

# Work experience in 1983 reflects the effects of the recovery

*As the economy rebounded from the 1981–82 recession so did the number of jobholders, particularly of a full-time year-round nature; the figure for women who held such jobs reached an all-time high*

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Reflecting the strong rebound of the economy, 1.4 million more persons held jobs in 1983 than in 1982. And the number working year round full time expanded even more—by nearly 3 million. In addition, there was a drop of 2.7 million in the number of persons experiencing some unemployment during the year.

These data come from responses to “work experience” questions asked in March 1984 in a supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS).<sup>1</sup> The questions, which are asked annually, refer to the work status of the civilian population over the previous calendar year.

Because many persons change their labor force status during a year, the total number with some employment or unemployment as measured in this survey usually is much higher than the annual averages based on the monthly CPS.

For 1983, the number of persons who worked all or part of the year—117.7 million—was 17 percent higher than the annual average civilian employment level of 100.8 million. And the number of persons who encountered some unemployment (although lower than the previous year) was still more than twice the annual average of the monthly unemployment figures (23.8 million versus 10.7 million). Altogether, 19.6 percent of all persons with some labor force activity during the year, in terms of having either worked

or looked for work, experienced some unemployment in 1983. By comparison, the annual average unemployment rate for 1983 was 9.6 percent.

While reflecting the effects of the recovery, the data for 1983 generally are also in line with some of the salient historical trends in employment and unemployment, as shown by the following highlights:

- Women showed a large gain in full-time year-round employment. This continued the trend of the last several decades during which women have become not only a larger but also a more permanent component of the labor force.
- The proportion of men with some employment—77.6 percent—continued to decline. (In 1980, the comparable proportion was 80 percent and in 1950 it was 87 percent.) This drop has been particularly sharp for older men.
- A smaller percentage of blacks (59 percent) than whites (68 percent) were employed during the year. However, following a longstanding pattern, the proportion of black women employed full time year round exceeded that of white women.
- As in the past, more blacks experienced unemployment than whites. Among those with some labor force activity during the year, nearly one-third of black men and more than one-fourth of black women encountered at least one spell of joblessness.
- The proportion of Hispanics<sup>2</sup> encountering some unem-

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ployment was higher than for whites but lower than for blacks. This follows a pattern evident since these data were first tabulated separately for Hispanics (in 1976).

- Men continued to be unemployed longer than women; blacks and Hispanics were unemployed longer than whites; and older workers tended to be unemployed longer than younger ones.

### The recovery's impact on jobs

As the economy rebounded from the severe 1981–82 recession, so did the number of persons with jobs—particularly jobs of a full-time year-round nature. Especially noteworthy was the fact that the number of women with full-time year-round employment reached 25.3 million in 1983, 48 percent of all women with some work during the year. Both of these figures are all-time highs. (See table 1.)

The proportion of employed blacks and Hispanics working full time year round—55 percent for both—was up nearly 3 percentage points from 1982. (See table 2.) For Hispanics—as well as for whites and blacks—the 1983 level was the highest since 1976. The tabulation below shows the

changes since 1976 in the proportion of workers in each of these groups who worked full time the year round:

	White	Black	Hispanic
1976 .....	54.7	51.4	50.3
1980 .....	56.5	52.7	53.1
1983 .....	56.9	55.2	55.2

For the entire population of working age, 1983 marked the first time in 4 years when the proportion working at some time during the year—67.0 percent—did not decrease. In 1980 and 1981, job growth had not kept pace with population growth, and in 1982, reflecting the severity of the recession, the number of persons with some employment showed an actual decline. As a result, the proportion of the population with some employment during the year was still lower in 1983 than it had been in 1980 (68.3 percent). This reflects the continuing decline in the proportion of men with some employment during the year, which has been only partly offset by the rebound in the proportion of working women. The latter reached 57.3 percent in 1983, only slightly below the peak levels of the 1979–81 period.

