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LABOR MARKET



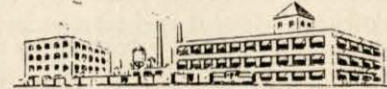
NEWS LETTER

Maine Employment Security Commission 331 Water Street Augusta, Maine



AUGUST - 1952

ISSUED BI-MONTHLY



LABOR MARKET HIGHLIGHTS

Employment requirements in nonagricultural industries in Maine have risen this year to one of the highest summer levels in the history of the State.

Demand for seasonal harvest hands has been cut due to crop losses caused by this summer's drought, but this has had little effect upon labor market conditions.

Unemployment has dropped off sharply since spring, and at the first of the current month there were fewer workers in the labor market than at any time since the end of World War II.

Shortages of qualified workers in a few occupational fields have become more pronounced than in recent months.

However, the vast majority of employers with expanding employment requirements are finding the supply of labor adequate to meet their needs.

The job outlook to the end of this year is exceptionally promising, but growing stringencies in the supply of certain classes of workers may create recruiting problems for some employers.

LABOR MARKET CONDITIONS

Job expansions in several major seasonal and nonseasonal activities since early in the spring have caused total nonfarm employment to rise this summer to one of the highest levels ever recorded in the State of Maine. Unlike during World War II, when employment advances were more or less confined to heavy munitions industries, recent gains have been along a broad industrial front. Weak spots exist in some fields, and there are a few scattered communities in which surpluses of labor may be found, but, on the whole, the employment situation in this State appears to be very sound at the present time.

FARM LABOR PICTURE

The severe mid-summer drought which resulted in serious crop damage in Maine has caused sharp cuts in the needs for seasonal harvest and food processing hands. Both the agricultural and vegetable canning industries have suffered undeniably extensive economic losses, but the effects of the drought upon the labor market has not been particularly far-reaching, since the classes of workers affected have, for the most part, been youths and housewives who ordinarily would be available only to fill short-term seasonal jobs in the summer months.

SEP 19 1952

NONAGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

Current estimates, compiled by the Maine Employment Security Commission in cooperation with the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, reveal that the number of jobs in nonagricultural industries in this State rose to a peak level for 1952, thus far, of 283,200 in July. Between April, when the low point for the year was reached, and July, there was an increase of 23,400 in the number of nonfarm workers employed. Normal large-scale expansions in seasonal activities have played an important part in producing the spectacularly sharp rise since spring, but that nearly 5,000 more workers are engaged in nonfarm jobs now than a year ago points to over-the-year improvements of a nonseasonal nature.

ADEQUACY OF LABOR SUPPLY

Accelerated hirings this summer have reduced the supply of available labor in Maine rather appreciably, but, in view of the size of the demand, there have been surprisingly few instances in which employers have been unable to find qualified workers for their job openings. The most noteworthy localized shortages have been of men experienced in certain metalworking, shipbuilding, and logging and lumbering occupations. Also, in some sections, difficulties have been encountered in obtaining trained female workers for clerical and related jobs.

JOB-SEEKERS IN THE LABOR MARKET

Indicative of generally favorable economic conditions in the State, is the fact that at the start of the current month there were fewer unemployed persons actively seeking jobs through the facilities of the local offices of the Maine Employment Security Commission than at any time since the end of World War II. On August 1, the number of job-seekers registered with the sixteen local offices totalled 9,089. This represented a two-month decline of nearly 8,000 in the number of registered work-applicants and a thirty-day decrease of about 1,800.

OCCUPATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF APPLICANTS

Although maldistribution factors have been instrumental in the growth of occupational deficiencies in the local supply of labor in some communities, workers are still available, on a state-wide basis, in a wide variety of occupations. Of those currently registered for work, 2.8 per cent are suited for professional or managerial jobs; 13 per cent are clerical workers or salespersons; 6.7 per cent could be used in jobs found in various service industries; 15.7 per cent are qualified for skilled occupations; 26.3 per cent have gained experience in semiskilled fields; and 35.5 per cent are classified as unskilled workers. Almost half of the total number of persons now in the labor market are women.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

In spite of unsettled employment conditions in a few industries, the volume of claims for unemployment insurance benefits received by the Maine Employment Security Commission has been lower this summer than in the comparable periods of the last six years. During July, the Commission issued 21,792 benefit checks to approximately 5,190 eligible claimants as compared with 29,409 payments to 7,000 claimants in July 1951. Weekly claims loads in August have continued to be lower than usual, having been about 33 per cent under a year ago.

