

Age of Workers in Covered Employment: Industry Differences, 1949

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THE development of private pension plans was stimulated during World War II by the Federal Government's wage stabilization program, which permitted the adoption of pension plans while restricting increases in wage rates. This growth has been accompanied by increased interest in the personal and economic characteristics of workers in industries currently covered by such plans, as well as in industries where similar plans may be contemplated.

Data on employment and taxable earnings tabulated annually by the Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance provide some indication of the duration of employment, mobility, the sex and age distribution of workers in covered employment, and the differences in these characteristics by industry group.¹ The present article analyzes age differences of workers in 68 selected industries covered by the old-age and survivors program in 1949. Previous articles have analyzed some of these characteristics for earlier years.²

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¹ The term "industry" or "industry group" as used in this article refers to a major industry group (2-digit classification), comprising several industry subgroups. The industry group "transportation equipment," for example, includes motor vehicles and motor-vehicle equipment, aircraft and parts, ship and boat-building and repairing, railroad equipment, and other industry subgroups. Classifications of the manufacturing industries are made in accordance with the *Standard Industrial Classification Manual*, Vol. I, part 1 (Bureau of the Budget, November 1945). The nonmanufacturing industries are classified according to the *Industrial Classification Code*, Vol. I (Social Security Board, 1942).

² George H. Trafton, "Age Distribution of Workers in Industries Under Old-Age and Survivors Insurance," March 1947; and Harper R. Fortune, "Duration of Employment and Mobility of Workers: Industry Variations, 1947," January 1951.

In the data analyzed, a worker is counted in each industry group in which he earned wage credits during 1949. Hence, the total number of workers with wage credits, or the number with wage credits in a broad industry division, such as manufacturing, wholesale and retail trade, or the service industries, cannot be obtained by adding the figures for the individual industry groups, because some workers earned wage credits in more than one industry group. This method of classification shows how many persons actually worked in each industry at some time during the year and is referred to as an "actual-industry" classification. It differs substantially from the "assigned-industry" method (used in the data presented in the 1947 article), under which a worker is counted in only one industry group regardless of the number of industries in which he received taxable wages during the year. The latter classification, while understating the number of workers employed at some time during the year in each industry, makes it possible to obtain an unduplicated count of workers distributed by the "last industry" in which they worked during the year—that is, the industry in which they earned wage credits in their last quarter of employment.

In order to gain perspective for the current study of industry age differences in 1949, the age composition of all workers in covered employment in the years 1939, 1944, and 1949 will be examined briefly.

The median age of all workers was 32 years in 1939 and 35 years in both 1944 and 1949 (table 1). This rise was largely the result of expanded employment opportunities in covered industries during World War II, which brought jobs to relatively large numbers of people in the older age groups. While the proportion aged 45 and over rose substantially, there was a marked decline in the proportion of workers aged 20-29.

Although in 1949 the men's median age of 36 was 2 years higher than in 1939, it was 3 years below the median for male workers in 1944. Changes in the median age of women workers contrast sharply with those for men. The median age of women in covered employment was 29 years in 1944 as it was in 1939, but it had risen to 32 years by 1949. From 1939 to 1944 the number of women with wages in covered employment almost doubled. In the age group 45 and over the number more than doubled; the increase in the 20-29 age group was considerably smaller. This situation would have resulted in a rise of the women's median age by 1944 if it

Table 1.—Median age and percentage distribution of workers in covered employment, by age group and sex, 1939, 1944, and 1949

Age group	All workers			Men			Women		
	1939	1944	1949	1939	1944	1949	1939	1944	1949
Number of workers (in millions).....	33.8	46.3	46.8	24.4	28.1	31.6	9.4	18.2	15.2
Total percent.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 20.....	8.5	14.9	9.2	7.2	12.9	7.4	11.9	18.0	12.8
20-29.....	35.0	23.7	28.7	31.9	16.7	26.7	42.8	34.4	33.1
30-44.....	34.1	33.3	34.3	35.1	35.2	35.1	31.8	30.4	32.5
45-59.....	17.9	21.2	20.8	20.3	25.6	22.1	11.6	14.6	17.8
60-64.....	2.5	3.8	3.9	3.1	5.0	4.7	1.2	1.8	2.4
65 and over.....	1.9	3.1	3.2	2.3	4.5	4.0	0.7	1.0	1.5
Median age.....	32.0	35.0	35.0	34.0	39.0	36.0	29.0	29.0	32.0

had not been counterbalanced by the phenomenal influx of women under age 20. The median did rise after the war, when women below age 45 failed to work in covered employ-

ment to anything like the extent that they did during the war.

As shown in table 2, the median age of workers in many industry groups differs substantially from the median

of all workers in covered employment. In 1949 the range in the median age extended from 25 years for all workers in the motion picture industry to 43 years in real estate.