**Table 1. Extent of employment during the year by gender, 1982–83**

Extent of employment	Total		Men		Women	
	1982	1983	1982	1983	1982	1983
<b>Numbers (in thousands)</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population .....	173,656	175,824	82,260	83,338	91,395	92,485
Total who worked or looked for work .....	120,235	121,634	66,160	66,531	54,074	55,103
Percent of the population .....	69.2	69.2	80.4	79.8	59.2	59.6
Total who worked during the year <sup>1</sup> .....	116,277	117,718	64,365	64,695	51,912	53,023
Percent of the population .....	67.0	67.0	78.2	77.6	56.8	57.3
Full time <sup>2</sup> .....	89,575	90,744	54,917	55,262	34,658	35,482
50 to 52 weeks .....	63,973	66,828	40,129	41,540	23,844	25,288
48 to 49 weeks .....	2,317	2,285	1,381	1,368	936	917
40 to 47 weeks .....	5,772	5,146	3,377	3,007	2,395	2,139
27 to 39 weeks .....	6,017	5,640	3,575	3,294	2,441	2,346
14 to 26 weeks .....	6,263	5,921	3,654	3,311	2,609	2,611
1 to 13 weeks .....	5,233	4,924	2,800	2,743	2,433	2,181
Part time <sup>3</sup> .....	26,702	26,974	9,448	9,433	17,254	17,541
50 to 52 weeks .....	9,812	10,306	3,118	3,227	6,694	7,079
48 to 49 weeks .....	815	766	253	234	562	532
40 to 47 weeks .....	2,416	2,346	912	748	1,503	1,599
27 to 39 weeks .....	3,463	3,101	1,210	1,052	2,253	2,049
14 to 26 weeks .....	4,623	4,505	1,714	1,762	2,910	2,742
1 to 13 weeks .....	5,574	5,950	2,241	2,410	3,332	3,540
<b>Percent distribution</b>						
Total who worked during the year <sup>1</sup> .....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full time <sup>2</sup> .....	77.0	77.1	85.3	85.4	66.8	66.9
50 to 52 weeks .....	55.0	56.8	62.3	64.2	45.9	47.7
48 to 49 weeks .....	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.1	1.8	1.7
40 to 47 weeks .....	5.0	4.4	5.2	4.6	4.6	4.0
27 to 39 weeks .....	5.2	4.8	5.6	5.1	4.7	4.4
14 to 26 weeks .....	5.4	5.0	5.7	5.1	5.0	4.9
1 to 13 weeks .....	4.5	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.7	4.1
Part time <sup>3</sup> .....	23.0	22.9	14.7	14.6	33.2	33.1
50 to 52 weeks .....	8.4	8.8	4.8	5.0	12.9	13.4
48 to 49 weeks .....	.7	.7	.4	.4	1.1	1.0
40 to 47 weeks .....	2.1	2.0	1.4	1.2	2.9	3.0
27 to 39 weeks .....	3.0	2.6	1.9	1.6	4.3	3.9
14 to 26 weeks .....	4.0	3.8	2.7	2.7	5.6	5.2
1 to 13 weeks .....	4.8	5.1	3.5	3.7	6.4	6.7

<sup>1</sup>Time worked includes paid vacation and sick leave.

<sup>2</sup>Usually worked 35 hours or more per week.

<sup>3</sup>Usually worked 1 to 34 hours per week.

**Table 2. Extent of employment during the year by race, Hispanic origin, and gender, 1982-83**

[Numbers in thousands]

