was even higher—8.2 percent. In contrast, only 3.2 percent of the service group and 3.4 percent of the unskilled group were in employment below their highest skill.

Geographic distribution of registrants corresponded rather closely to population and degree of industrialization. For example, the Great Lakes States, which in the 1940 census claimed

Chart 2.—*Skilled and semiskilled job seekers available at public employment offices, by industry, April 1941*



22 percent of the working population, accounted for 24 percent of total available registrants, while the Mountain States, with only 2.8 percent of the labor force, had only 3.8 percent of the registrants (table 3). New York State, with 11 percent of the national labor force, had 13 percent of all registrants. Except for New York, the States along the Atlantic seaboard and the Gulf of Mexico generally had a proportion of total registrants slightly smaller than their share of the total labor force. Whether this slight variation is due to differences in employment opportunities or to differences in administrative procedures of employment service offices is not known.

Occupational and Industrial Distribution of Registrants

Although workers in the skilled and semiskilled occupations have been most in demand under the defense program, the supply of registered workers in these categories has not been depleted much faster than in other occupational groups. Dif-

Table 2.—*Number of job seekers available at public employment offices and percent with a job, by major occupational group and State, April 1941*

[Corrected to July 14, 1941]

State	Total		Skilled		Semiskilled		Unskilled		Professional and managerial		Clerical and sales	Service	Agricultural, fishery, and forestry	Unassigned[1]
	Number	Percent with a job	Number	Percent with a job	Number	Percent with a job	Number	Percent with a job	Number	Percent with a job				
Total	4,059,403	4.8	731,263	7.0	764,011	5.2	870,641	3.4	155,228	7.3	505,454	529,318	282,458	160,130
Alabama	101,169	4.5	18,312	6.0	16,784	4.2	23,623	2.0	2,626	11.8	8,632	9,084	19,326	2,782
Alaska	2,034	11.4	446	18.6	372	10.8	517	8.9	63	22.2	196	230	174	36
Arizona	14,287	2.8	2,568	4.3	2,083	5.1	3,227	2.2	446	4.7	1,891	2,232	1,751	89
Arkansas	60,171	5.3	12,430	13.0	9,562	4.5	24,118	1.4	979	13.9	5,243	5,679	1,994	166
California	313,837	4.8	48,491	6.2	47,399	7.0	53,748	5.4	17,812	3.6	59,866	47,829	28,515	10,177
Colorado	54,296	3.6	9,483	6.7	8,187	3.8	9,670	1.0	2,070	8.1	6,737	6,837	9,125	2,187
Connecticut	29,278	4.4	3,817	5.2	6,814	4.0	7,273	3.9	1,003	7.8	5,553	3,315	858	645
Delaware	9,066	2.8	1,448	3.7	1,339	2.4	3,031	.7	177	9.0	817	1,453	592	209
District of Columbia	25,594	1.6	2,995	1.0	2,809	.5	5,233	1.4	1,508	2.3	5,050	6,644	114	341
Florida	91,981	3.2	21,150	4.9	12,142	3.3	22,944	1.5	3,294	4.9	9,465	10,879	8,280	3,827
Georgia	72,552	3.3	13,151	5.3	14,570	3.1	16,417	1.6	1,630	6.9	8,019	7,592	7,920	3,253
Hawaii	4,032	24.5	503	10.7	535	16.4	1,966	41.5	130	16.9	716	381	701	0
Idaho	17,000	7.5	2,570	11.1	2,838	7.4	3,308	7.5	329	17.3	1,079	1,803	4,904	169
Illinois[2]	260,121	3.5	49,936	5.5	53,630	3.7	47,232	1.9	14,650	5.4	45,946	38,516	9,907	295
