

Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance are simplicity and flexibility, since it lends itself readily to yield smaller or larger samples, as the need arises, by sorting on selected digits in the serial number. Second, the cost of selecting samples of different sizes is kept to a minimum because statistical sampling is linked to administrative operations. Third, by selecting smaller samples from the larger samples it is possible to control mechanical or other errors by comparing sample totals with previously tabulated subuniverse or larger sample totals—an important factor both from the standpoint of accuracy and economy. Fourth, this sample is most appropriate for the type of continuous work-history tabulations made in the Bureau, since it automatically yields representation of the changing universe by the addition each year of a sample of new workers from the group receiving new account numbers with the predetermined sample digits. Thus, all persons who in 1950 obtained new account numbers having the serial 2505 or 7505 will automatically be represented in the 0.02-percent sample. A fifth advantage of this type of digital sample is that, because of the automatic identification of the persons involved, it affords a simple method of coordinating informational items for given workers in the sample with those of other agencies operating on the account-number system. It is relatively easy to supplement the old-age and survivors insurance sample with information from the Railroad Retirement Board or the State unemployment insurance agencies, since they also use the 9-digit account number system. Finally, because of the systematic methods of selection and the automatic stratification by area, the sample yields results highly representative of the universe from which it is drawn.

### Conclusions

The compilation of statistics under the sampling program is not devoid of problems despite the availability of selected universe and subuniverse data and a simple, reliable sampling scheme. Two problems in particular need further study. One is the need for data to measure the bias intro-

duced in the employee statistics when it is assumed that a sample of accounts to which wage credits have been posted is representative of individual workers. Despite all efforts to avoid issuing more than one number to an individual, it is known that some persons have multiple account numbers and thus may have wages credited under more than one account. The inclusion of these multiple accounts causes some overstatement in the number of workers and some understatement in the amount of average wage credits. A special study is under way to measure the significance of the multiples.

The second problem is the need to measure the extent to which the variance in the statistics on employees, by industry, exceeds that for random samples. Admittedly, some bias was introduced into the employee sample in the early days of the program, when, to alleviate the heavy initial registration load, clusters of account numbers were given to employers for issuance to their employees. While this bias is probably insignificant for broad industry groupings of the data, it is not known how significant it is for more detailed breakdowns. This problem is also being studied.

The probable main developments in the future sampling program may be summarized as follows:

1. The digital sampling system for employees and beneficiaries has proven itself the most feasible. It may be assumed, therefore, that it will be extended to provide data on the characteristics of the new groups of employees covered under old-age and survivors insurance for the first time by the 1950 Amendments to the Social Security Act.

2. The procedure for maintaining a sample of sufficient size for tabulating detailed data and using smaller subsamples from the larger sample for tabulating selected data will be continued because of its flexibility and economy.

3. Sampling of business establishments, up to now restricted to small-scale studies, will become a necessity under the extended program, when about 7-8 million businesses will be required to report. Consequently, it will be necessary to develop a feasible

sampling system for use in compiling statistics on employing organizations and their characteristics.

## Economic Status of Aged Persons and of Dependent Survivors

Estimates for December 1950 have been made of the number of aged persons, widows under age 65, and paternal orphans under age 18, and of the number with income from employment, social insurance and related programs, and public assistance. Such estimates are prepared semi-annually by the Social Security Administration to aid in program planning and for other purposes.

The most significant development in the economic status of these groups between June and December 1950 is the sharp increase in the number of old-age and survivors insurance beneficiaries. The Social Security Act

**Table 1.—Estimated number of persons aged 65 years and over, receiving income from specified source, December 1950**

[In millions]

Source of income	Number of persons		
	Total	Men	Women
Total population aged 65 and over <sup>1</sup> .....	12.3	5.7	6.6
Employment.....	3.7	2.3	1.4
Earnings.....	2.8	2.3	.6
Wives of earners.....	.9		.9
Social insurance and related programs:			
Old-age and survivors insurance.....	2.6	1.5	.11
Railroad retirement.....	.3	.2	.1
Federal civil-service retirement.....	.1	.1	( <sup>2</sup> )
Veterans' program.....	.3	.1	.1
Other <sup>3</sup> .....	.4	.1	.3
Old-age assistance.....	2.8	1.3	1.5

<sup>1</sup> Total population is preliminary estimate for April 1950 based on a sample of census returns and is subject to change. Includes persons with no income and with income from sources other than those specified. Some persons received income from more than one of the sources listed.

<sup>2</sup> Less than 50,000.

<sup>3</sup> Beneficiaries of Federal retirement programs other than civil service, and of State and local government retirement programs, and the wives of male beneficiaries of programs other than old-age and survivors insurance.

Sources: Total population and earners from Bureau of the Census. Number of persons in receipt of payments under social insurance and related programs and from old-age assistance, reported by administrative agencies, partly estimated. Number of wives of earners and number of wives of male beneficiaries of programs other than old-age and survivors insurance estimated from Census data on marital status.