Characteristic	Total		Men		Women	
	1982	1983	1982	1983	1982	1983
<b>White</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population	150,427	152,244	71,808	72,701	78,618	79,543
Total who worked or looked for work	104,942	106,117	58,560	58,737	46,381	47,379
Percent of the population	69.8	69.7	81.6	80.8	59.0	59.6
Total who worked during the year <sup>1</sup>	102,192	103,496	57,273	57,495	44,918	46,002
Percent of the population	67.9	68.0	79.8	79.1	57.1	57.8
Total who worked during the year <sup>1</sup>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full time <sup>2</sup>	76.8	77.0	85.6	85.8	65.6	66.0
50 to 52 weeks	55.3	56.9	63.2	64.8	45.2	46.9
27 to 49 weeks	12.0	11.2	12.8	12.0	11.0	10.2
1 to 26 weeks	9.5	8.9	9.6	8.9	9.4	9.0
Part time <sup>3</sup>	23.2	23.0	14.4	14.2	34.4	34.0
50 to 52 weeks	8.7	8.9	4.9	5.0	13.5	13.7
27 to 49 weeks	5.9	5.4	3.7	3.1	8.7	8.3
1 to 26 weeks	8.6	8.7	5.8	6.2	12.2	12.0
<b>Black</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population	18,823	19,248	8,398	8,608	10,425	10,641
Total who worked or looked for work	12,276	12,593	5,994	6,269	6,282	6,323
Percent of the population	65.2	65.4	71.4	72.8	60.3	59.4
Total who worked during the year <sup>1</sup>	11,168	11,414	5,521	5,737	5,647	5,678
Percent of the population	59.3	59.3	65.7	66.6	54.2	53.4
Total who worked during the year <sup>1</sup>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full time <sup>2</sup>	78.6	77.5	83.0	82.1	74.4	72.9
50 to 52 weeks	52.3	55.2	54.1	57.2	50.5	53.2
27 to 49 weeks	13.4	10.9	14.6	11.5	12.2	10.2
1 to 26 weeks	13.0	11.4	14.2	13.3	11.7	9.5
Part time <sup>3</sup>	21.4	22.5	17.0	17.9	25.6	27.1
50 to 52 weeks	6.4	7.9	4.3	5.0	8.3	10.9
27 to 49 weeks	4.9	4.6	3.4	3.8	6.2	5.4
1 to 26 weeks	10.1	10.0	9.2	9.2	11.0	10.8
<b>Hispanic origin</b>						
Civilian noninstitutional population	9,384	9,811	4,406	4,542	4,978	5,268
Total who worked or looked for work	6,331	6,565	3,646	3,723	2,685	2,843
Percent of the population	67.5	66.9	82.7	82.0	53.9	54.0
Total who worked during the year <sup>1</sup>	6,078	6,348	3,544	3,622	2,534	2,727
Percent of the population	64.8	64.7	80.4	79.7	50.9	51.8
Total who worked during the year <sup>1</sup>	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full time <sup>2</sup>	80.9	80.7	86.6	86.5	73.1	72.9
50 to 52 weeks	52.5	55.2	57.7	60.8	45.3	47.7
27 to 49 weeks	14.8	13.4	16.1	14.8	12.9	11.4
1 to 26 weeks	13.6	12.1	12.7	10.9	14.9	13.8
Part time <sup>3</sup>	19.1	19.3	13.4	13.5	26.9	27.1
50 to 52 weeks	7.0	7.1	4.7	4.9	10.2	10.1
27 to 49 weeks	4.1	4.2	2.8	2.8	5.7	6.2
1 to 26 weeks	8.0	8.0	5.9	5.9	10.9	10.8

<sup>1</sup>Time worked includes paid vacation and sick leave.

<sup>2</sup>Usually worked 35 hours or more per week.

<sup>3</sup>Usually worked 1 to 34 hours per week.

NOTE: Detail for the above race and Hispanic-origin groups will not sum to totals because data for the "other races" group are not presented and Hispanics are included in both the white and black population groups.

## Group differences in employment

Until a decade ago, a greater proportion of black than white women worked at some time during the year. However, the proportion of white women with some employment has long been growing at a faster rate, and since 1976 it has exceeded the proportion for black women by a gradually larger margin. By 1983, the proportion with some employment was 58 percent for white women and 53 percent for black women. However, black women continue to be more likely than their white counterparts to work full time year round.

As expected, women without children are most likely to be in the labor force all year, while those with younger children are least likely. Still, more than half of the mothers

with children under age 3 who worked in 1983 did so year round.

