



Research Division
Note #80
May 2002

Artist Employment in 2001

Data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) show that 2.1 million people were employed (in primary jobs) as artists in 2001—a gain of 72,000 workers over the 2000 figure. An additional 315,000 people held *secondary* jobs in artist occupations. This note, #80, reports on the employment trends of workers in 11 artist occupations. The data are provided by the BLS and are annual averages of monthly employment counts taken from the Current Population Survey (CPS).

Table 1 of this note shows 1998 through 2001 employment statistics for all civilian workers, professional specialty occupations, and artist occupations. Chart 1 is a 1995-2001 time-series graph of employment for the three aggregate categories of civilian workers, professional specialty occupations, and artist occupations. Chart 2 shows a time-series graph of unemployed workers in these three categories, and Chart 3 plots the unemployment rate for the three groups of workers over the 1995-2001 period. Table 2 shows artist employment in secondary jobs.

This note also features a section on earnings and projected employment growth for select artist occupations taken from the BLS *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. Table 3 summarizes this information for select artist occupations.

Employment Situation in 2001

The March 2001 recession officially ended the longest postwar economic expansion in the Nation's history¹. As shown in Table 1, civilian employment declined by 135,000 in 2001, and the unemployment rate increased from 3.7 percent in 2000 to 4.4 percent in 2001. Employment of workers in professional specialty occupations² fared better. Employment in this extensive category increased by 443,000 workers in 2001. However, unemployment increased by 113,000, driving up the unemployment *rate* for professional specialty occupations

¹ See David S. Langdon, Terence M. McMenamin, and Thomas J. Krolik. "U.S. Labor Market in 2001: Economy Enters a Recession." *Monthly Labor Review*, February 2001.

² Workers with relatively high levels of education characterize professional specialty occupations. It is a broad category that includes artist occupations, as well as careers in engineering, science, the clergy, and law.

to 2.2 percent, a 0.5 percent increase from the corresponding unemployment rate for professional specialty occupations in 2000.

Employment of artists, a component of professional specialty occupations, also increased between 2000 and 2001. Over this time frame, the BLS reported 72,000 more employed artists. Like all professional specialty occupations, though, unemployment among artists also increased. In 2001, unemployment increased by 14,000, and the unemployment rate increased from 3.5 percent in 2000 to 4 percent in 2001.

Chart 1 shows 1995-2001 employment trends for all civilian workers, professional specialty occupations, and all artists. Though employment among all three categories tended to increase throughout much of this period, growth patterns differed. For example, between 1995 and 1998, growth in artist employment was higher and less stable than the other two employment categories. In 1997, for instance, artist employment grew by 7 percent, compared to the 1.4 percent and 3.4 percent rates recorded for civilian employment and professional specialty employment, respectively. In 1999, however, the 5 percent growth in professional specialty employment surpassed growth in artist employment (3.9 percent) and civilian employment (1.5 percent). Chart 1 also shows the 2001 increase in employment of professional specialty occupations and artists, though civilian employment declined in response to the 2001 recession.

Trends in unemployment and the unemployment rate are shown in Charts 2 and 3³. Between 1995 and 2000, civilian unemployment declined, and the unemployment rate dropped from 5.6 percent in 1995 to 3.7 percent in 2000. Trends in professional specialty occupations and artist unemployment were less stable. In 1999, for example, unemployment actually increased for both categories. Unemployment rates, however, tended to display a downward trend throughout the 1995-2000 time frame. As discussed above, unemployment and unemployment rates increased for all three categories in 2001. Chart 3 also shows that unemployment rates are higher for artists than for professional specialty occupations. Throughout the 1995-2001 time series, the unemployment rate associated with artists is generally twice as high as the rate for professional specialty occupations.

Individual Artist Occupations

Table 1 shows employment, unemployment, and unemployment rates for 11 individual artist occupations. The designers occupation is the largest of these categories. In 2001, 788,000 workers were employed as designers. In contrast, dancers constitute the smallest artist occupations—26,000 dancers were employed in 2001⁴. Of the 11 individual artist occupations shown in Table 1, six showed 2001 increases in employment. Between 2000 and 2001, employment of designers increased by 50,000, or about 7 percent (though the unemployment

³ In this note, unemployment and the unemployment rate relate to experienced workers.

