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Research Division
Note #57
July, 1995

Artist Employment in 1994

The Artist Labor Force:

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there was virtually no growth in artist employment from 1993 to 1994. The total number of persons employed in one of the eleven arts occupational categories in 1994 stood at 1,622,000 which is only 1,000 higher than in 1993. Unemployment rose 4,000 - from 87,000 in 1993 to 91,000 in 1994. This increase caused the unemployment rate for artists to rise from 5.1% to 5.3%.

Arts in Education

Challenge &
Advancement

Dance

Design Arts

Expansion Arts

Folk Arts

International

Literature

Locals

Media Arts

Museum

Music

Opera/Musical
Theater

Presenting &
Commissioning

State & Regional

Theater

Visual Arts

Artists Occupations Compared:

For the purposes of this note, the artist labor force, which includes the eleven artist occupations listed in Table 1, is compared to the "Total Civilian Labor Force" and the occupational category "Professional Specialty Occupations." The Total Civilian Labor Force or Workforce is self-explanatory; the Professional Specialty Occupations category consists of a broad group of occupations that generally require substantial professional training and/or education, and includes the eleven artist occupations studied here. The data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) indicate several changes:

-The labor force for all artist occupations increased by 5,000 from 1993 to 1994, but employment was up by only 1,000. For the total civilian labor force, employment growth exceeded the overall growth in the labor force by 389,000 persons. The professional specialty occupations category showed an employment increase of 632,000 -- 3,000 more than their labor force growth.

-While the unemployment rate for all of the artist occupations rose by 0.2% from 1993 to 1994, the rate for the total civilian workforce fell by

0.4%. This decrease was shared by the professional specialty occupations which had a 0.1% decrease in their unemployment rate.

The unemployment rates for the total civilian labor force, professional specialty occupations, and all artist occupations, are graphically represented in Chart 1. Looking at the graph, each of the three categories follow slightly different patterns. For instance, the total civilian labor force follows a curve which peaks in 1992 at 6.7% and has been declining steadily ever since. The unemployment rate for the artist occupations has been somewhat more erratic, but the data show a net increase in the unemployment rate of 1.6% since 1990. The most stable category is professional specialty occupations. It has had the lowest overall unemployment rate combined with the least amount of fluctuation over time.

Trends in the Artist Labor Force Since 1992:

The BLS data can also be used to identify trends in the artist labor force. The last column of Table 1 shows changes in the size and distribution of each arts occupation for 1992/1994. For comparison purposes, the total civilian labor force, professional specialty occupations, and all artist occupations are also shown. These data indicate significant increases in employment for the total civilian labor force and for professional specialty occupations from 1992 to 1994, but a decline for artists. The unemployment rate for artists also showed a proportionally smaller decline than that for the total civilian labor force or professional specialty occupations.

Trends in Individual Artist Occupations:

This section examines trends in individual artist occupations from 1992 to 1994. Individual occupational trends often differ from the trends of the aggregate. As the note on Table 1 explains, caution should be used in interpreting these differences as some may not be statistically significant -- especially in the smallest occupational categories.

Actors and Directors -

This field has experienced a general decline in size since 1992. The total number of people employed as actors or directors has dropped 10,000 to 86,000. The total number of unemployed dropped from 15,000 in 1992 to 13,000 persons, leading to a slight decrease in the rate of unemployment - from 13.5% to 13.0%.

Announcers -

The unemployment rate for announcers was 5.3% in 1994, well below the rates for 1993 and 1992 - 10.3% and 8.0%, respectively. Although this drop in the unemployment rate is a positive sign, it should also be remembered that the announcers' labor force has dropped by 9,000 since 1992 and stood at 49,000 in 1994. The smaller size of this occupational group also makes it subject to greater sampling error and thus should be interpreted cautiously. (See note on Table 1.)

Architects -

Looking at the period 1992-1994, the architecture field has experienced a slight increase in employment and decrease in unemployment. The total number of architects has increased by 3,000 since 1992 and the number unemployed declined by 2,000. As a result, their unemployment rate has decreased by more than one full percentage point, from 5.6% to 4.4%.

Authors -

The size of the author labor force declined substantially in 1994. Since 1992, the number of employed authors has declined by over 10% - from 125,000 to 112,000; and the number of unemployed has decreased by 50% - from 6,000 to 3,000. Their unemployment rate has moved down from 4.9% in 1992 to 3.0% in 1994.