Reflecting a long-term trend, the proportion of men with any employment during the year—77.6 percent in 1983—reached its lowest level since about 35 years ago when this series began. As shown in table 3, the drop in labor force activity has been particularly evident among older men, who have been choosing to retire at earlier ages under Social Security Act provisions and private pension plans.<sup>3</sup>

Even when they remain in the labor force, older men are now less likely to work year round full time than was the case 10 years ago. In contrast, among older working women there has been little change in the percentage who work full time year round, as is shown in the following tabulation.

	55 to 59 years	60 to 64 years	65 years and over
<b>Men:</b>			
1973 .....	81.9	72.9	36.1
1978 .....	80.7	71.6	32.8
1983 .....	77.0	65.6	33.4
<b>Women:</b>			
1973 .....	57.4	49.3	23.8
1978 .....	59.4	50.0	22.1
1983 .....	55.8	48.9	23.6

There was also a drop over the past decade in the proportion of young men with work experience during the year. This was evident both among those in their teens as well as among those 20 to 24 years old. The trend for young women was somewhat different, with a decline in the proportion of teenagers with some employment during the year but a rise for women aged 20 to 24. Even among the latter female group, however, the percentage employed in 1983 was lower than the peak reached in 1978.<sup>4</sup>

### Unemployment declines

The 23.8 million persons who were unemployed at some time in 1983 represented 19.6 percent of all persons who worked or looked for work during the year. (See table 4.) This proportion was well below the 22 percent for 1982, when unemployment reached a recessionary peak. For men, who were particularly hard hit by the 1981-82 recession, the proportion with some unemployment dropped to 21 percent for 1983. This was less than the proportion encountering unemployment in 1982, but still above 1981's level. For women, the proportion with some joblessness in 1983—17.8 percent—was lower than in both prior years.

### More data available

Additional data on the work experience of the population, compiled from the March 1984 Current Population Survey, are available as a tabulation package from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Office of Employment and Unemployment Statistics, Division of Data Development and Users' Services, 441 G Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20212.

The percentage of blacks unemployed at some time during 1983 was also lower than in 1982 and 1981. However, 1 of 3 black men and 1 of 4 black women encountered some unemployment, proportionately more than either Hispanic or white workers.

Among industries, the greatest decrease in the proportion of workers encountering unemployment in 1983 was in manufacturing, particularly in durable goods, where the proportion dropped from 28 to 20 percent. As usual, the proportion of workers with the lowest incidence of unemployment over the year was in public administration and in finance, insurance, and real estate (10 percent for both industry groups in 1983). The highest incidence was in construction (38 percent) and agriculture (29 percent). (See table 5.)

The great majority of persons with some unemployment in 1983 held at least one job during the year (84 percent), while the remaining 16 percent looked for work at least part of the time but never held a job. Nearly 1 of 3 blacks with

**Table 3. Extent of employment by gender and age, selected years, 1973-83**

[Numbers in thousands]

Gender and age	1973		1978		1983	
	Total who worked during the year	Percent of the population	Total who worked during the year	Percent of the population	Total who worked during the year	Percent of the population
<b>Men</b> .....	58,370	83.7	61,917	81.4	64,695	77.6
Age (in years):						
16 to 17 .....	2,560	61.3	2,368	56.7	1,712	46.6
18 to 19 .....	3,178	85.3	3,336	83.7	2,797	73.9
20 to 24 .....	7,696	92.1	8,797	92.9	8,813	86.9
25 to 34 .....	13,385	97.0	15,767	96.2	18,002	92.4
35 to 44 .....	10,412	97.0	11,274	96.1	13,666	94.0
45 to 54 .....	10,611	93.6	10,215	92.7	9,703	90.6
55 to 59 .....	4,340	89.8	4,506	84.3	4,382	82.4
60 to 64 .....	3,356	79.6	3,120	70.9	3,226	65.3
65 and over .....	2,832	33.2	2,534	26.5	2,394	22.3
<b>Women</b> .....	41,835	53.6	48,373	57.1	53,023	57.3
Age (in years):						
16 to 17 .....	1,945	47.7	2,014	49.6	1,449	40.7
18 to 19 .....	2,962	74.1	3,086	73.8	2,570	66.5
20 to 24 .....	6,828	74.3	8,111	80.0	8,066	76.0
25 to 34 .....	9,087	61.6	12,220	70.5	14,951	73.7
35 to 44 .....	7,074	60.9	8,684	68.5	11,237	73.2
45 to 54 .....	7,344	60.0	7,420	62.9	7,633	66.4
55 to 59 .....	2,919	54.8	3,139	53.5	3,214	53.7
60 to 64 .....	2,165	44.7	2,074	41.3	2,304	39.9
65 and over .....	1,509	12.5	1,626	11.9	1,600	10.3

