

The estimated number of employers paying taxable wages was about 3.6 million in the second quarter of 1953, about the same number as in April-June 1952 and 2.0 percent more than in January-March 1953.

Number and average monthly amount of old-age benefits in current-payment status and percentage distribution by amount of benefit, by State, December 31, 1953

(Percentage distribution based on 10-percent sample)

Old-Age Benefits in Current-Payment Status, December 31, 1953

Old-age benefits under the old-age and survivors insurance program were being paid on December 31, 1953, to more than 3.2 million persons, almost three-fifths of a million more than in December 1952. The accompanying table shows the average monthly benefit amount and gives a percentage distribution of the number of beneficiaries according to the size of their benefit; the data are classified by the beneficiaries' State of residence at the close of 1953.

In December 1953 the average old-age benefit amount was \$51.10, almost \$2 higher than the average a year earlier. One out of 9 old-age beneficiaries (11 percent) were receiving monthly amounts of \$75.00-85.00 at the end of 1953, in comparison with 1 out of 15 (7 percent) as of December 31, 1952. One-fifth of all old-age beneficiaries were receiving benefits in the \$55.00-64.90 range, about the same proportion as at the end of 1952. Minimum benefits of \$25.00 were being paid to about 600,000 old-age beneficiaries, 75,000 more than at the end of 1952; as a proportion of the total, however, the number of persons receiving minimum benefits declined about 1 percent to 18.5 percent.

Among the States the average monthly old-age benefit at the end of 1953 ranged from \$56.41 in Connecticut to \$40.59 in Mississippi. Benefits of \$75.00-85.00 were being paid to 15 percent of the old-age beneficiaries in Connecticut and to 4 percent in Mississippi; minimum benefits of \$25.00 went to only 11 percent of the beneficiaries in Connecticut and to 37 percent in Mississippi. In Puerto Rico, where the average benefit was only \$37.10, 61 percent of the beneficiaries were receiving benefits of less than \$35.00.