Indiana	145,467	7.7	22,125	8.7	31,105	7.8	31,443	4.5	5,322	24.7	20,417	22,186	9,235	3,634
Iowa	57,164	5.5	10,432	10.7	8,679	5.7	15,525	3.1	1,148	10.8	7,140	7,502	6,185	493
Kansas	59,816	8.7	12,400	14.8	10,600	11.0	13,001	2.9	1,832	16.9	5,751	7,351	7,086	1,795
Kentucky	66,219	4.0	10,143	7.3	9,470	3.9	20,294	3.8	1,520	5.1	5,722	7,007	10,739	1,324
Louisiana	48,894	4.9	8,043	4.8	8,672	3.3	14,217	5.6	1,241	7.5	6,228	5,703	4,000	730
Maine	29,494	6.3	5,474	7.7	9,055	4.2	6,236	7.6	922	15.4	2,960	2,471	1,774	602
Maryland	29,521	4.5	3,877	7.6	5,198	5.7	8,963	1.8	817	9.8	4,312	4,427	1,787	140
Massachusetts	116,215	5.3	23,022	8.2	27,692	6.0	21,107	3.8	5,360	4.5	23,333	12,095	1,730	1,876
Michigan	170,075	1.1	32,411	2.2	49,573	1.1	35,459	.3	6,249	3.0	20,535	19,764	5,851	233
Minnesota	93,507	2.3	16,396	3.8	18,818	2.3	19,076	.9	3,284	5.3	13,725	10,065	9,427	2,116
Mississippi	54,394	4.8	6,928	9.0	8,376	4.8	11,046	4.0	1,012	10.5	5,192	5,803	8,649	7,389
Missouri	131,355	5.2	23,590	9.0	24,504	6.4	28,076	3.4	4,272	6.3	17,792	17,075	13,804	2,182
Montana	18,831	12.0	4,477	19.4	3,353	5.1	4,300	11.0	469	15.6	1,809	2,205	1,015	303
Nebraska	41,339	3.5	6,530	5.8	7,272	3.4	9,359	2.2	1,545	8.4	5,777	4,989	5,531	336
Nevada	5,758	6.2	1,542	10.0	865	6.9	930	4.2	185	7.0	593	1,228	376	39
New Hampshire	14,695	4.2	2,898	6.2	4,225	2.6	3,088	1.7	404	9.6	1,564	1,684	463	369
New Jersey	109,384	7.3	21,270	8.6	25,476	6.5	23,409	6.7	5,702	8.8	15,563	10,110	1,841	13
New Mexico	21,618	4.9	3,056	8.3	3,236	2.8	5,973	1.8	325	11.4	1,110	2,264	5,408	246
New York	535,582	3.4	100,818	4.9	92,687	4.4	76,364	2.0	26,292	4.9	91,679	71,809	5,150	70,783
North Carolina	50,491	8.8	8,673	11.5	10,590	7.5	11,703	7.9	1,109	17.8	4,995	6,591	4,441	2,359
North Dakota	15,919	2.5	2,264	2.8	2,487	2.0	2,588	1.0	702	5.1	1,685	2,104	3,973	116
Ohio	233,678	5.4	38,932	7.9	46,801	6.4	53,264	3.0	7,601	9.6	30,537	42,816	12,599	1,128
Oklahoma	56,363	9.9	12,936	13.6	10,226	10.1	12,084	7.8	1,685	17.9	6,544	6,837	5,890	161
Oregon	42,584	9.0	7,639	13.2	9,136	9.6	8,238	8.0	1,752	7.6	5,538	4,877	4,310	1,094
Pennsylvania	292,896	5.1	61,752	8.2	55,545	6.2	74,052	3.4	12,157	6.0	35,145	31,167	5,763	17,315
Rhode Island	23,502	8.2	4,056	11.7	6,763	8.0	5,342	5.3	594	9.4	3,864	1,986	305	592
South Carolina	26,254	4.4	3,577	6.3	4,243	2.6	5,221	3.4	393	10.7	3,201	5,309	3,708	512
South Dakota	17,255	4.4	2,377	10.4	3,092	3.9	4,735	1.0	377	12.2	1,451	2,063	2,764	396
Tennessee	55,183	6.8	9,612	8.0	11,157	5.3	9,613	5.5	1,203	13.8	5,426	7,861	6,589	3,632
Texas	158,692	5.7	20,375	7.4	27,059	5.8	33,923	3.5	4,117	11.7	23,861	23,259	15,961	1,137
Utah	21,667	5.5	4,078	7.6	3,817	4.9	4,935	4.3	910	19.0	2,823	1,936	2,789	379
Vermont	7,416	9.3	1,490	12.3	1,558	7.8	1,889	12.0	232	14.2	828	918	493	38
Virginia	44,898	3.6	5,770	5.8	7,506	2.9	13,952	1.0	978	13.1	4,566	6,068	2,691	3,367
Washington	63,112	2.7	11,065	3.9	13,108	2.4	12,862	3.8	2,638	3.4	8,011	7,125	7,790	513
West Virginia	47,024	3.6	8,164	6.2	7,112	4.9	17,710	1.4	790	11.1	3,846	4,565	3,991	846
Wisconsin	90,228	4.5	15,593	4.2	15,362	4.6	20,895	4.8	3,152	5.1	11,117	8,171	2,522	7,416
Wyoming	6,595	5.1	1,178	11.2	1,430	4.5	1,402	4.1	121	15.7	704	733	647	320