**Table 2.—Estimated number of children under age 18 with father dead, and of widows under age 65, receiving income from specified source, December 1950**

[In millions]

Source of income	Survivor children under age 18 <sup>1</sup>	Widows under age 65 <sup>2</sup>	
		Total	With 1 or more children under age 18
Total in population <sup>3</sup> .....	2.0	3.5	0.7
Employment.....	.1	1.9	.4
Social insurance and related programs:			
Old-age and survivors insurance.....	.7	.2	.2
Veterans' program.....	.3	.4	.1
Other <sup>4</sup> .....	.1	( <sup>5</sup> )	( <sup>5</sup> )
Aid to dependent children.....	.4	.1	.1

<sup>1</sup> Includes children not living with widowed mother.

<sup>2</sup> Excludes widows who have remarried.

<sup>3</sup> Includes persons with no income and with income from sources other than those specified. Some persons received income from more than one of the sources listed.

<sup>4</sup> Railroad and Federal civil service retirement.

<sup>5</sup> Less than 50,000.

Sources: Number of widows in population and employed persons among widows and survivor children under age 18, estimated from Census Bureau data. Number of survivor children under age 18 based on October 1949 estimate prepared by Division of the Actuary, Social Security Administration. Number of persons in receipt of payments under social insurance and related programs and from aid to dependent children, reported by administrative agencies, partly estimated.

Amendments of 1950 liberalized eligibility conditions and accounted for most of this increase. At the same time, recipients of old-age assistance

and of aid to dependent children decreased in number. As a result the number of aged men receiving old-age and survivors insurance surpassed the number of men on the old-age assistance rolls for the first time.

The liberalization was of more immediate advantage to aged men than aged women; in December 1950, aged women recipients of old-age assistance still outnumbered the women receiving old-age and survivors insurance by 1.3 to 1. In the aggregate there were about 107 recipients of old-age assistance at the end of 1950 for every 100 aged persons on the old-age and survivors insurance rolls. In June 1950 the ratio had been 133 to 100.

Another trend worth noting is the continuing decline in the relative number of aged persons with income from employment. In 1944, when relatively more aged persons were in the labor force than at any other time since 1940, approximately 40 percent of the population aged 65 and over was in receipt of earnings either as an earner or the wife of an earner. By the end of 1950 this proportion had dropped to 30 percent. The decrease was a reflection of the failure of employment opportunities to keep pace with the gain in the size of the aged population rather than a drop in the absolute number of aged workers, which held close to wartime levels.

INFORMATION. *Britain 1950-51*. London: The Office, 1950. 306 pp. Distributed by the British Information Services, New York City. A handbook of information about the United Kingdom.

INTERNATIONAL LABOR OFFICE. *Social Security*. (Regional Conference for the Near and Middle East, Teheran, April 1951, Report III.) Geneva: The Office, 1950. 69 pp. 50 cents.

Reviews the progress made in developing social security systems in the Near East and Middle East, discusses plans now under consideration for the extension of these systems, and considers regional characteristics and social security needs.

KLINBERG, OTTO. *Tensions Affecting International Understanding*. (Bulletin 62.) New York: Social Science Research Council, 1950. 227 pp. \$1.75.

A survey of research on international tensions and techniques for their relief.

MERRILL, FRANCIS E. *Social Problems*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950. 425 pp. \$4.

Designed as a basic textbook.

MINNESOTA. UNIVERSITY. GRADUATE SCHOOL. SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH CENTER. *The Welfare State: Menace or Millennium?* Minneapolis: The Center, 1950. 58 pp.

The third in a series of lectures on social issues.

RESEARCH COUNCIL FOR ECONOMIC SECURITY. *Social Security Abroad: Financial Cost and Program Emphasis*. (Publication No. 77.) Chicago: The Council, 1950. 13 pp. Single copies free.

Surveys the social security systems in 11 countries and points out the variation in program emphasis due to differences in economic, political, and social conditions.

"Social Insurance Agreement Between Austria and Switzerland." *Industry and Labour*, Geneva, Vol. 5, Mar. 15, 1951, pp. 222-224. 25 cents.

UNITED NATIONS. DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS. *Methods of Social Welfare Administration*. New York: United Nations, 1950. 229 pp. \$2.50.

Monographs on 30 countries. Includes a summary of common problems in social welfare administration.

U. S. CONGRESS. JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMIC REPORT. *January 1951 Economic Report of the President. Hearings, 82d Congress, 1st*

## Recent Publications\*

### General

AMERICAN MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION. *Property Risks and Coverages Under Mobilization, With a Paper on Group Insurance*. (Insurance Series No. 88.) New York: The Association, 1951. 44 pp. \$1.25. Includes Trends in Group and Social Insurance, by E. B. Whittaker.

BREWER, CAREY. *Civil Defense in the United States: Federal, State and*

\* Prepared in the Library, Federal Security Agency. Orders for the publications listed should be directed to publishers or booksellers; Federal publications for which prices are listed should be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.

*Local*. (Public Affairs Bulletin No. 92.) Washington: Library of Congress, Legislative Reference Service, Feb. 1951. 78 pp. Processed. 55 cents.

BROWNELL, BAKER. *The Human Community: Its Philosophy and Practice for a Time of Crisis*. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950. 305 pp. \$4.

GOLDBERG, GLORIA S. *Haynes Foundation Budget for Moderate Income Families, Prices for Los Angeles, September 1950*. Los Angeles, The Haynes Foundation, 1951. 42 pp.

A study based on the needs of a family of four.

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