Table 2.—Median age and percentage distribution of workers, by sex and age, and median age of 4-quarter workers, for each industry division and group in which employed, 1949

Industry	All workers		Median age of 4-quarter workers	Men						Women					
	Number (in thousands) ¹	Median age		Number (in thousands) ¹	Percentage distribution				Median age	Number (in thousands) ¹	Percentage distribution				Median age
					Total	Under 20	20-64	65 and over			Total	Under 20	20-64	65 and over	
United States total.....	46,400	34.9	37.2	31,374	100.0	7.4	88.5	4.0	36.3	15,026	100.0	12.8	85.7	1.5	31.8
<i>Mining.....</i>	1,342	37.1	39.3	1,297	100.0	3.5	93.7	2.6	37.3	45	100.0	* 7.8	90.2	* 2.0	30.6
10 Metal mining.....	137	37.5	40.3	132	100.0	* 3.5	93.0	* 3.3	37.8	5	100.0	* 9.8	* 90.2	(?)	32.2
11 Anthracite mining.....	96	42.3	43.6	95	100.0	* 1.1	95.8	* 3.1	42.3	1	100.0	* 7.1	* 92.9	(?)	40.0
12 Bituminous and other soft-coal mining.....	587	37.9	39.0	577	100.0	2.5	94.8	2.6	38.0	10	100.0	* 9.8	* 85.3	* 4.9	31.2
13 Crude-petroleum and natural-gas production.....	367	34.5	37.7	344	100.0	5.2	93.1	* 1.5	31.9	23	100.0	* 6.8	91.9	* 1.3	30.6
14 Nonmetallic mining and quarrying.....	166	36.2	39.8	161	100.0	* 5.0	90.5	* 3.9	36.3	5	100.0	* 6.4	* 91.5	* 2.1	29.7
<i>Contract construction.....</i>	4,420	34.8	38.9	4,282	100.0	6.7	90.5	2.7	34.9	138	100.0	* 10.3	85.5	* 1.2	30.2
15 Building construction—general contractors.....	1,874	36.2	40.3	1,827	100.0	5.9	90.8	3.2	36.3	47	100.0	* 9.4	89.7	* 0.9	30.5
16 General contractors, other than building.....	1,373	33.8	38.6	1,350	100.0	7.6	90.5	1.8	33.9	23	100.0	* 8.2	90.9	* 0.9	30.6
17 Construction—special-trade contractors.....	2,100	35.2	38.1	2,028	100.0	5.6	91.6	2.7	35.3	72	100.0	* 11.4	87.1	* 1.5	30.0
<i>Manufacturing.....</i>	20,241	35.5	38.7	14,277	100.0	5.6	90.3	4.0	36.5	5,964	100.0	8.6	90.0	1.3	33.0
19 Ordnance and accessories.....	33	39.1	40.9	25	100.0	* 1.2	96.4	* 2.4	49.1	8	100.0	* 5.2	94.8	(?)	34.9
20 Food and kindred products.....	2,951	32.8	38.3	2,018	100.0	10.3	88.5	3.0	33.1	933	100.0	13.1	85.5	1.4	32.1
21 Tobacco manufacturers.....	184	35.0	40.5	82	100.0	* 5.9	88.1	* 5.8	36.6	102	100.0	* 7.7	90.8	* 1.5	34.2
22 Textile mill products.....	1,670	36.4	38.9	907	100.0	5.6	89.2	5.2	37.6	763	100.0	6.5	92.2	1.3	35.2
23 Apparel and other finished products made from fabrics and similar materials.....	1,867	35.5	39.6	466	100.0	10.4	82.6	6.8	37.3	1,401	100.0	8.8	89.4	1.7	35.0
24 Lumber and wood products (except furniture).....	1,313	35.4	40.2	1,231	100.0	8.3	87.5	4.0	35.6	82	100.0	* 8.5	90.3	* 1.1	32.7
25 Furniture and fixtures.....	510	33.9	38.6	420	100.0	7.6	87.6	4.7	34.5	90	100.0	* 8.8	89.9	* 1.2	31.5
26 Paper and allied products.....	634	34.2	38.2	451	100.0	4.9	90.9	4.1	35.5	183	100.0	9.5	89.4	* 1.0	30.9