⁴ In occupations with labor forces of less than 75,000 there is a higher error in the estimate due to small sample sizes. Year-to-year changes should be viewed with caution.

rate for designers increased by 0.6 percent). Employment among musicians and composers increased by 19,000 workers, or 12 percent, and the unemployment rate actually dropped by 1.6 percent in this category. Other artist occupations exhibiting 2001 employment growth included teachers of art, drama, and music (29 percent); and other artists not elsewhere classified (13 percent); Employment gains were also recorded for painters, sculptors, and craft artists, though the gain was small (0.2 percent) and was coupled with an increase in the unemployment rate by 1.4 percent. Photographers also experienced a small increase in employment (0.4 percent) and a 0.9 percent drop in their unemployment rate.

Among the 145,000 actors and directors in the labor market in 2001, 14,000 were unemployed, resulting in a 9.9 percent unemployment rate. This figure is up three percentage points from 2000, and the highest unemployment rate recorded among the 11 artist occupations shown in Table 1. Employment of authors dropped by 16,000 workers in 2001. However, the unemployment rate for this occupation only nudged-up by 0.3 percent. This is because the BLS estimates that the labor market also decreased by about 16,000 authors (i.e., 16,000 workers were no longer working or looking for work as authors).

Secondary Artist Employment⁵

The previous sections of this note and Table 1 describe workers in primary jobs⁶. However, the BLS reports that 7.3 million workers, or 5.4 percent of the employed workforce, were multiple jobholders in 2001. Among professional specialty occupations, nearly 1.5 million held secondary jobs. Table 2 shows the number and percentage of workers holding second jobs in artist occupations. At 35.5 percent, the rate of workers holding second jobs in artist occupations was highest for announcers. The next highest rate of secondary jobs was in the musicians and composers category (32.3 percent). On the lower end of the scale, only 2.7 percent of workers held second jobs as architects. Designer occupations also recorded fewer second jobs—6.3 percent of all workers in this occupation.

Occupational Outlook

In addition to reporting the current trends in artist occupations described above, the BLS also produces employment projections by occupation. Taken from the most recent edition of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*⁷, Table 3 provides a brief summary of earnings and projected employment for select artist

⁵ For detailed information about artist multiple jobholding, see *More Than Once in a Blue Moon: Multiple Jobholding by American Artists*, National Endowment for the Arts, Research Division Report #40.

⁶ Those holding more than one job are counted in the job in which they worked the most hours during the CPS survey week. This job is referred to as the primary job, while all other jobs held are defined as secondary jobs.

⁷ The Occupational Outlook Handbook is revised every two years. The figures printed here were taken from the 2002-03 edition issued in December 2001.

occupations. The employment trends outlined in earlier sections of this note were based on annual averages from the Current Population Survey. However, *Outlook* earnings and projections are based on the BLS' Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey of 400,000 business establishments. Consequently, not all of the artist occupations shown in Table 1 are available from the OES. For example, earnings and employment projections are not offered for teachers of art/drama/music and artists not elsewhere classified. In addition, some artist occupations are grouped and defined differently in the *Outlook* than they are in the CPS. For example, the CPS combines all types of designers, while the *Outlook* distinguishes between various types of designers (e.g., interior designer).

Of the select artist occupations shown in Table 3, the highest median annual earnings were recorded for architects (\$52,510), landscape architects (\$43,540), and writers and authors⁸ (\$42,270). Photographers (\$22,300) and dancers and choreographers (\$22,470) had the lowest median annual earnings. The BLS also reports that median earnings of announcers, reported at \$9.52 per hour, were also generally low.

Higher than average employment growth, defined as 21 to 35 percent gains between 2000 and 2010, is expected for landscape architects, designers, and writers and authors. In the case of landscape architects, BLS attributes projected employment growth to increases in residential and commercial construction, and continued emphasis on ecology and the environment. Increased demand for writers and authors will be due to a number of factors, including growth in the number of on-line

publications, expansions in advertising and public relations, and high levels of retirement in this occupation. Though demand for designers will be high, the BLS notes that competition for these jobs will also be high. Employment of announcers is expected to decline by one percent or more, largely due to a lack of growth of new radio and television stations.