Dancers -

The position of dancers in the labor force improved substantially from 1993 to 1994. According to the BLS statistics, the total number of dancers in the labor force, and the number of employed dancers increased 7,000 and 8,000 respectively. The unemployment rate

for dancers was 5.9% in 1994, well below the rates for 1993 and 1992 (11.5% and 7.3%, respectively). Caution should be taken in interpreting trends in this occupation in particular because it is the smallest and thus subject to substantial sampling error. (See note on Table 1.)

Designers -

Of the arts occupations studied, designers are the largest individual occupation among the eleven artist occupations. There are more than twice as many people in the category of "designer" as there are in any of the other categories in 1994. The field has been relatively stable over the 1992-1994 period. There are 6,000 more employed designers in 1994 than in 1992, and the number unemployed was unchanged at 28,000.

Musicians/Composers -

Since 1992, the arts occupation category of Musician/Composer has seen steady declines in employment and increases in unemployment. The number of employed musician/composers has decreased by 24,000, while the number unemployed has grown from 9,000 to 14,000. This resulted in a growth in the unemployment rate from 4.8% to 8.0%.

Painters/Sculptors/Craft Artists/Artist Printmakers -

This group of artists is second in size only to designers. In 1994, there were 225,000 persons who reported working in this occupational category. There has been some nominal growth in this field since 1992, and the trend in their unemployment rate is one of decline - falling steadily from 4.3% in 1992 to 3.9% in 1994.

Photographers -

Photographers experienced steady employment growth from 1992 to 1994 increasing over 10% each year. Despite a rise in unemployment in 1993, unemployment was lower in 1994 than in 1993. Their unemployment in 1994 stood at 3.3%, down from 4.1% in 1992.

Teachers of Art/Drama/Music post secondary -

Aside from 1993, which could be assumed to be an anomaly, this category is stable and generally exhibits a low unemployment rate. At 0.7% in 1994, the unemployment rate for post secondary teachers of art, drama and music was by far the lowest of any artist occupation. The number of persons in this occupational group is small, like the dancer category and is therefore subject to greater fluctuations that are often not statistically significant. (See note on Table 1.)

Other Artists -

The labor force for this occupational category has remained fairly constant since 1992 at approximately 99,000. However, the number of employed persons has declined, while the number unemployed has increased. In 1992, with a labor force of 99,000, the unemployment rate was 4.3%. By 1994, the unemployment rate had climbed to 7.9%, yet the overall labor force size remained the same.

About the data:

These national employment statistics are obtained from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Current Population Survey, which reports employment information on over 325 occupations, including eleven arts occupations. A respondent (16 years or older) is considered employed if during the survey week he/she did any paid work in his/her business, profession or farm. To be considered as working in one of these artist occupations in the BLS' survey, one must be working during the survey week and have described that job/work as one of the eleven artist occupations. It is important to note that those holding more than one job are counted in the job in which they worked the most hours during the survey week.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics counts a person as unemployed if they did not have a job during the survey week, were available for work, and had made specific efforts to find a job during the previous four weeks. In order to be counted as unemployed in a particular occupation, an unemployed person's last full-time job must have been in that occupation. Therefore, to be

counted as unemployed in one of the artist occupations, one must not have had a job in the survey week, been available for work, have made specific efforts to find work during the four week prior to the survey, and last worked in an artist occupation.

Caveats:

This Research Division Note is the eleventh in an annual series utilizing the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) adapted by the Current Population Survey in 1983. Changes in the occupational classification system improved the consistency in measuring employment in the artist occupation groups. Caution should be used when comparing these data to pre-1983 data.

Research Division Reports and Notes of Related Interest:

Reports -

- #1 Employment and Unemployment for Artists: 1970-1975
- #16 Artist Employment and Unemployment: 1971-1980
- #29 Trends in Artist Occupations: 1970-1990

Notes -

- #2 Artist Employment in 1982
- #7 Artist Employment in 1983
- #11 Artist Employment in 1984
- #15 Artist Employment in 1985
- #22 Artist Employment in 1986
- #29 Artist Employment in 1987
- #31 Artist Employment in 1988
- #33 Artist Employment in 1989
- #35 Artist Employment in 1990
- #37 Artist Employment in 1991
- #39 Artist Employment in 1992
- #54 Artist Employment in 1993

