

# The Evolution of Men's and Women's Employment (1914–18)

## Abstract

The wartime economy changed the basic composition and dynamics of labor in Germany. Able-bodied men were recruited into military service during the war, while more and more women stepped in to take up the slack in industrial production. Although there was resistance to women abandoning their roles as wives and mothers, the growing prominence of women in the workforce was driven by material hardship.

## Source

### I. Employment of Adult Workers according to Branch of Industry, 1914–1918

(March 1914 = 100)

Branch of Industry	Sept. 1914	March 1915	Sept. 1915	March 1916	Sept. 1916	March 1917	Sept. 1917	March 1918	Sept. 1918
Natural Stone, Gravel, Sand and Concrete	67.2	67.4	67.0	74.6	83.6	82.8	89.7	87.0	77.3
Metal Industry	58.3	117.4	289.5	492.4	596.7	745.5	783.5	846.7	777.0
Machine Building	83.2	309.8	572.7	1414.8	2316.8	3381.7	3308.7	3520.4	3637.9
Electrical Industry	57.1	102.3	245.4	299.7	665.5	856.4	972.2	813.8	691.4
Chemicals	84.9	92.7	112.3	171.8	209.6	31.4	392.2	436.2	467.7
Textiles	89.0	108.1	85.1	66.9	55.8	66.9	68.5	62.6	59.9
Paper	53.8	78.9	90.6	101.3	132.5	136.7	131.1	149.8	159.4
Leather and Rubber	67.7	57.3	61.8	57.8	55.8	89.1	112.3	96.8	96.6
Wood and Woodcarving	24.6	89.9	110.8	148.5	123.9	109.5	112.2	115.7	124.9
Gastronomy/ Groceries	139.7	133.2	166.9	155.7	162.5	159.0	153.5	146.5	161.0
Clothing	66.3	74.7	95.2	83.4	72.5	58.1	51.6	55.5	54.3
Printing	62.7	82.5	83.2	84.9	86.1	82.1	87.1	90.1	96.5

### II. Index of Employment in Germany, 1916–1918

*Health insurance members subject to obligatory insurance minus those who are disabled or unfit for work*

(June 1, 1914 = 100)

Date	Women	Men	Combined
June 1, 1914	100.0	100.0	100.0
December 1, 1916	108.1	60.5	77.3
January 1, 1917	107.5	60.1	76.9

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April 1, 1917	109.9	60.1	77.7
July 1, 1917	115.1	61.1	80.2
October 1, 1917	116.6	60.9	80.7
December 1, 1917	118.5	61.3	81.7
January 1, 1918	116.5	60.4	80.4
April 1, 1918	115.2	60.3	79.8
July 1, 1918	116.7	60.8	80.8
October 1, 1918	116.0	60.2	80.1
December 1, 1918	108.7	59.3	76.8

Source: Stefan Bajohr, *Die Hälfte der Fabrik. Geschichte der Frauenarbeit in Deutschland 1914–1945*. Marburg: Verlag Arbeiterbewegung und Gesellschaftswissenschaft, 1979, pp. 119, 125; reprinted in Rüdiger vom Bruch and Björn Hofmeister, eds., *Kaiserreich und Erster Weltkrieg 1871–1918*. Deutsche Geschichte in Quellen und Darstellung, edited by Rainer A. Müller, vol. 8. Stuttgart: P. Reclam, 2000, pp. 419–22.

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