Final Notes

The current trend employment data in this note are reported by the BLS and are based on annual averages of data recorded by the monthly CPS. The employed are persons who, during the reference week of the survey, did any work as paid employees, worked in their own business, profession, or on their own farm, or who worked 15 hours or more as unpaid workers in an enterprise operated by a family member. Each employed person is counted only once, even if he or she holds more than one job. Multiple jobholders are counted in the job at which they worked the greatest number of hours during the reference week. The unemployed are defined as persons who had no employment during the reference week, were available for work, except for temporary illness, and had

⁸ A broad category of workers who develop original fiction and nonfiction for books, magazines and trade journals, newspapers, online publications, company newsletters, radio and television broadcasts, motion pictures, and advertisements.

made specific efforts to find employment some time during the four-week-period ending with the reference week. The labor force comprises all persons classified as employed or unemployed, and the unemployment rate is the number of unemployed as a percent of the labor force. The unemployment rates listed in this note were obtained directly from the BLS using un-rounded data and relate to experienced workers. For a more complete explanation of the CPS, see the notes and definitions sections of the Monthly Labor Review, available online at www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/mlrhome.htm.

The earnings and projected employment growth reported in this note were taken from the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, also produced by the BLS. Figures shown in the *Outlook* are based on the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey. For more information about the Outlook or the OES, see the BLS web site at www.bls.gov/oco.

The Research Division of the National Endowment for the Arts has produced notes on artist employment since 1983. More information about Research Division notes and reports can be found on the Endowment's web site at www.arts.gov.

Table 1. The Artist Labor Force: Trends in Employment and Unemployment, 1998-2001

(in thousands)

<i>Occupation</i>	2001	2000	1999	1998	Change From 00-01	Change From 98-01
Total Civilian Workers	141,362	140,432	138,898	137,673	930	3,689
Employed	135,073	135,208	133,488	131,463	-135	3,610
Unemployed	6,289	5,224	5,410	6,210	1,065	79
Unemployment Rate	4.4%	3.7%	3.9%	4.5%	0.7%	-0.1%
Professional Specialty Occupations	22,038	21,482	21,277	20,263	556	1,775
Employed	21,556	21,113	20,883	19,883	443	1,673
Unemployed	482	369	394	380	113	102
Unemployment Rate	2.2%	1.7%	1.9%	1.9%	0.5%	0.3%
All Artists	2,196	2,110	2,113	2,032	26	-648
Employed	2,108	2,036	2,026	1,950	14	-620
Unemployed	88	74	87	82	12	-28
Unemployment Rate	4.0%	3.5%	4.1%	4.0%	0.8%	-0.1%
Actors/Directors	145	149	146	144	-4	1
Employed	131	139	129	130	-8	1
Unemployed	14	10	17	14	4	0
Unemployment Rate	9.9%	6.9%	11.9%	9.8%	3.0%	0.1%
Announcers	51	57	54	62	-6	-11
Employed	49	54	50	60	-5	-11
Unemployed	2	3	4	2	-1	0
Unemployment Rate	4.5%	5.6%	7.6%	3.7%	-1.1%	0.8%
Architects	218	217	196	161	1	57
Employed	214	215	194	158	-1	56
Unemployed	4	2	2	3	2	1
Unemployment Rate	1.7%	1.1%	0.9%	1.9%	0.6%	-0.2%
Authors	128	144	152	134	-16	-6
Employed	122	138	148	130	-16	-8
Unemployed	6	6	4	4	0	2
Unemployment Rate	4.6%	4.3%	2.9%	3.3%	0.3%	1.3%
Dancers	28	33	29	35	-5	-7
Employed	26	32	27	34	-6	-8
Unemployed	2	1	2	1	1	1
Unemployment Rate	6.3%	4.1%	5.2%	3.9%	2.2%	2.4%
Designers	814	758	746	716	56	98
Employed	788	738	722	692	50	96
Unemployed	26	20	24	24	6	2
Unemployment Rate	3.2%	2.6%	3.2%	3.4%	0.6%	-0.2%

