

3-1-1956

## Labor Market News Letter, March 1956

Maine Employment Security Commission

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalmaine.com/cwri\\_docs](http://digitalmaine.com/cwri_docs)

---

### Recommended Citation

Maine Employment Security Commission, "Labor Market News Letter, March 1956" (1956). *Center for Workforce Research and Information Documents*. Paper 151.  
[http://digitalmaine.com/cwri\\_docs/151](http://digitalmaine.com/cwri_docs/151)

This Text is brought to you for free and open access by the Labor at Maine State Documents. It has been accepted for inclusion in Center for Workforce Research and Information Documents by an authorized administrator of Maine State Documents. For more information, please contact [statedocs@maine.gov](mailto:statedocs@maine.gov).

# LABOR MARKET



# NEWS LETTER

Maine Employment Security Commission 331 Water Street Augusta, Maine

MARCH - 1956

ISSUED BI-MONTHLY

**Labor market trend indicators** currently reflect a favorable picture of the over-all Maine economy. Reverses sustained in the last few years through the closing of a number of manufacturing plants have left several localities with lingering distresses of varying intensity. On the whole, however, economic activity in the State is at a remarkably high point with setbacks suffered in a few areas having been more than offset by gains in others.

**More persons are employed** in nonagricultural establishments than last year at this time. In the middle week of January, jobs in nonfarm industries totalled 267,300 as compared with 263,200 in the comparable week of January, 1955. Preliminary statistics relating to February point to a slight seasonal downtrend, as is customary in the mid-winter period. But a comparison of 1955 and 1956 trends still showed marked twelve-month improvements — a condition which is likely to be evident for each of the next several months if developments in the first half of this year prove to be in line with present expectations.

**Maine's major industries**, with but few exceptions, are providing more jobs than in the early part of 1955. Noteworthy over-the-year employment gains have been registered in leather and leather products, logging and lumbering, wholesale and retail trade, financial and related activities, and in various service industries. Employment in the leather and leather products group, of which shoe manufacturing comprises the largest component, reached an all-time employment peak of 22,750 in January. Industries with significantly lower labor requirements than last year include only textiles, ordnance, and contract construction.

**Demand for labor** throughout the winter has been at what might be described as a normal level. Almost invariably, hirings are lower in the first months of the year than at any other time, and it is apparent from the number of jobs which have been listed with the public employment offices

operated by the Maine Employment Security Commission that labor needs generally have fallen off since last fall. However, the downtrend has not been more pronounced than usual, and the fact that Maine employers sought the assistance of local employment offices in filling over 2,000 vacancies during February alone, indicates there certainly is no dearth of job opportunities in the State.

**The supply of labor** has risen steadily in the last five months primarily as a result of seasonal employment curtailments in various activities such as food processing, contract construction, and trade and service. On March 1, over 18,100 persons had active applications for work on file with this Commission's local offices. This represented a jump of more than 3,000 for the two-month period from January 1 and an increase of about 6,500 from October 1 when the number of registered job-applicants was at a low point for 1955.

**Localized shortages of workers** qualified for some types of jobs have arisen even though the total supply has been far greater, numerically, than the demand. Such qualitative shortcomings in local labor reserves which have come to the attention of public employment offices involve, at the moment, 439 vacancies in twenty-one different occupations. These openings are distributed on a broad occupational group basis as follows: professional and managerial — 12; clerical and sales — 3; service — 4; agricultural — 2; skilled — 7; semiskilled — 1; and unskilled — 410. In the unskilled category, the needs are for brush cutters to engage in land clearance projects.

**The Federal one dollar per hour** minimum wage law, effective March 1, has had no discernable effect to date upon the unemployment situation in Maine. Similarly, there appear to have been no adverse developments yet which are traceable to secondary effects of the sharp curtailments which have taken place in other parts of the country in automobile assembly and suppliers plants. As a matter of fact, the volume of insured unemployment in Maine has remained fairly constant since the first of the year — averaging about 24.4 percent less than in the first part of 1955.

**The ratio of insured unemployment** to average monthly covered employment is higher in Maine than in the nation as a whole. However, this State's ratio is lower than in fifteen of the other states. During the week ended March 3, continued claims filed under the UI program were 5.9 percent of total covered employment for Maine as compared with a country-wide ratio of 4.3 percent. Corresponding insured unemployment — covered employment rates in the other New England States were: Connecticut — 2.5 percent; Massachusetts — 3.2 percent; New Hampshire — 4.5 percent; Rhode Island — 6.4 percent; and Vermont — 4.2 percent.

## Maine Employment Security Commission

### EMPLOYMENT OFFICES

<i>Location</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Telephone</i>
Augusta	331 Water Street	MAyfair 3-4511—Ext. 41
Bangor	131 Franklin Street	6435
Bath	174 Front Street	Hilltop 3-5536
Biddeford	318 Main Street	4-4571
Calais	129 Main Street	427
Caribou	Main Street	3331
Lewiston	392 Lisbon Street	4-6971
Portland	500 Forest Avenue	SPruce 2-0186
Rockland	437 Main Street	105
Sanford	25 Washington Street	2041
Skowhegan	29 Water Street	7-3368
Waterville	177 Main Street	TRinity 2-5513
Wilton	29 Main Street	5-4441

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