**Table 4. Extent of unemployment during the year by race, Hispanic origin, and gender, 1982-83**

[Numbers in thousands]

Characteristic	Total		Men		Women	
	1982	1983	1982	1983	1982	1983
<b>TOTAL</b>						
Total who worked or looked for work .....	120,235	121,634	66,160	66,531	54,074	55,103
Percent with unemployment .....	22.0	19.6	23.3	21.0	20.4	17.8
Total with unemployment .....	26,493	23,799	15,441	13,973	11,052	9,826
Did not work but looked for work .....	3,958	3,916	1,795	1,835	2,163	2,080
1 to 14 weeks .....	1,730	1,628	508	504	1,221	1,125
15 weeks or more .....	2,228	2,287	1,286	1,332	942	956
Worked during the year .....	22,535	19,883	13,646	12,138	8,889	7,745
Year-round workers <sup>1</sup> with 1 or 2 weeks of unemployment .....	1,155	920	747	615	408	305
Part-year workers <sup>2</sup> with unemployment .....	21,380	18,963	12,900	11,523	8,481	7,440
1 to 4 weeks .....	3,483	3,367	1,736	1,718	1,747	1,649
5 to 10 weeks .....	4,184	3,608	2,372	2,078	1,813	1,530
11 to 14 weeks .....	2,808	2,549	1,721	1,588	1,087	961
15 to 26 weeks .....	5,863	4,980	3,911	3,245	1,952	1,735
27 weeks or more .....	5,041	4,460	3,159	2,895	1,882	1,565
With 2 spells or more of unemployment .....	7,573	6,445	4,913	4,276	2,660	2,168
2 spells .....	3,854	3,308	2,421	2,082	1,433	1,226
3 spells or more .....	3,719	3,136	2,492	2,194	1,227	942
<b>White</b>						
Total who worked or looked for work .....	104,942	106,117	58,560	58,737	46,381	47,379
Percent with unemployment .....	20.7	18.4	22.0	19.8	19.1	16.7
Total with unemployment .....	21,730	19,576	12,883	11,654	8,847	7,922
Did not work but looked for work .....	2,750	2,620	1,287	1,243	1,463	1,377
Worked during the year .....	18,981	16,956	11,596	10,411	7,384	6,545
<b>Black</b>						
Total who worked or looked for work .....	12,276	12,593	5,994	6,269	6,282	6,323
Percent with unemployment .....	33.4	29.1	36.5	32.2	30.4	26.1
Total with unemployment .....	4,096	3,668	2,186	2,019	1,910	1,650
Did not work but looked for work .....	1,108	1,178	473	533	635	646
Worked during the year .....	2,988	2,490	1,713	1,486	1,275	1,004
<b>Hispanic origin</b>						
Total who worked or looked for work .....	6,331	6,565	3,646	3,723	2,685	2,843
Percent with unemployment .....	27.1	24.3	28.5	25.7	25.3	22.5
Total with unemployment .....	1,717	1,598	1,038	958	679	640
Did not work but looked for work .....	253	217	101	101	152	116
Worked during the year .....	1,464	1,381	937	857	527	524

<sup>1</sup>Worked 50 or 51 weeks.<sup>2</sup>Worked less than 50 weeks.

NOTE: Detail for race and Hispanic-origin groups will not sum to totals because data for the "other races" group are not presented and Hispanics are included in both the white and black population groups.

unemployment did not report any employment for the year, in contrast to 14 percent for both whites and Hispanics.