27 Printing, publishing, and allied industries.....	1,052	33.5	38.7	707	100.0	11.6	83.4	4.9	35.1	345	100.0	12.9	85.7	* 1.3	30.0
28 Chemicals and allied products.....	964	35.5	38.3	766	100.0	3.4	93.8	2.7	36.7	198	100.0	7.7	91.2	* 1.2	30.2
29 Products of petroleum and coal.....	334	36.8	39.4	310	100.0	* 2.1	96.1	* 1.6	37.4	24	100.0	* 6.1	93.9	(?)	29.4
30 Rubber products.....	318	35.2	38.4	227	100.0	* 2.9	94.3	* 2.8	36.4	91	100.0	* 6.8	92.5	* 0.7	32.1
31 Leather and leather products.....	597	34.0	39.0	294	100.0	11.1	82.7	6.1	36.1	303	100.0	11.6	86.4	* 1.9	32.0
32 Stone, clay, and glass products.....	733	34.4	38.4	607	100.0	5.7	90.5	3.6	35.1	126	100.0	8.1	90.6	* 1.2	31.1
33 Primary metal industries.....	1,382	37.5	40.2	1,298	100.0	2.4	94.2	3.3	37.9	84	100.0	* 6.2	92.8	* 1.0	30.8
34 Fabricated metal products (except ordnance, machinery, and transportation equipment).....	1,409	34.1	37.8	1,139	100.0	4.9	91.8	3.2	34.9	270	100.0	6.8	92.5	* 0.7	31.2
35 Machinery (except electrical).....	1,844	36.9	39.7	1,592	100.0	2.7	92.7	4.6	37.9	252	100.0	6.4	92.6	* 0.9	31.2
36 Electrical machinery, equipment, and supplies.....	1,055	32.9	35.9	624	100.0	3.7	93.8	2.4	34.7	431	100.0	6.1	93.5	* 0.3	30.1
37 Transportation equipment.....	1,642	35.0	37.9	1,475	100.0	2.8	94.6	2.5	35.4	167	100.0	* 3.9	95.9	* 0.1	32.0
38 Professional, scientific, and controlling instruments: photographic and optical goods; watches and clocks.....	318	34.0	36.6	200	100.0	* 4.4	91.2	* 4.3	35.8	118	100.0	* 7.1	92.3	* 0.6	30.4
39 Miscellaneous manufacturing industries.....	783	33.3	38.7	452	100.0	8.7	86.3	5.0	34.7	331	100.0	12.0	86.5	* 1.4	31.4
<i>Transportation, communication, and other public utilities.....</i>	3,778	33.0	36.0	2,957	100.0	4.6	93.3	1.9	34.5	821	100.0	12.8	86.6	* 0.6	26.8
41 Local railroads and bus lines.....	180	38.0	39.9	168	100.0	* 0.8	96.4	* 2.9	38.2	12	100.0	* 8.3	90.1	* 1.7	34.8
42 Trucking and warehousing for hire.....	1,142	33.2	36.5	1,058	100.0	5.2	92.9	1.7	33.4	84	100.0	* 11.7	87.2	* 1.0	29.2
43 Other transportation, except water transportation.....	507	32.5	36.1	450	100.0	* 1.9	97.2	* 0.8	32.9	57	100.0	* 7.0	92.3	* 0.7	29.1
44 Water transportation.....	266	36.4	37.9	252	100.0	* 3.1	94.3	* 2.6	36.7	14	100.0	* 5.6	93.1	* 1.4	31.7
45 Services allied to transportation, not elsewhere classified.....	302	37.0	41.3	278	100.0	* 3.5	93.2	* 3.2	37.6	24	100.0	* 10.7	88.1	* 1.2	29.9
46 Communication: telephone, telegraph, and related services.....	845	27.6	29.6	299	100.0	11.7	86.7	* 1.5	30.6	546	100.0	14.1	85.4	* 0.4	25.5
48 Utilities: electric and gas.....	641	35.2	39.0	556	100.0	3.8	94.3	1.9	36.7	85	100.0	* 11.6	87.9	* 0.6	27.1
49 Local utilities and local public services, not elsewhere classified.....	37	38.5	41.4	33	100.0	* 5.7	87.3	* 6.9	38.7	4	100.0	* 4.8	* 92.9	* 2.4	36.3