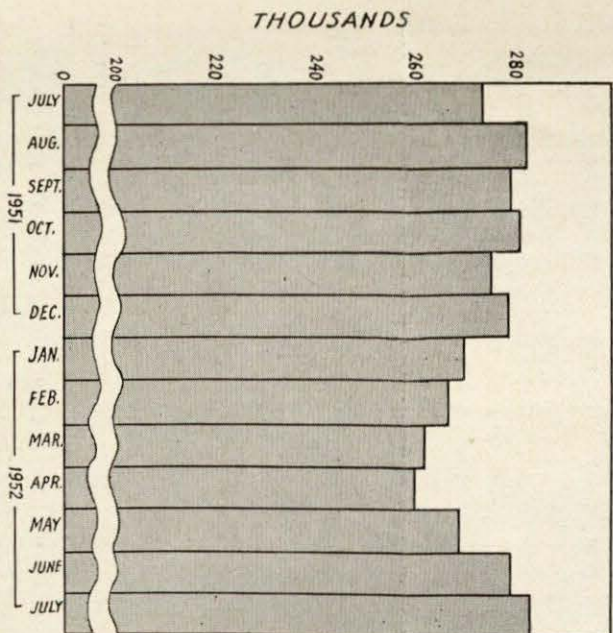
AVERAGE WORKWEEK AND EARNINGS

Plant shut-downs for vacation periods early in July resulted in a decline from June in the average weekly hours worked by production workers in manufacturing industries, and downward wage-rate adjustments in some textile plants contributed to a slight drop in the over-all average hourly earnings of such workers in this State. During the middle week of July the average workweek was 40.2 hours; average hourly earnings amounted to \$1.343; and average weekly earnings totalled \$54.03. In the preceding month the comparable averages were: 41.2 hours; \$1.353; and \$55.77.

