

Structural Change in the Workforce (1950–1970)

Abstract

Under the conditions of the “economic miracle,” the Federal Republic witnessed a profound change in its occupational structure during the first two decades of its existence. Among the most important developments was the decline in the number of those working in agriculture by two-thirds, and the upswing in industry, trade, and the service sector, in particular. While the ratio of blue-collar workers was declining, the ratio of white-collar workers and civil servants within the working population was on the rise.

Source

Gainfully Employed Persons by Economic Sector and Occupational Status in the Federal Republic 1950–1970 (in percent)

Economic sector	Year	Total number of gainfully employed persons	Distribution:				
			Self-employed	Participating family members	Civil servants	White-collar employees	Workers
Agriculture and forestry, animal husbandry and fishing	1950	23.2	38.4	85.8	0.8	0.9	9.7
	1961	13.5	35.3	74.9	0.5	0.5	3.2
	1970	7.5	25.8	60.9	0.4	0.6	2.2
Manufacturing and processing industry	1950	34.4	22.3	4.6	0.3	28.3	50.9
	1961	40.5	17.1	6.7	0.2	33.0	61.4
	1970	41.2	18.2	11.1	0.3	34.7	61.2
Construction industry	1950	7.9	6.4	0.6	–	3.1	12.6
	1961	7.7	5.2	1.0	–	2.5	13.0
	1970	7.7	6.5	2.4	–	3.2	12.9
Trade, banking, and insurance	1950	10.1	20.0	5.5	1.3	28.9	3.3
	1961	13.6	23.7	9.8	1.0	30.7	4.4
	1970	15.0	24.3	12.8	0.9	27.9	6.9
Transportation	1950	5.5	2.3	0.3	38.6	5.3	5.4
	1961	5.6	2.3	0.5	37.6	4.1	5.1

Services	1970	5.4	3.0	1.0	24.0	3.9	4.7
	1950	6.3	6.8	2.9	0.1	3.9	8.4
	1961	11.2	16.4	7.1	21.1	16.9	7.3
Other economic sectors	1970	13.6	22.1	11.8	19.5	18.2	7.9
	1950	12.6	3.7	0.3	58.9	29.6	9.7
	1961	7.9	0.0	0.0	39.6	13.1	5.5
All economic sectors together	1970	9.5	0.1	0.0	55.0	11.5	4.3
	1950	100	100	100	100	100	100
	1961	100	100	100	100	100	100
	1970	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Gerhard A. Ritter and Merith Niehuss, *Wahlen in Deutschland, 1945–1990. Ein Handbuch*. Munich: Beck, 1991, p. 53.

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