Table 1. The Artist Labor Force: Trends in Employment and Unemployment, 1998-2001

(in thousands)

Continued

Occupation	2001	2000	1999	1998	Change From	Change From
					00-01	98-01
Musicians/Composers	187	170	181	193	17	-6
Employed	180	161	172	183	19	-3
Unemployed	7	9	9	10	-2	-3
Unemployment Rate	3.7%	5.3%	4.8%	5.2%	-1.6%	-1.5%
Painters, Sculptors, Craft Artists	255	246	261	248	9	7
Employed	243	238	252	241	5	2
Unemployed	12	8	9	7	4	5
Unemployment Rate	4.6%	3.2%	3.4%	2.9%	1.4%	1.7%
Photographers	159	154	174	162	5	-3
Employed	154	148	166	154	6	0
Unemployed	5	6	8	8	-1	-3
Unemployment Rate	2.9%	3.8%	4.4%	4.9%	-0.9%	-2.0%
Teachers of Art/Drama/Music	46	36	40	46	10	0
Employed	45	35	39	45	10	0
Unemployed	1	1	1	1	0	0
Unemployment Rate	1.4%	2.3%	2.8%	1.6%	-0.9%	-0.2%
Other Artists, N.E.C.**	165	146	134	131	19	34
Employed	156	138	127	123	18	33
Unemployed	9	8	7	8	1	1
Unemployment Rate	5.4%	5.5%	5.6%	6.4%	-0.1%	-1.0%

** Not Elsewhere Classified

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Source: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Current Population Survey, Annual Averages.

Note: All unemployment rates shown, except for the category "All Artists," were calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics using unrounded data.

Table 2. Secondary Employment in 2001

Occupation	Primary Job Employment in 2001 (in thousands)	Secondary Job Employment in 2001 (in thousands)	Total Holding Either Primary or Secondary Jobs (in thousands)	% in this Occupation as a Second Job
<i>All Artists</i>	2,108	315	2,423	13.0%
<i>Actors/Directors</i>	131	18	149	12.1%
<i>Announcers</i>	49	27	76	35.5%
<i>Architects</i>	214	6	220	2.7%
<i>Authors</i>	122	20	142	14.1%
<i>Dancers</i>	26	5	31	16.1%
<i>Designers</i>	788	53	841	6.3%
<i>Musicians/Composers</i>	180	86	266	32.3%
<i>Painters, Sculptors, Craft Artists</i>	243	33	276	12.0%
<i>Photographers</i>	154	23	177	13.0%
<i>Teachers of Art/Drama/Music</i>	45	14	59	23.7%
<i>Other Artists, N.E.C.**</i>	156	30	186	16.1%

** Not Elsewhere Classified

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Source: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Current Population Survey, Annual Averages.

Table 3. Occupational Outlook for Select Artist Occupations

Occupation	Median Annual Earnings in 2000	Projected Employment Growth Between 2000 and 2010
<i>Actors, Directors, and Producers</i>	\$25,920	Increase Between 21 to 35 Percent
<i>Announcers</i>	9.52 (per hour)	Decrease 1 Percent or More
<i>Architects</i>	\$52,510	Increase 10 to 20 Percent
<i>Landscape Architects</i>	\$43,540	Increase 21 to 35 Percent
<i>Dancers and Choreographers</i>	\$22,470	Increase 10 to 20 Percent
<i>Commercial and Industrial Designers</i>	\$48,780	Increase Between 21 to 35 Percent
<i>Interior Designers</i>	\$36,540	Increase Between 21 to 35 Percent
<i>Graphic Designers</i>	\$34,570	Increase Between 21 to 35 Percent
<i>Musicians, Singers, and Related Workers</i>	\$36,740	Increase 10 to 20 Percent
<i>Fine Artists (painters, sculptors, and illustrators)</i>	\$31,190	Increase 10 to 20 Percent
<i>Photographers</i>	\$22,300	Increase 10 to 20 Percent
<i>Writers and Authors</i>	\$42,270	Increase Between 21 to 35 Percent