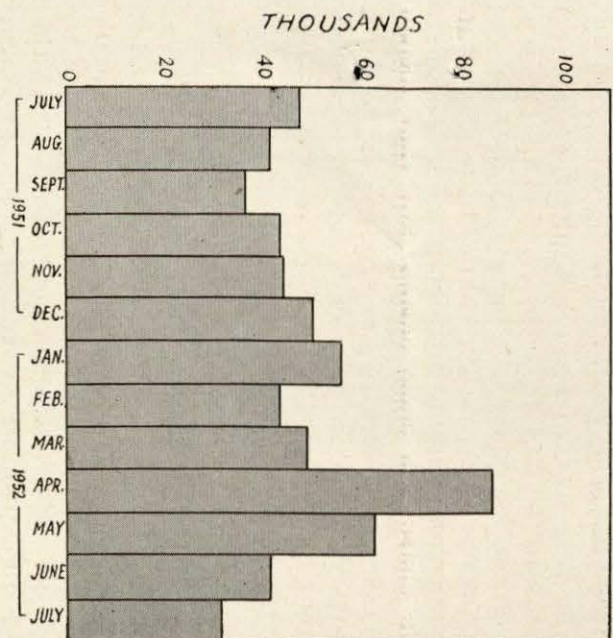
Selected Labor Market Trend Indicators

JULY 1951 — JULY 1952

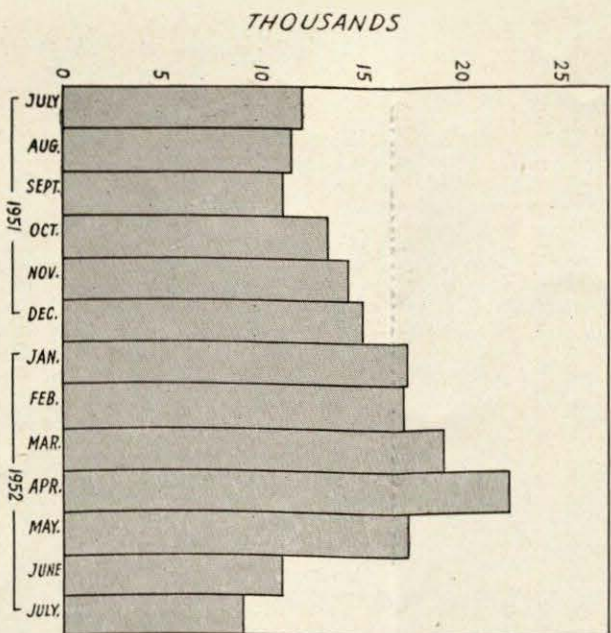
NONAGRICULTURAL EMPLOYMENT



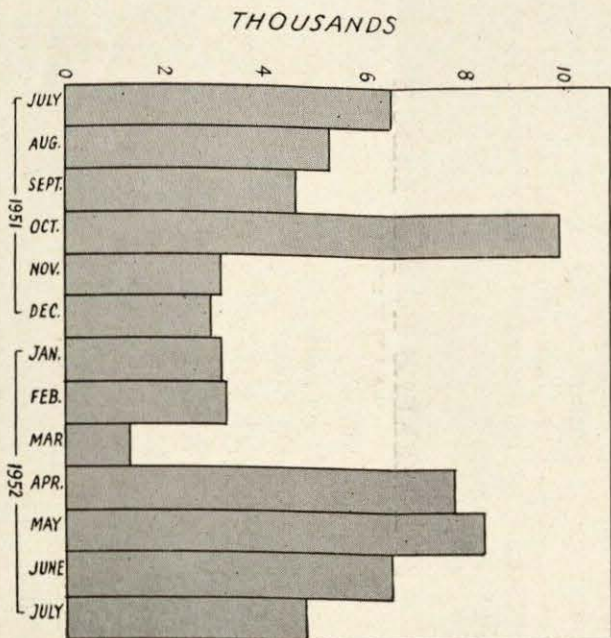
U C CLAIMS LOAD



REGISTERED JOB SEEKERS



JOB OPENINGS RECEIVED



JOB OUTLOOK

It is anticipated that total employment in Maine will drop off in September when curtailments occur in numerous seasonal activities, but, because many of the workers holding jobs in such industries have been available only for summer employment and will withdraw from the labor force as soon as they are released, and because employment require-

ments in other nonfarm activities should either expand slightly or remain relatively stable, labor market conditions should continue to be exceptionally favorable during the next several months. Demand probably will be heavier than in recent months for men skilled in metalworking trades, and it is entirely possible that shortages in other occupational lines will become pronounced before the end of the year.

Maine Employment Security Commission

EMPLOYMENT OFFICES

<i>Location</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Telephone</i>
Augusta	331 Water Street	1200-41
Bangor	131 Franklin Street	6435
Bath	174 Front Street	1748
Biddeford	275 Main Street	4-4571
Calais	87 Main Street	427
Caribou	Main Street	3331
Ellsworth	City Hall, Room 7	333
Houlton	32 Bangor Street	3606
Lewiston	19 Park Street	4-6971
Machias	Main Street	167
Portland	615 Congress Street	2-0186
Rockland	437 Main Street	105
Rumford	244 Waldo Street	805
Sanford	25 Washington Street	1045
Skowhegan	29 Water Street	368
Waterville	177 Main Street	1886

After Five Days Return To
MAINE
EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION
AUGUSTA MAINE
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

EMPLOYMENT SECURITY MAIL
UNITED STATES POSTAGE
ACCOUNTED FOR UNDER
ACT OF CONGRESS
(PAR. 13, SEC. 579, P. L. & R.)