State ¹ (ranked by size of average benefit)	Average old-age benefit	Number of old-age beneficiaries	Percent of old-age beneficiaries receiving—							
			Total	\$25.00	\$25.10- 34.90	\$35.00- 44.90	\$45.00- 54.90	\$55.00- 64.90	\$65.00- 74.90	\$75.00- 85.00
Total.....	\$51.10	3,222,348	100.0	18.5	8.8	11.0	15.1	19.9	15.5	11.2
Connecticut.....	56.41	57,518	100.0	11.0	6.5	8.4	14.0	22.6	22.7	14.8
New Jersey.....	55.34	127,798	100.0	13.4	6.4	9.3	14.6	21.2	20.2	14.9
Michigan.....	55.15	135,992	100.0	14.6	7.4	10.0	13.6	18.0	18.9	17.5
Pennsylvania.....	54.24	263,387	100.0	13.4	7.4	9.4	15.2	23.3	19.2	12.1
Massachusetts.....	54.20	151,081	100.0	12.7	7.3	9.8	15.8	24.6	17.8	12.0
Rhode Island.....	53.73	25,676	100.0	12.9	6.7	9.6	17.2	24.8	18.0	10.8
Ohio.....	53.49	191,425	100.0	15.6	7.7	10.2	14.3	20.2	18.5	13.5
Illinois.....	53.30	200,324	100.0	13.6	7.9	10.2	14.7	20.2	18.1	13.3
New York.....	53.09	392,009	100.0	14.7	8.2	10.6	15.6	21.8	17.3	11.8
Washington.....	51.60	68,472	100.0	15.8	8.2	11.5	17.5	20.6	14.6	11.8
Delaware.....	51.53	7,611	100.0	20.7	8.5	10.9	13.3	19.2	15.5	11.9
Florida.....	51.23	84,555	100.0	20.3	8.8	10.1	13.9	17.6	15.5	13.8
West Virginia.....	51.19	37,793	100.0	18.9	8.1	9.7	14.5	23.0	16.2	9.6
Wisconsin.....	51.11	79,466	100.0	20.9	8.7	10.0	13.4	18.3	15.5	13.2
California.....	50.86	287,444	100.0	17.5	8.7	12.5	18.3	19.2	15.1	10.7
Oregon.....	50.42	45,976	100.0	18.6	7.7	12.4	18.3	19.4	12.3	11.3
Dist. of Columbia.....	50.28	12,522	100.0	16.6	10.5	13.5	14.8	19.7	14.0	10.9
Maryland.....	50.28	43,156	100.0	18.9	9.1	10.9	15.5	21.0	13.6	11.0
Indiana.....	50.19	93,366	100.0	20.8	9.3	10.9	14.6	18.9	14.1	11.4
New Hampshire.....	50.15	18,717	100.0	15.1	8.9	11.5	19.2	23.7	13.8	7.8
Arizona.....	50.10	12,617	100.0	23.4	9.4	11.1	14.3	16.4	13.9	11.5
Utah.....	50.04	10,246	100.0	21.1	8.0	10.9	15.5	18.3	16.0	10.2
Minnesota.....	49.49	60,258	100.0	22.1	9.4	11.4	14.6	18.1	14.2	10.2
Nevada.....	48.87	3,446	100.0	22.4	10.0	11.8	19.3	17.5	11.8	7.2
Missouri.....	48.86	85,925	100.0	21.2	9.6	12.1	15.1	19.3	13.5	9.2
Colorado.....	48.72	27,001	100.0	24.2	9.2	10.6	16.1	17.4	14.0	8.5
Alaska.....	48.54	1,726	100.0	19.9	10.7	12.8	18.4	16.8	11.7	9.7
Vermont.....	48.37	9,871	100.0	19.5	11.7	10.8	16.6	20.9	12.3	8.2
Hawaii.....	48.34	6,899	100.0	19.3	10.5	15.2	14.5	17.9	14.0	8.6
Wyoming.....	48.16	4,432	100.0	27.9	8.1	8.8	15.6	16.6	16.9	6.1
Maine.....	48.08	20,878	100.0	20.9	9.6	11.5	17.3	21.6	12.7	6.4
Montana.....	47.80	11,679	100.0	26.1	11.3	9.8	14.8	17.3	11.9	8.8
Virginia.....	47.30	45,208	100.0	23.3	10.6	12.4	15.2	20.0	20.8	7.7
Iowa.....	46.90	50,478	100.0	26.0	10.7	12.1	13.8	18.2	10.4	8.8
Kansas.....	46.58	36,209	100.0	25.4	11.5	12.8	14.4	17.1	11.0	7.8
Kentucky.....	46.52	43,610	100.0	24.5	11.4	12.2	15.2	18.6	10.8	7.3
Nebraska.....	46.23	22,868	100.0	26.4	11.6	12.6	12.9	17.6	11.0	7.9
Idaho.....	46.00	10,688	100.0	25.4	11.4	14.8	13.7	15.6	10.6	8.5
Texas.....	45.28	92,574	100.0	28.3	12.0	13.5	14.4	15.8	9.9	7.9
Oklahoma.....	45.18	33,374	100.0	27.3	11.2	13.0	12.6	16.3	11.0	7.3
South Dakota.....	44.99	8,425	100.0	27.0	11.7	11.8	13.9	20.0	10.0	5.6
North Carolina.....	44.96	41,121	100.0	26.9	11.3	12.6	17.2	18.5	8.4	5.1
New Mexico.....	44.94	6,186	100.0	30.5	10.7	10.2	14.5	13.8	10.5	9.8
South Carolina.....	44.87	19,321	100.0	27.1	10.5	13.2	17.3	17.3	9.0	5.6
Alabama.....	44.53	37,009	100.0	28.8	11.0	12.5	16.8	16.8	8.9	5.2
Louisiana.....	44.32	31,903	100.0	28.4	12.4	12.9	16.1	14.6	9.0	6.6
Tennessee.....	43.86	40,802	100.0	29.8	12.4	12.5	15.1	16.7	7.6	5.9
Georgia.....	43.60	37,951	100.0	30.5	13.2	13.6	13.8	15.0	8.1	5.8
North Dakota.....	43.53	6,077	100.0	32.8	11.1	12.1	12.8	13.2	9.3	8.7
Arkansas.....	41.87	26,290	100.0	33.1	12.6	12.9	13.4	14.9	7.4	5.7
Mississippi.....	40.59	18,794	100.0	36.9	12.2	12.3	13.5	14.0	7.1	4.0
Puerto Rico.....	37.10	6,722	100.0	22.9	38.3	14.1	8.7	11.3	2.6	2.1
Virgin Islands ²	35.70	98	100.0							
Foreign.....	54.56	18,971	100.0	10.4	6.0	9.9	16.4	30.2	18.1	9.0

¹ Beneficiary's State of residence as of December 31, 1953.

² Too few cases in the sample for a reliable distribution.

The average old-age benefit was highest in the Northeastern States and in certain North Central States, somewhat lower in the Middle West and Far West, and for the most part lowest in the Southern States. Five of the six States with the highest average old-age benefit are in the Northeast, while five of the six States with the lowest average benefit are in the South. The lower averages in

the Southern States reflected mainly the more frequent periods of non-covered employment in the wage histories of beneficiaries in this area; the result was a reduction in the average monthly wages from which their benefits were computed. The averages also reflected, though to a lesser extent, the prevailing wage rates in different regions throughout the country.