See footnotes at end of table.

These two industries also had the lowest and highest median ages for women workers—23 years in the former and 42 years in the latter industry. Men employed by retail filling stations were youngest, on the average, and those employed by security dealers and investment banking houses were oldest; the

median ages were 27 years and 45 years, respectively.

"Young-Worker" and "Old-Worker" Industries

Industries that employ relatively large numbers of young workers have problems that differ substantially from those that employ rela-

tively large numbers of old workers. Costs and other factors affecting industry retirement plans will probably be fairly dissimilar as between "young-worker" and "old-worker" industries. Which are the young-worker and which are the old-worker industries? What are their characteristics? Are either young-worker or

Table 2.—Median age and percentage distribution of workers, by sex and age, and median age of 4-quarter workers, for each industry division and group in which employed, 1949—Continued

Industry	All workers		Median age of 4-quarter workers	Men						Women					
	Number (in thousands) ¹	Median age		Number (in thousands) ¹	Percentage distribution				Median age	Number (in thousands) ¹	Percentage distribution				Median age
					Total	Under 20	20-64	65 and over			Total	Under 20	20-64	65 and over	
Wholesale and retail trade.....	15,968	31.9	36.9	9,848	100.0	11.7	85.1	3.0	33.2	6,120	100.0	19.0	79.6	1.3	29.6
50 Full-service and limited-function wholesalers.....	2,459	33.6	37.9	1,851	100.0	7.0	89.6	3.3	34.5	608	100.0	12.4	86.3	* 1.3	30.1
51 Wholesale distributors, other than full-service and limited-function wholesalers.....	1,648	33.9	37.2	1,288	100.0	4.9	92.5	2.6	35.0	360	100.0	9.2	89.9	* 0.9	29.5
52 Wholesale and retail trade combined, not elsewhere classified.....	658	35.4	40.3	606	100.0	6.4	90.4	3.1	35.7	52	100.0	* 13.4	85.4	* 1.2	30.7
53 Retail general merchandise.....	2,840	27.6	36.2	826	100.0	17.3	79.5	3.1	29.8	2,014	100.0	28.5	70.2	* 1.3	26.5
54 Retail food and liquor stores.....	2,157	28.6	34.2	1,512	100.0	24.0	73.6	2.3	28.6	645	100.0	22.8	76.6	* 0.6	28.5
55 Retail automotive.....	1,064	32.1	35.2	963	100.0	6.7	91.8	1.5	32.5	101	100.0	14.1	85.5	* 0.4	28.2
56 Retail apparel and accessories.....	1,090	32.1	39.6	383	100.0	14.1	81.3	4.5	31.0	707	100.0	16.4	81.5	2.0	32.7
57 Retail trade, not elsewhere classified.....	2,487	30.8	36.6	1,678	100.0	13.1	83.5	3.3	32.2	809	100.0	21.1	77.6	1.3	28.0
58 Eating and drinking places.....	2,852	32.6	38.7	1,368	100.0	12.9	83.6	3.3	35.1	1,484	100.0	14.7	84.2	1.1	30.6
59 Retail filling stations.....	560	27.2	30.7	530	100.0	15.5	83.6	* 0.8	27.2	30	100.0	* 20.0	78.7	* 1.3	27.5
Finance, insurance, and real estate.....	2,492	35.9	39.9	1,421	100.0	4.2	88.5	7.2	41.2	1,071	100.0	15.4	83.0	1.7	28.0
60 Banks and trust companies.....	494	33.0	37.8	239	100.0	5.4	85.7	8.8	42.8	255	100.0	16.1	83.1	* 0.8	25.3
61 Security dealers and investment banking.....	72	42.0	44.3	48	100.0	* 5.0	85.7	* 8.9	44.7	24	100.0	* 8.1	90.6	* 1.3	33.3
62 Finance agencies, not elsewhere classified.....	185	29.7	35.4	91	100.0	* 2.7	90.3	* 7.0	36.7	94	100.0	18.3	81.2	* 0.4	24.7
63 Insurance carriers.....	699	31.0	35.3	353	100.0	3.3	93.6	3.1	37.6	346	100.0	21.7	77.8	* 0.5	24.4
64 Insurance agents, brokers, and services.....	198	29.8	33.4	76	100.0	* 4.1	91.4	* 4.5	35.4	122	100.0	15.1	83.9	* 0.8	27.0
65 Real estate.....	794	43.4	50.0	585	100.0	4.5	85.9	9.5	44.0	209	100.0	5.5	89.1	5.5	41.9
66 Real estate, insurance, loans, law offices: any combination.....	106	38.2	42.4	57	100.0	* 1.9	90.9	* 7.0	42.8	49	100.0	* 10.3	87.7	* 2.1	31.8
67 Holding companies (except real estate holding companies).....	13	40.5	43.4	9	100.0	* 4.4	* 90.0	* 5.6	43.9	4	100.0	* 12.8	* 87.2	(?)	31.5
Service industries.....	6,473	33.0	38.0	3,861	100.0	13.0	83.2	3.8	33.5	2,612	100.0	12.4	85.8	1.7	32.2
70 Hotels, rooming houses, camps, and other lodging places.....	1,096	37.0	44.5	593	100.0	10.9	83.4	5.5	37.6	503	100.0	9.9	87.1	2.9	36.3
72 Personal services.....	1,485	33.1	37.7	632	100.0	9.6	86.7	3.6	33.8	853	100.0	11.0	87.8	1.2	32.6
73 Business services, not elsewhere classified.....	849	32.3	35.9	550	100.0	6.4	90.5	3.1	33.6	299	100.0	11.8	87.3	* 0.8	29.7
74 Employment agencies and commercial and trade schools.....	86	32.8	37.3	56	100.0	* 2.7	94.6	* 2.0	33.3	30	100.0	* 10.9	86.1	* 3.0	31.5
75 Automobile repair services and garages.....	438	30.7	34.5	415	100.0	8.3	89.9	* 1.6	30.8	23	100.0	* 8.4	89.8	* 1.8	29.9
76 Miscellaneous repair services and hand trades.....	234	32.4	34.9	214	100.0	7.4	90.8	* 1.8	32.4	20	100.0	* 13.1	85.4	* 1.5	32.0
78 Motion pictures.....	495	25.2	37.1	319	100.0	31.8	64.5	3.6	28.1	176	100.0	40.5	58.3	* 1.1	22.5
79 Amusement and recreation and related services, not elsewhere classified.....	836	29.7	36.7	698	100.0	26.4	70.5	2.9	29.3	138	100.0	13.9	83.9	* 2.0	31.6
80 Medical and other health services.....	460	32.7	36.0	82	100.0	* 8.2	86.5	* 5.3	35.6	378	100.0	9.0	89.5	* 1.5	32.1
81 Law offices and related services.....	146	31.5	34.9	35	100.0	* 5.4	89.9	* 4.8	33.4	111	100.0	10.8	87.3	* 1.8	30.4
82 Educational institutions and agencies.....	53	32.6	40.4	23	100.0	* 5.2	91.4	* 3.4	32.4	30	100.0	* 7.1	88.8	* 4.1	33.0
83 Other professional and social-service agencies and institutions.....	191	32.1	35.7	162	100.0	6.3	89.9	* 3.6	33.0	29	100.0	* 11.0	87.3	* 1.7	28.0
86 Nonprofit membership organizations.....	470	39.8	44.3	337	100.0	4.3	89.3	6.5	41.7	133	100.0	* 6.5	91.8	* 1.6	34.3
All others ³	1,068	34.3	38.9	834	100.0	7.6	89.2	3.2	35.3	234	100.0	10.3	88.5	* 1.2	30.8