[1] Represents recent students, persons without work experience, and persons with occupation unspecified.

[2] Excludes 24,831 new registrants in March and April for whom only summary applications were made; includes an estimated 32,500 registrants who had not been in contact with local offices since Mar. 1 but who could not be identified for exclusion at time of count.

ferences between the occupational distribution of the 1940 and 1941 inventories are slight. As in 1940, each of the groups classified according to skill constituted approximately one-fifth of the total. About 731,000 available workers were qualified in skilled occupations, 765,000 in semiskilled, and 871,000 in unskilled occupations (table 2). Approximately 155,000 were available in professional and managerial occupations, and 1.4 million were available for jobs in the clerical and sales, service, agricultural, forestry, and fishery fields.

Approximately 1 out of every 3 of the available skilled registrants was qualified for a job in the manufacturing industries. More than a third of the 237,000 skilled manufacturing workmen were qualified in the metal-working occupations, where some of the most acute shortages have been reported. Among them were 16,300 welders and flame-cutters, 11,800 machinists, and 10,800 tinsmiths, coppersmiths, and sheet-metal workers. An unusually high proportion of the available registrants in these occupations—between 10 and 16 percent—were at work in jobs below their primary skill. Only 2,100 tool makers, die makers, and die sinkers were available, and 14 percent of them had other jobs.

Registrants in occupations used in the manufacture of textiles and in the fabrication of textile products constituted more than a fourth of the skilled manufacturing roster. There were also 18,100 available in occupations used in the production of lumber and lumber products and 10,000 in occupations related to the manufacture of leather and leather products, but only 830 in skills used in the production of chemicals and chemical products.

Almost half of the available skilled workers were in nonmanufacturing occupations—288,000 of them in construction trades. There were also 112,400 registrations of skilled workmen in occupations used in more than one industry—more than half of them mechanics and repairmen for motor vehicles, airplanes, and railroad equipment.

Of the 765,000 available semiskilled workers, 308,000 were suitable for jobs in manufacturing. Here again, a substantial number (77,700) were available in the critical metalworking occupations. There were 18,700 available in machine-shop and related occupations, and 21,300 in occupations used in the mechanical treatment of metals, such as rolling, stamping, forging, and pressing. Textile manufacturing and fabricating occupations accounted for more than a third of the semiskilled manufacturing registrants.

Forty-five percent of the semiskilled registrants were in nonmanufacturing occupations. The most numerous were the 193,000 chauffeurs and drivers of buses, taxicabs, trucks, and tractors. There were also 60,200 workers available for construction jobs, and 46,000 in trade and service occupations.

Of all the available skilled and semiskilled registrants throughout the country, 465,000 or 31 percent were in selected occupations essential to defense industries, in all of which shortages had either been reported or were anticipated. Nearly half of these defense registrants were in construction occupations; 146,000 were in metal-trades occupations; 34,000 in textile, garment, and related occupations; 31,200 in automobile service occupations; 9,700 in shipbuilding occupations; 6,200 in aircraft manufacturing and service occupations; 8,500 in occupations used in the manufacture of electrical equipment; 1,700 in occupations used in the manufacture of instruments and optical goods; and 14,300 in a miscellaneous group of occupations used in a variety of industries.

In addition, there were 16,900 professional and technical registrants in strategic defense occupations. They constituted but a small proportion of the 155,000 professional and managerial registrants throughout the country, the great bulk of which consisted of accountants, musicians, teachers, retail managers, and so forth.