Source: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Occupational Outlook Handbook

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Chart 1. Total Civilian Labor Employment, Professional Specialty Occupations Employment, and All Artist Employment: 1995-2001

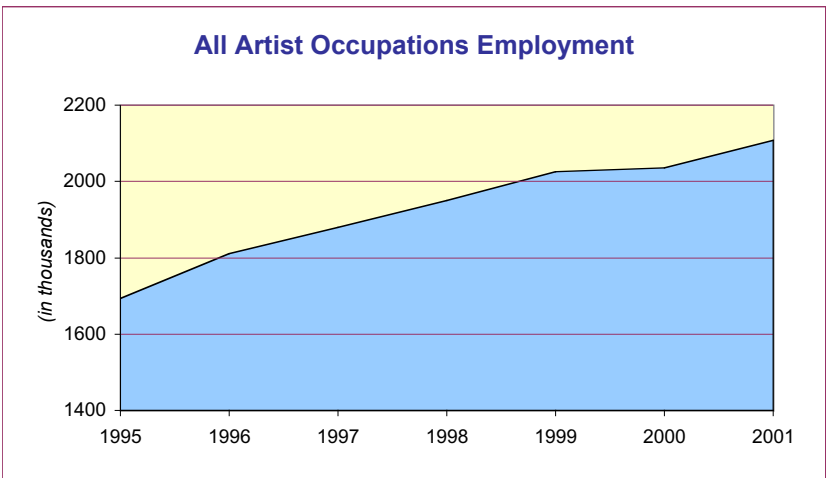
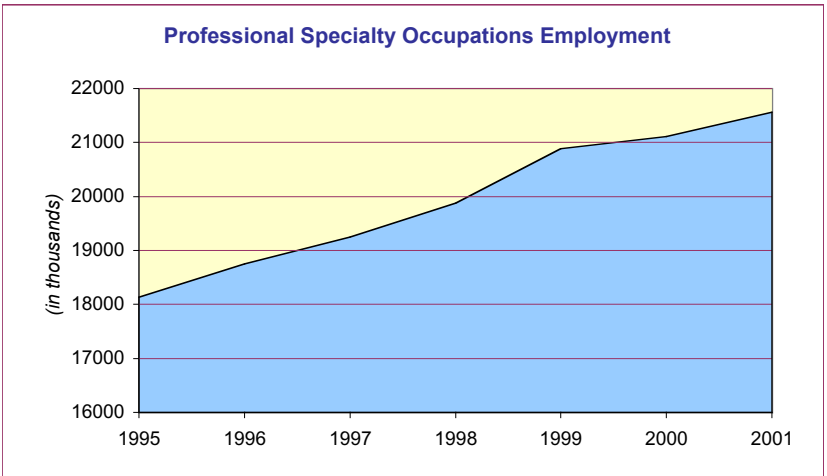
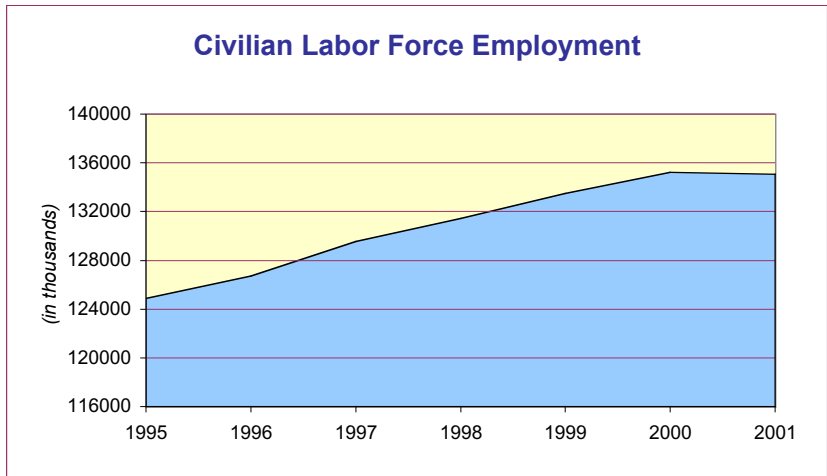


