

Women Workers in World War II

- The female labor force grew by 6.5 million.
- In 1944, 37 percent of all adult women were employed.
- In 1944, women comprised 35.4 percent of the civilian labor force.
- In 1945, women comprised 36.1 percent of the civilian labor force.
- At the height of the war, there were 19,170,000 women in the labor force.
- Between 1940 and 1945, the female labor force grew by 50 percent.
- One in ten married women entered the labor force.
- The percentage of married women working outside the home increased from 13.9 to 22.5.
- The percentage of working women with children under 10 years of age increased from 7.8 to 12.1 from 1940 to 1944.
- At the height of the war, women comprised 4 percent of skilled workers.
- In 1944, skilled female workers made an average weekly wage of \$31.21 while skilled male workers earned \$54.65 weekly.
- From 1940 to 1944, the percentage of women workers employed in factories increased from 20 to 30 percent.
- From 1940 to 1944, the percentage of women workers employed as domestic servants declined from 17.7 to 9.5 percent.
- Female employment in defense industries grew by 462 percent from 1940 to 1944.
- Between 1943 and 1945, polls indicated that 61 to 85 percent of women workers wanted to keep their jobs after the war.
- Between 1943 and 1945, polls indicated that 47 to 68 percent of married women workers wanted to keep their jobs after the war.

Source: Susan M. Hartmann, *The Home Front and Beyond: American Women in the 1940s* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1982).