* Fewer than 100 workers in sample.

¹ Based on 1-percent sample.

² No workers in sample.

³ Includes agriculture, forestry, and fishing; manufacturing—administrative and auxiliary; private households; establishments not elsewhere classified; and unreported industries.

Table 3.—Workers employed in only one industry group as a percent of all workers employed at some time during 1949, by age group

Industry division	All age groups	Under 25	25-44	45-64	65 and over
United States total	78.7	70.9	78.1	85.9	91.9
Mining	71.9	55.7	69.5	83.6	92.8
Contract construction	43.4	36.5	41.3	51.5	64.6
Manufacturing	74.8	60.3	74.3	85.7	93.2
Transportation, communication, and other public utilities	64.1	55.4	62.7	76.5	82.2
Wholesale and retail trade	65.0	57.7	64.4	75.5	85.3
Finance, insurance, and real estate	66.6	60.7	64.1	73.3	80.9
Service industries	58.6	51.4	57.1	68.3	82.1
All others ¹	31.8	31.0	28.8	36.3	54.0

¹ Includes agriculture, forestry, and fishing; establishments not elsewhere classified; and unreported industries.

old-worker industries the same for men workers as they are for women workers?

In order to appraise these industry characteristics, a definition of young-worker and old-worker industries was needed. Computations were therefore made to determine the standard deviation of the median ages for workers with taxable wages in 1949 in the 68 industry groups. The industries in which the median age of the workers fell at least one standard deviation below the mean of the median ages were classified as young-worker industries; those at least one standard deviation above were classified as old-worker industries. This procedure was followed separately for men, women, and all workers.

This manner of defining young-worker and old-worker industries is somewhat arbitrary because there are no sharp breaks in the distribution of industries by median age. It is, however, a convenient way of indicating and distinguishing for analysis the industries with relatively low, and those with relatively high, median ages and avoiding subjective judgment in choosing particular industries to include in this group. An alternative method that defined young-worker industries as those employing relatively large proportions of workers under age 20 and old-worker industries as those employing relatively large proportions of workers aged 65 and over gave practically the same young- and old-worker industries.

The upper and lower limits for classifying the 68 industries, by median age of workers in 1949, as young-worker or old-worker industries

are given in the following tabulation.

Item	Median age (years)		
	All workers	Men	Women
Mean of the industry median ages	34.3	35.6	30.9
Standard deviation of the industry median ages	3.5	3.6	3.2
Upper median age limit for young-worker industries (one standard deviation below the mean of industry median ages)	30.8	32.0	27.7
Lower median age limit for old-worker industries (one standard deviation above the mean of industry median ages)	37.8	39.2	34.1

Some industries were young-worker industries with respect to both men and women workers, others for men but not women, and still others for women but not men. In the young-worker industries for both men and women workers, listed below, the median ages were, on the average, much below the median age of all men and women workers in covered employment.