Sourcebook of Arts Statistics: 1989, Research Division, April 1990

1992 Addendum to Sourcebook of Arts Statistics, Research Division, April 1992

Table 1. The Artist Labor Force: Trends in Employment & Unemployment, 1992-1994
(all numbers in thousands)

Occupation	1994	1993	1992	Change From '93-'94	Change From '92-'94
Total All Civilian Workers	130,452	127,087	126,006	+3,365	+4,447
Employed	123,060	119,306	117,583	+3,754	+5,477
Unemployed	7,392	7,781	8,422	-389	-1,030
Unemployment Rate	5.7%	6.1%	6.7%	-0.4%	-1.0%
Professional Specialty Occupations	17,989	17,360	16,825	+629	+1,164
Employed	17,536	16,904	16,393	+632	+1,143
Unemployed	453	456	432	-3	+21
Unemployment Rate	2.5%	2.6%	2.6%	-0.1%	-0.1%
All Artists	1,713	1,708	1,736	+5	-22
Employed	1,622	1,621	1,642	+1	-20
Unemployed	91	87	93	+4	-2
Unemployment Rate	5.3%	5.1%	5.4%	+0.2%	-0.1%
Actors and Directors	98	108	111	-9	-12
Employed	86	96	96	-10	-10
Unemployed	13	12	15	+1	-2
Unemployment Rate	13.0%	11.2%	13.5%	+1.8%	-0.5%
Announcers	49	51	58	-2	-9
Employed	46	46	53	0	-7
Unemployed	3	5	5	-2	-2
Unemployment Rate	5.3%	10.3%	8.0%	-5.0%	-2.7%
Architects	147	128	146	+19	+1
Employed	141	123	138	+18	+3
Unemployed	6	5	8	+1	-2
Unemployment Rate	4.4%	3.9%	5.6%	+0.5%	-1.2%
Authors	115	143	131	-28	-16
Employed	112	139	125	-27	-13
Unemployed	3	4	6	-1	-3
Unemployment Rate	3.0%	2.7%	4.9%	+0.3%	-1.9%
Dancers	30	23	22	+7	+8
Employed	28	20	20	+8	+8
Unemployed	2	3	2	-1	0
Unemployment Rate	5.9%	11.5%	7.3%	-5.6%	-1.4%
Designers	576	563	570	+13	+6
Employed	548	541	542	+7	+6
Unemployed	28	22	28	+6	0
Unemployment Rate	4.8%	3.9%	4.9%	+0.9%	-0.1%

Table 1. continued

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>Change From '93-'94</u>	<u>Change From '92-'94</u>
Musicians/Composers	178	180	197	-2	-18
Employed	164	174	188	-10	-24
Unemployed	14	6	9	+8	+5
Unemployment Rate	8.0%	3.3%	4.8%	+4.7%	+3.2%
Painters, Sculptors, Craft Artists & Artist Printmakers	234	232	232	+2	+2
Employed	225	222	222	+3	+3
Unemployed	9	10	10	-1	-1
Unemployment Rate	3.9%	4.2%	4.3%	-0.3%	-0.4%
Photographers	153	148	135	+7	+18
Employed	148	135	129	+13	+19
Unemployed	5	11	6	-6	-1
Unemployment Rate	3.3%	7.5%	4.1%	-4.2%	-0.8%
Teachers of Art/Drama/Music (post secondary education)	33	36	34	-3	-1
Employed	33	35	34	-2	-1
Unemployed	-	1	-	-	-
Unemployment Rate	0.7%	4.0%	1.4%	-3.3%	-0.7%
Other Artists, N.E.C.**	99	98	99	+1	0
Employed	91	90	95	+1	-4
Unemployed	8	8	4	0	+4
Unemployment Rate	7.9%	8.5%	4.3%	-0.6%	+3.6%

*Less than 1,000

**Not Elsewhere Classified

Note: These labor force statistics are based on a sample survey and, consequently, are subject to sampling errors. Relatively small changes in employment in the smaller artist occupations are often not statistically significant. For a more detailed discussion, see Research Division Report #16, Artists Employment and Unemployment: 1971-1980, Appendix B, "Reliability of Current Population Survey (CPS) Statistics." All unemployment rates shown in the Table, except 'All Artists,' were calculated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics using unrounded data.

Source: Current Population Survey 1992-1994
 U.S. Department of Labor,
 Bureau of Labor Statistics

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**Chart 1. Rates of Unemployment for Total Civilian Labor Force, Professional
Specialty Occupations, and All Artist Occupations from 1990-1994**