The largest occupational group was that of unskilled workers, of whom 871,000 were available. Only 1 out of 5 of these registrants was best suited for employment in manufacturing industries. Half the unskilled registrants were classified in the construction occupations.

In the clerical and sales group, where 565,000 workers were available, 65 percent were in clerical and 35 percent in sales occupations. In spite of widespread reports of unsatisfied demand, 87,000 stenographers and typists were available. General office clerks to the number of 55,000, and bookkeepers and cashiers numbering 51,700, were the next most numerous.

Of 529,000 workers available in the service occupations, two-fifths were domestic workers

and another two-fifths were workers in personal-service occupations. Various types of farm hands constituted more than two-thirds of the 282,000 workers available in the agricultural, forestry, fishery, and kindred occupations.

Since the location of available workers in relation to demand is of vital importance, the occupational distribution of available registrants was analyzed by geographic area [2] and by occupational group within each area (tables 3 and 4). The areas consist of States with fairly similar industrial characteristics or among which there is considerable exchange of labor across State lines. In some instances the inclusion of a State with one or another group had to be made arbitrarily. New York was treated as a separate area because its active file is so great that the State would dominate any area in which it was placed.

The geographic distribution of registrants in the broad occupational classes is shown in table 3. In general, each area's share of the total registrants in each of the occupational groups was proportionate to its share of the total active file. The Great Lakes and Ohio Valley States, with nearly a fourth of all the registrants in the country, had the greatest number of workers registered in each occupational group even though their share of registrants in the agricultural, forestry, and fishery group was low in relation to their share of total registrants. The distribution of skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled workers corresponded closely to the distribution of total registrants, areas with the most registrants having the most workers in each skill category, and vice versa. There were some minor variations in this relationship; for example, although the New England States had only 5.4 percent of the available job seekers, they had 7.3 percent of the semiskilled registrants, and New York State, with 13 percent of the available registrants, had only 8.8 percent of the unskilled group.

The degree of industrialization of an area was reflected in variations in the distribution of professional and managerial, clerical and sales, and agricultural registrants, rather than in the mechanical trades. New York State, with its highly developed industrial and commercial life, had a relatively high proportion of the professional and managerial and clerical and sales registrants, and a very low relative proportion of the registrants in agricultural, forestry, and fishery occupations. The Gulf States, on the other hand, had relatively few registrants in the professional and managerial field and twice their proportionate share in the agricultural occupations. As might be expected, this latter pattern was characteristic of the more rural areas. Altogether, 72 percent of the workers registered in the agricultural group were located in a broad area extending diagonally across the country from the South Atlantic to the Pacific Coast, where only 44 percent of the total registrants were located.

Variations between the proportion of total

[2] The State groupings used in this analysis are as follows: New England—Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont; New York; Middle Atlantic—Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia; Great Lakes and Ohio Valley—Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin; South Atlantic and Tennessee—Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee; Gulf—Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas; Southwest—Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma; North Central—Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, and South Dakota; Mountain—Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming; Pacific and Nevada—California, Nevada, Oregon, and Washington; Territories—Alaska and Hawaii.

Table 3.—*Percentage distribution of job seekers available in each major occupational group, by area, April 1941*

Area [1]	Total available	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled	Professional and managerial	Clerical and sales	Service	Agricultural, fishery, and forestry	Unassigned [3]
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
New England States	5.4	5.6	7.3	5.1	5.5	6.7	4.2	2.0	2.6
New York State	13.2	13.8	12.1	8.8	10.9	16.2	13.6	1.8	44.2
Middle Atlantic States	13.8	14.4	13.7	16.8	14.3	12.4	13.3	5.0	13.9
Great Lakes and Ohio Valley States	23.8	23.1	26.9	24.6	24.8	23.7	26.2	18.0	8.8
South Atlantic States and Tennessee	7.3	7.7	6.9	7.6	5.0	6.5	7.2	11.0	8.5
Gulf States	8.9	8.6	8.0	9.5	5.8	7.8	8.3	17.0	7.5
Southwest States	7.6	8.4	7.2	8.9	5.7	6.2	7.0	10.2	2.7
North Central States	5.5	5.2	5.3	5.9	4.5	5.3	5.2	9.9	2.1
Mountain States	3.8	3.7	3.3	3.8	3.0	2.9	3.4	9.4	2.3
Pacific States and Nevada	10.5	9.4	9.2	8.7	14.4	13.1	11.5	14.5	7.4
Territories	.2	.1	.1	.3	.1	.2	.1	.3	(4)

[1] See text footnote 2 for States included in areas.