Industry	Median age (years)		
	All workers	Men	Women
Retail filling stations	27.2	27.2	27.5
Motion pictures	25.2	28.1	22.5
Retail general merchandise	27.6	29.8	26.5
Communication: telephone, telegraph, and related services	27.6	30.6	25.5
Mean of median ages	26.9	28.9	25.5

In the industries that are young-worker industries for men but not for

women workers, the median age for women workers was practically the same, on the average, as the median for all women workers.

Industry	Median age (years)		
	All workers	Men	Women
Retail food and liquor stores, amusement and recreation and related services, not elsewhere classified	28.6	28.6	28.5
Automobile repair services and garages	29.7	29.3	31.6
Retail apparel and accessories	30.7	30.8	29.9
Mean of median ages	32.1	31.0	32.7
Mean of median ages	30.3	29.9	30.7

¹ Not a young-worker industry for all workers.

In the industries that were young-worker industries for women but not for men workers, the women employed were for the most part relatively young, but the median age of the men was, on the average, considerably above the median for all men in covered employment.

Industry	Median age (years)		
	All workers	Men	Women
Insurance carriers	31.0	37.6	24.4
Finance agencies, not elsewhere classified	29.7	36.7	24.7
Banks and trust companies	33.0	42.8	26.3
Insurance agents, brokers, and services	29.8	35.4	27.0
Utilities: electric and gas	35.2	36.7	27.1
Mean of median ages	31.7	37.8	25.9

¹ Not a young-worker industry for all workers.

All the young-worker industries with respect to men, with the single exception of the communication industry,³ and all the young-worker industries for both sexes were in the wholesale and retail trade or in the service industries. Most jobs in these industries require little, if any, training. As a result, they are industries in which relatively large numbers of untrained young people find em-

³ The communication industry was a young-worker industry for men in 1949 only because of its abnormal postwar expansion, which—together with a general practice of hiring young men and training them for long service with the same employer—produced a much lower median age than would have resulted under normal rates of expansion.

ployment. Since wage and skill levels in these industries are relatively low, they do not as a rule attract older workers. For women workers, the young-worker industries are found primarily in the finance, insurance, and real estate industries, which employ women largely as clerical workers. Young persons generally leave these industries in their teens or early twenties and are replaced by others equally as young. None of the young-worker industries was found in mining, contract construction, or manufacturing.

Just as certain industries employ young workers predominantly, others employ large numbers of older workers. The following tabulation lists the industry groups that were old-worker industries for both men and women workers in 1949. In these industries the median ages of both men and women workers were well above one standard deviation from the corresponding mean for the 68 industry groups.

Industry	Median age (years)		
	All workers	Men	Women
Ordnance and accessories.....	39.1	40.1	34.9
Nonprofit membership organizations.....	39.8	41.7	34.3
Anthracite mining.....	42.3	42.3	40.0
Real estate.....	43.4	44.0	41.9
Mean of median ages.....	41.2	42.0	37.8

In the industries that were old-worker industries for men but not for women workers, the average age of men was considerably older than that of all men in covered employment; the mean median age of the women

Industry	Median age (years)		
	All workers	Men	Women
Banks and trust companies.....	33.0	42.8	26.3
Real estate, insurance, loans, law offices: any combination.....	38.2	42.8	31.8
Holding companies (except real estate holding companies).....	40.5	43.9	31.5
Security dealers and investment banking.....	42.0	44.7	33.3
Mean of median ages.....	38.4	43.6	30.7

¹ Not an old-worker industry for all workers.

workers, however, was practically the same as the median for all women workers.

Certain industries were old-worker industries for women workers but not for men. The median ages for women in these industries were all substantially higher than one standard deviation above the mean of industry median ages for all women workers. Because the median ages for men were considerably above the median age for all men, the industries just fall short of being old-worker industries for both men and women.

Industry	Median age (years)		
	All workers	Men	Women
Tobacco manufacturers.....	35.0	36.6	34.2
Local railways and bus lines.....	38.0	38.2	34.8
Apparel and other finished products made from fabrics and similar materials.....	35.5	37.3	35.0
Textile mill products.....	36.4	37.6	35.2
Hotels, rooming houses, camps, and other lodging places.....	37.0	37.6	36.3
Local utilities and local public services, not elsewhere classified.....	38.5	38.7	36.3
Mean of median ages.....	36.7	37.7	35.3

¹ Not an old-worker industry for all workers.

Unlike the young-worker industries, some mining and manufacturing industries are found among the old-worker industries. On the other hand, there are no contract construction or wholesale and retail trade industries in the old-worker category for either men or women. In fact, the contract construction industry division is not represented in either the young-worker or the old-worker category.