Chart 2. Total Civilian Labor Unemployment, Professional Specialty Occupations Employment, and All Artist Occupations Unemployment: 1995-2001

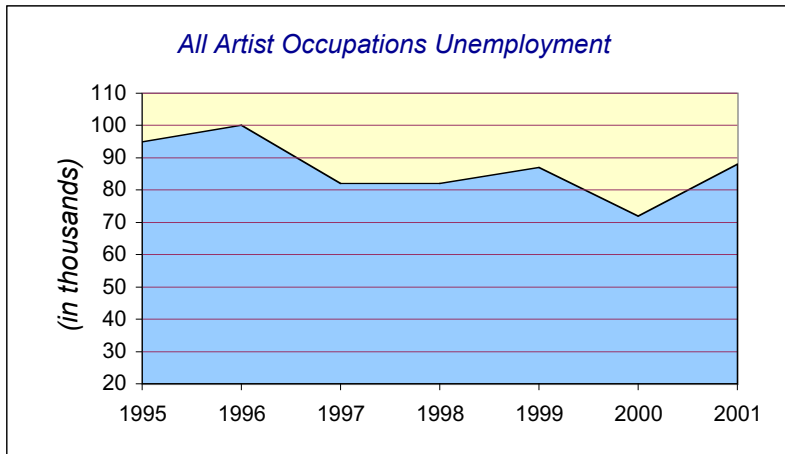
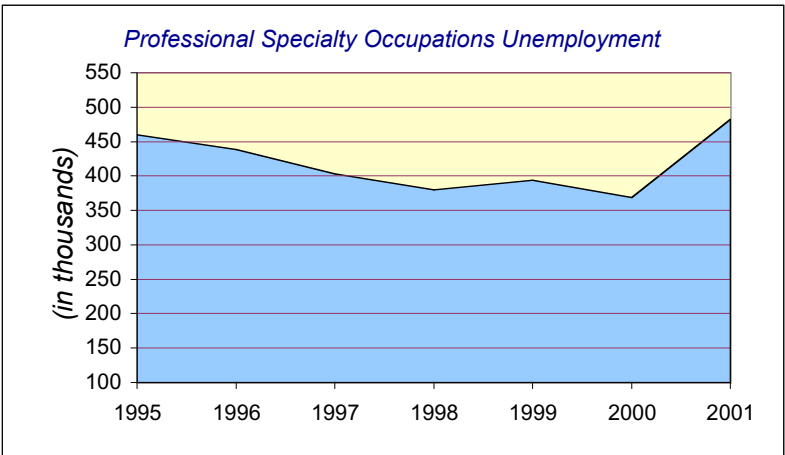
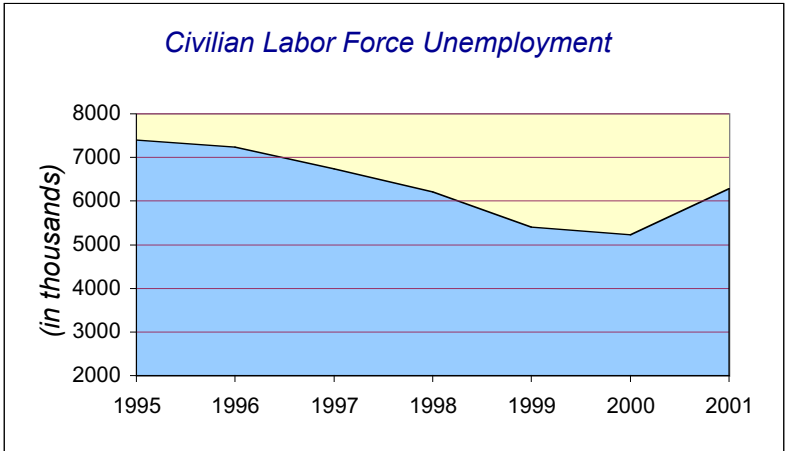


Chart 3. Unemployment Rates for Total Civilian Labor Force, Professional Specialty Occupations, and All Artist Occupations: 1995-2001