[2] Represents recent students, persons without work experience, and persons with occupation unspecified.

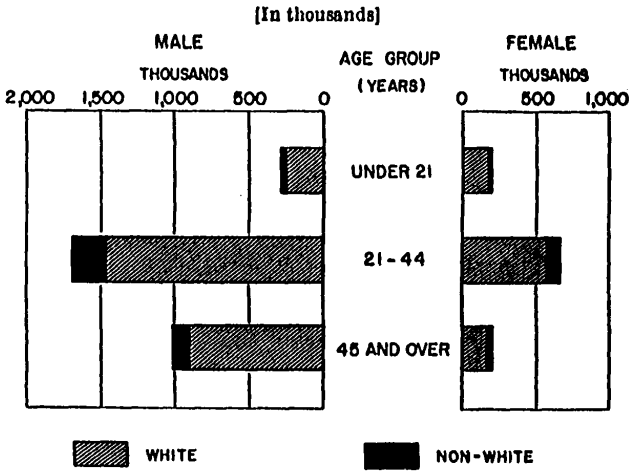
[4] Less than 0.05 percent.

registrants and available registrants among the areas were too small to be significant.

Distribution of registrants among the broad occupational groups in each geographic area is shown in table 4. In each area, registrations of available skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled workers together constituted between 50 and 65 percent of the entire file. The only area in which skilled workers outnumbered the unskilled was New York State, but in five areas (New York State, South Atlantic and Tennessee, Gulf, Southwest, and Mountain States) they outnumbered semiskilled workers. In general, a greater proportion of the unskilled registrants in each area were available than of the skilled and semiskilled. The Southwest States, where one-fifth of the file was composed of available skilled workers, had the highest proportion in this class. The highest proportion of semiskilled workers was found in New England, where a fourth of the file was made up of available workers in this category. Most of the areas had between 20 and 25 percent of their registrants in the unskilled group; however, in New York State the proportion was 14 percent; in the Pacific States and Nevada it was 18 percent; and in the Middle Atlantic States, 26 percent.

In the other occupational groups, the least variation occurred in the professional and managerial occupations. The proportion of registrants in service occupations was also more or less similar in the various regions. Available registrants in the clerical and sales occupations, however, ranged from 11 percent of the total in the Mountain and the South Atlantic States and Tennessee to more than 17 percent in the New England States, New York, the Pacific States and Nevada.

Chart 3.—*Age, sex, and race of job seekers available at public employment offices, April 1941*



Registrants in occupations connected with agriculture, forestry, and fishery showed the greatest variation; in New York they constituted only 1 percent of the file, but in the Mountain States they accounted for 17 percent.

Personal Characteristics of Registrants

Since the usefulness and adaptability of a worker are frequently conditioned by his age, sex, and race, the personal characteristics of registrants in the 1941 inventory are interesting in the light of available labor supply (chart 3).

Among the available workers, men outnumbered women by almost 3 to 1; there were 3.0 million men and 1.1 million women. The women as a group were younger than the men; 19 percent of them were under 21, as compared with 10 percent of the men, while 34 percent of the men and only 19 percent of the women were 45 or over. Only

Table 4.—*Percentage distribution of job seekers available in each area, by major occupational group, April 1941*