In summary, although some industries are young-worker industries and some are old-worker industries for both men and women workers, such a sex-age relationship is not pronounced for all industries.

Four-Quarter Workers

As might be expected, the median age—37 years—of workers with wage credits in all 4 quarters was considerably higher than the median—35 years—of all workers with taxable wages during 1949 (table 2). The differences between 4-quarter and all workers varied greatly among in-

dustry divisions. Four-quarter workers were, on the average, 5 years older than all workers in the service industries; they were 4 years older in wholesale and retail trade, in contract construction, and in finance, insurance, and real estate; 3 years older in manufacturing and in transportation, communication, and other public utilities; and 2 years older in mining.

In industry groups within these industry divisions the differences in median age between 4-quarter and all workers were even wider. The greatest differences were found in some of the service industry groups. For example, the median age of 4-quarter workers in the motion picture industry was 37 years, as against 25 years for all workers—a difference of 12 years. In some of the trade industries, the disparity was as large as 8 years (table 2).

In the manufacturing industries division and in finance, insurance, and real estate, the over-all differences between the median age for 4-quarter and all workers were small, but the median age of 4-quarter workers in some of the industry groups within these divisions was considerably higher than that of all workers. In three manufacturing industry groups—food and kindred products, tobacco manufacturers, and lumber and wood products (except furniture)—and in two finance groups—banks and trust companies and finance agencies not elsewhere classified—4-quarter workers averaged 5–6 years older than all workers.

The older median age of 4-quarter workers is largely accounted for by the small proportion of young persons among those who worked in all 4 quarters. While 9 percent of all workers with wage credits in 1949 were under age 20, only about 5 percent of the 4-quarter workers were in that age group. Many young persons first enter the labor force at the end of the school year and as a result usually have no more than 2 quarters of coverage to their credit for the year. Others are short-term workers with employment primarily during school vacations or Christmas holidays. Since many of the trade and service industries are young-worker industries, it is not surprising to find a much smaller proportion of 4-

quarter workers than the average in these industries. Whereas two-thirds of all workers in 1949 were 4-quarter workers, workers who were employed in all 4 quarters in the trade and service industries constituted only 47 and 39 percent, respectively, of all workers in these industries.

Industry Mobility and Age

Mobility in employment is generally conceded to be more characteristic of youth than it is of older persons, and the motivating influence behind the movement is largely economic. In addition to personal differences of temperament, the main factors that affect the extent to which workers move from industry to industry are the degree of skill required, wage levels, comparative opportunities for promotion, degree of unionization, seniority rights, pension plans, and the extent of fluctuation in the demand for labor.

Industry data derived from the 1-percent sample afford a measure of the extent to which workers in covered employment work in more than one 2-digit industry within a calendar year. They also show the relative movement between these industries for workers at different age levels.

As shown in table 3, about 4 out of every 5 workers had covered employment in only one industry group in 1949. Movement is more frequent, however, among workers in some industry divisions than in others. For example, only 43 percent of the workers who worked in contract construction at some time during 1949 were employed in only one industry group, compared with 72 percent in mining and 75 percent in manufacturing.

The greatest movement occurred among workers under 25 years of age. In this age group, 29 percent of all workers had held covered jobs in more than one industry group in 1949. With advancing age, industry movement declined gradually, so that only 8 percent of the workers aged 65 and over were multi-industry workers.

Young people shifted about more frequently than older workers in every one of the industry divisions. For example, only about one-third of

the workers under age 25 in contract construction were single-industry workers, compared with two-thirds aged 65 and over. Even in mining and manufacturing, where workers, on the whole, had relatively few industry changes during the year, 56 percent of the workers under 25 years of age in the former division and 60 percent in the latter were single-industry workers, compared with 93 percent of the workers aged 65 and over in either division.

Women workers tend to change from industry to industry less frequently than men do. Eighty-four percent of all women workers compared with 76 percent of all men workers were employed in only one industry group. Of the workers with employment in all 4 quarters, 85 percent of the women and 78 percent of the men worked in only one industry group.

Higher wage rates and greater opportunities for advancement in other industries, plus low seniority status, are largely responsible for the shift of young workers from industry to industry. Skills acquired and vested interests in their jobs—such as accrual of seniority rights and greater stakes in pension benefits—tend to hold down the movement of older workers. The decreased marketability of their services is also a factor in keeping older workers attached to their jobs.