For persons with some unemployment who worked at some time during the year, the improvement in the economy was reflected in slight decreases in the proportions with two spells or more of joblessness and in a reduction in the median weeks of unemployment. There also was a small decrease in the number (and proportion) of persons reporting that they were involuntarily working part year or part time.

### Part-year and part-time workers

Among the persons who were employed less than the entire year in 1983, a far greater proportion of men than women pointed to unemployment as the main reason. As seen in the following tabulation, of part-year workers aged 25 to 44, 7 of 10 men but only 3 of 10 women cited unemployment as the major reason they were not employed year round. Also, 5 percent of men aged 25 to 44, but a

smaller percentage of women (3 percent), reported that they only worked part of the year because there was "no work available." (Some 1.3 million part-year workers aged 16 and over in 1983, in contrast to about 2.2 million in 1982, seem to have been "discouraged" by lack of employment opportunities, citing that the main reason they were not working or looking for work for the remainder of the year was the unavailability of jobs.)<sup>5</sup>

Reason	Part-year workers	
	Number (in thousands)	Percent
Men, 25 to 44 years .....	7,566	100.0
Unemployment .....	5,229	69.1
Illness or disability .....	464	6.1
Home responsibilities .....	90	1.2
School attendance .....	499	6.6
No work available .....	375	5.0
Other .....	909	12.0

**Table 5. Extent of unemployment of wage and salary workers by industry of the job held the longest, 1982-83**

[Numbers in thousands]

Industry	1982			1983		
	Total wage and salary workers	With unemployment		Total wage and salary workers	With unemployment	
		Total	Percent of total wage and salary workers		Total	Percent of total wage and salary workers
Total	106,423	21,544	20.2	107,948	19,075	17.7
Agriculture	2,187	667	30.5	2,209	641	29.0
Mining	1,226	337	27.5	1,016	261	25.6
Construction	5,985	2,435	40.7	6,444	2,431	37.7
Manufacturing	22,777	5,889	25.9	22,147	4,390	19.8
Durable goods	13,405	3,698	27.6	12,822	2,585	20.2
Nondurable goods	9,372	2,190	23.4	9,325	1,805	19.4
Transportation and public utilities	7,220	1,040	14.4	7,499	956	12.8
Wholesale and retail trade	22,819	4,903	21.5	23,307	4,578	19.6
Finance, insurance, and real estate	6,223	683	11.0	6,559	659	10.1
Services	32,748	5,099	15.6	33,360	4,627	13.9
Public administration	5,238	492	9.4	5,407	532	9.8

Reason	Part-year workers	
	Number (in thousands)	Percent
Women, 25 to 44 years	9,082	100.0
Unemployment	2,726	30.0
Illness or disability	566	6.2
Home responsibilities	4,108	45.2
School attendance	417	4.6
No work available	253	2.8
Other	1,012	11.1

In addition, as indicated below, more than half of men aged 25 to 44 but less than one-third of women reported they were limited to working part time because they could not find a full-time job or because of slack work or material shortage. Such differences generally reflect the fact that women are more likely than men to choose to work part time or part year (although the choice often is imposed by child-care responsibilities), and that women are less prone to be in cyclically sensitive employment.

Reason	Part-time workers	
	Number (in thousands)	Percent
Men, 25 to 44 years	7,251	100.0
Could only find part-time job	993	13.7
Wanted or could only work part time	1,095	15.1
Slack work or material shortage	3,109	42.9
Other	2,054	28.3
Women, 25 to 44 years	10,202	100.0
Could only find part-time job	1,415	13.9
Wanted or could only work part time	5,475	53.7
Slack work or material shortage	1,646	16.1
Other	1,667	16.3

### Unemployment and family income

The median number of weeks unemployed for persons with both employment and unemployment during 1983 was

13.3. (This figure represents total weeks unemployed including, for some persons, more than one spell of unemployment.) As indicated below, women on average were unemployed fewer weeks than men, whites fewer weeks than blacks and Hispanics, and younger workers fewer weeks than older workers:

Persons with employment and unemployment	Median weeks unemployed
Total, 16 years and over	13.3
16 to 19 years	10.4
20 to 24 years	12.5
25 to 44 years	14.1
45 to 64 years	17.0
65 years and over	17.4
Men	15.2
Women	12.3
Whites	13.1
Blacks	18.4
Hispanics	16.9

Clearly, the longer a person is unemployed the more severe the impact on earnings. But what is the effect of unemployment on family income? While the impact also is more burdensome the longer the period of unemployment, other factors need to be considered. These include earnings of other family members, wage levels of family earners, and alternative sources of income such as unemployment insurance benefits and transfer payments. For example, as seen in the following tabulation, median family income—while substantially lower than in similar families with no unemployment—was still about \$27,000 for married-couple families with two earners or more in which at least one experienced some unemployment. Seven percent of such families had incomes which fell below the Federally designated poverty thresholds.<sup>6</sup> In contrast, median family income was about \$7,000 in one-earner families maintained by women in which the earner had encountered some unemployment during the year. More than half of such families were in poverty.

Type of family	No member unemployed		At least one member with some unemployment	
	Median family income	Percent in poverty	Median family income	Percent in poverty
Married-couple families ..	\$31,495	4.3	\$23,592	13.2
One earner .....	24,801	7.8	14,959	27.2
Two earners or more ..	35,201	2.6	27,274	7.1
Families maintained by women .....	16,116	17.0	9,860	44.5
One earner .....	13,501	22.1	7,345	52.9
Two earners or more ..	23,925	5.9	18,341	17.1
Families maintained by men.....	25,950	6.4	17,309	19.2
One earner .....	21,644	8.9	11,349	27.6
Two earners or more ..	33,218	2.8	24,107	6.4
Persons not living in families, with earnings	15,538	10.2	7,238	38.0

Similar patterns are found among families with involuntary part-time workers who encountered unemployment in 1983, as well as among families with unemployed members who did not work at all during the year. In each case, the largest proportion of families in poverty are those maintained by women. However, even when no family members are unemployed, median family income is relatively low for families maintained by women (\$16,000 in 1983), and a significant proportion are in poverty (17 percent). This largely reflects the concentration of these women in low-paying jobs, employment constraints because of child-care respon-

sibilities, and the absence of other family wage earners. Unemployment, of course, compounds their problem. □

—FOOTNOTES—

<sup>1</sup>This is the latest in a series of reports on this subject. For an analysis of data from the March 1983 Current Population Survey, see Paul O. Flaim, "Unemployment in 1982: the cost to workers and their families," *Monthly Labor Review*, February 1984, pp. 30-37, reprinted as Special Labor Force Report Bulletin 2199.

<sup>2</sup>It should be noted that the "Hispanic" category is not a racial classification. Persons in this group may appear in the white or black or other racial categories.

<sup>3</sup>For a study of the work experiences of older men, see Herbert S. Parnes, ed., *Work and Retirement, A Longitudinal Study of Men* (The MIT Press, 1981). Parnes documents the trend toward men's earlier withdrawal from the labor force, finding that relatively few men are forced out of jobs by mandatory retirement, and that a majority of retirees are not interested in returning to work. For a study of the work experiences of women, see Lois Banfill Shaw, ed., *Unplanned Careers: The Working Lives of Middle-Aged Women* (Lexington Books, 1983).

<sup>4</sup>For studies on employment experiences of young men and women, see Michael E. Borus, ed., *Tomorrow's Worker* (Lexington Books 1983); and Frank L. Mott, ed., *The Employment Revolution, Young American Women of the 1970's* (The MIT Press, 1982).

<sup>5</sup>While "discouragement" has been measured on a current basis in the monthly Current Population Survey (CPS) for a long time, the March 1983 supplement to the CPS was the first which included a question aimed at measuring discouragement retroactively, and, as in the March 1984 supplement, it was asked only of part-year workers.

<sup>6</sup>The poverty thresholds, which are based primarily on U.S. Department of Agriculture determinations of consumption requirements of families by size, are revised each year by the Office of Management and Budget to reflect changes in the Consumer Price Index. The poverty threshold for a family of four in 1983 was \$10,178. However, when making such determinations, only cash income is considered.