Area[1]	Number available	Total	Skilled	Semiskilled	Unskilled	Professional and managerial	Clerical and sales	Service	Agricultural, fishery, and forestry	Unassigned[2]
Total	4,059,403	100.0	18.0	18.8	21.5	3.8	13.9	13.0	7.0	4.0
New England States	220,600	100.0	18.5	25.4	20.4	3.8	17.3	10.2	2.5	1.9
New York State	535,582	100.0	18.8	17.3	14.3	4.9	17.1	13.4	1.0	13.2
Middle Atlantic States	558,393	100.0	18.8	18.8	26.2	4.0	12.6	12.6	3.0	4.0
Great Lakes and Ohio Valley States	965,788	100.0	17.5	21.3	22.2	4.0	13.9	14.3	5.3	1.5
South Atlantic States and Tennessee	296,461	100.0	18.9	17.8	22.2	2.6	10.5	12.9	10.5	4.6
Gulf States	363,149	100.0	17.2	16.8	22.8	2.5	12.1	12.1	13.2	3.3
Southwest States	307,705	100.0	19.9	17.8	25.1	2.9	11.5	12.0	9.4	1.4
North Central States	225,184	100.0	16.9	17.9	22.8	3.1	13.2	12.2	12.4	1.5
Mountain States	154,294	100.0	17.7	16.2	21.3	3.0	10.5	11.7	17.2	2.4
Pacific States and Nevada	425,291	100.0	16.2	16.6	17.8	5.3	17.4	14.3	9.6	2.8
Territories	6,966	100.0	13.6	13.0	35.6	2.8	13.1	8.8	12.6	.5

[1] See text footnote 2 for States included in areas.

[2] Represents recent students, persons without work experience, and persons with occupation unspecified.

12 percent of all the available registrants were under 21 and approximately 30 percent were 45 or over. Although 68 percent of all the available male workers were registered in skilled, semiskilled, and unskilled occupations, only 30 percent of the women were so registered. Clerical and sales and service occupations claimed almost 60 percent of the women.

The older men—that is, men over 45—were chiefly in the skilled occupations. Although only 22 percent of all the men registered were skilled workmen, 32 percent of those 45 and over were skilled. The older women workers were found chiefly in the service occupations, where 39 percent of all those 45 and over were found, as compared with 28 percent of all women registrants. About one-fifth of all the registrants who had not yet reached their 21st birthday were apparently newcomers to the labor market and were classified in the unassigned group.

Seven out of every eight workers were white. Practically two-thirds of the non-white workers were qualified for jobs in the unskilled and service occupations; only 6 percent of them were skilled workmen, as compared with 20 percent of the white registrants. Though non-white registrants constituted only 12 percent of the entire file, they made up 20 percent of the available workers in unskilled occupations and 29 percent in the service occupations.

Personal characteristics of registrants in the 394 selected defense occupations differed from those of the inventory as a whole, chiefly because all the selected occupations were in the higher skill categories. A much smaller proportion of the registrants in the selected occupations were under 21 years of age, and a much larger proportion were 45 and over. The relative number who were white was much higher than for the total inventory—96 out of every 100, as compared with 88 out of every 100.

Comparison of the age and sex distributions of the 1941 and 1940 inventories reveals that workers in the most employable age group, 21–44 years, represented a substantially smaller percentage of all registrants this year than in 1940. The proportion of registrants under 21 had risen from 9.7 to 12 percent during the year, and registrations of workers who had already passed their 45th birthday had increased from 27 to 30 percent of the file. The proportion of women had also increased slightly, from 25 to 26 percent.

Most of the relative increase in the number of women took place in the clerical and sales occupations and in the unassigned group. The relative increases in the upper and lower age brackets were apparent in most of the major occupational groups, among both the men and the women. However, the largest increases were in the "45 and over" group of skilled workmen, where the proportion of the total file had increased from 7.3 to 7.6 percent during the year, and in the "under 21" group of semiskilled and unassigned male registrants, where the proportion of the total file had increased from 0.9 and 0.8 percent, respectively, to 1.4 percent for each group. The increase in the older group of skilled workmen is attributable to the registrations of many who had not worked at their skills for some time. The increase in the proportion of semiskilled workers under 21 may be accounted for by the thousands of youths receiving vocational training, and the increased proportion of unassigned youths no doubt reflects the large numbers of inexperienced workers who registered in response to the recruitment campaign or in the hope of taking advantage of the rising labor market.

Conclusion

If the April inventory is a fair measure of labor supply, then the dearth of manpower for defense production is cause for genuine concern. The supply of skilled workmen cannot be augmented quickly by training. And it is in this category that the defense program makes significant demands. A survey by local employment offices of approximately 10,000 establishments in the vital defense industries has indicated that approximately 307,000 skilled workers would be added to factory pay rolls between May and the end of December 1941. There were only 443,000 available workers in skilled occupations other than construction in the April inventory, indicating that even more acute shortages in numerous occupations are likely to occur, unless carefully directed efforts are made to supply the skilled workers needed for defense production.