Size of Establishment

In recent years, largely because the compulsory retirement age in most private pension plans is set at age 65, and because of the effort that has been made to increase production by bringing into employment older workers at present in the labor-force reserve, there has been considerable interest in the employment practices of establishments of various sizes with respect to workers at different age levels. There is, for example, interest in the supposed tendency for large firms to employ relatively small proportions of "old" workers. Many studies, based on small samples, say that there is such a tendency. The Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance has not yet tabulated data to show the age distribution of workers by size of estab-

Table 4.—Coefficients of rank correlation between percentage of workers aged 65 and over and percentage of workers in selected sizes of establishments for 68 industries, 1948, and measures of their significance

Number of workers employed	Coefficient of rank correlation (rho)	Standard deviations of rho from zero ¹	The square of rho ²
0-49.....	.04	0.33	.0016
50-499.....	.33	2.70	.1089
500-999.....	.14	1.22	.0196
1,000 and over.....	-.32	-2.30	.1024

¹ A "rho" that is ± 1.96 standard deviations from zero indicates that there probably is some correlation, because a standard deviation that high would occur only 5 times out of 100 purely by chance if there were no correlation.

² The square of rho indicates how much more accurately, on the average, the median age of workers in an industry can be estimated if the distribution of workers in industries by size of establishment is known instead of assumed to be the same as the average for all the industries. In none of the cases above would such knowledge improve the estimates more than 11 percent.

lishment. Data, however, are available for 1948 that show (1) the age distribution of workers in industry groups and (2) the distribution of workers in these industries by size of establishment. These data were analyzed to indicate the degree of correlation between employment of the aged and size of establishment.

If there is a much stronger tendency for small establishments than for large establishments to employ workers aged 65 and over, it is reasonable to expect that industries with a large percentage of workers in small establishments would tend to have a relatively high percentage of workers in the age group 65 and over and that industries with a large percentage of workers in large firms would tend to have a relatively low percentage of workers aged 65 and over. In order to test whether this tendency exists, computations were made to determine the coefficients of rank correlation between the industries ranked by the percentage of workers who were aged 65 and over and the same industries ranked by the percentage of workers employed in establishments with 0-49 workers, 50-499 workers, 500-999 workers, and 1,000 and more workers.

The results of the tests, as shown in table 4, indicate that there may be a slight tendency for establishments of 50-499 workers to employ relatively large proportions of older workers,

and for establishments of 1,000 and more workers to employ relatively small proportions of older workers. They do not indicate, however, that there is much correlation between age and size of establishment.

Summary

Over the decade 1939 to 1949 significant changes occurred in the age composition of workers in industries covered by old-age and survivors insurance. War activity and a high level of employment resulted in an increased median age. In any one year the average age of workers employed in all 4 quarters of the year

is much higher than that of all workers. There is also diversity in the average ages of workers in different industries. Relatively large proportions of young workers are employed in industry groups in retail trade, service, and finance and insurance, most of which are characterized by much part-time employment and low levels of skill and wages. On the other hand, there are industry groups with comparatively large proportions of older workers in all industry divisions except wholesale and retail trade and contract construction. In these old-worker industries, private retirement plans are more common

and part-time employment less common than in the young-worker industries. Furthermore, few young-worker industries for men are also young-worker industries for women, and few old-worker industries for men are old-worker industries for women, and vice versa.

Industry data from old-age and survivors insurance records show considerably more interindustry movement among young workers than among older workers. The data do not lend much support to the hypothesis that there is a tendency for large establishments to employ relatively few old persons.

SOCIAL SECURITY IN REVIEW

(Continued from page 2)

of the old-age beneficiary on whose earnings these benefits are based.

FEWER UNEMPLOYED WORKERS filed initial claims for benefits under the State unemployment insurance programs in January than in December. The decline of 5.7 percent, to slightly more than 1.0 million, was the first reported for any January in several years. In weeks of unemployment claimed, a continuance of the seasonal rise noted in December brought the total number to 4.9 million—20.9 percent more than in December. For both types of claim the totals were nearly a fourth less than in January 1952 and were the lowest for any January since 1948.

The number of claimants receiving benefits in an average week in January rose sharply, to 952,500—a total 41.6 percent greater than that in December but 19.6 percent less than the average in January 1952. Benefits paid also showed a marked increase from December, rising 36.6 percent to \$94.4 million. The average weekly check for total unemployment increased slightly, to \$23.43.

Child Health Day

May 1, for the twenty-fifth year, has been designated by Presidential proclamation as Child Health Day. President Eisenhower, in issuing the proclamation, called attention to the fact that “we have made tremendous advances in overcoming the most severe physical hazards of childhood,

and are now striving to make equally significant progress in understanding the nature of emotional health, in order that our children may grow into mature, responsible citizens of a democracy.” He urged all Americans “to increase their understanding of the emotional, social, and spiritual growth of children, so as to apply this understanding in their day-to-day relations with the rising generation.”

Federal Security Administrator Oveta Culp Hobby, in discussing Child Health Day, said that if we “can understand more about the growth processes of childhood, we increase the chances that our children can develop the emotional and mental strength required to live happy, useful, and satisfying lives.”