



## German History in Documents and Images

Volume 5. Wilhelmine Germany and the First World War, 1890-1918  
Census Figures (1882-1907)

One of the most striking developments in Wilhelmine Germany was the growing importance of the industrial workplace. These census figures show a decline in the number of independent producers and a rise in the number of workers in large-scale production. An increase in the number of "white collar" workers, including clerks and office assistants, can also be seen.

Gainfully Employed Persons and their Family Members by Occupation (in thousands)<sup>7</sup>

Economic sector	Year	Self-employed (a)			Salaried employees <sup>8</sup> (b)			Workers <sup>8</sup> (c)		
		Total	Women	%	Total	Women	%	Total	Women <sup>9</sup>	%
A. Agriculture <sup>1,9</sup>	1882	2,288	277	12.1	67	6	8.8	5,882	2,252	38.3
	1895	2,569	347	13.5	96	18	18.8	5,628	2,388	42.4
	1907	2,501	328	13.1	99	16	16.5	7,283	4,254	58.4
B. Industry <sup>2</sup>	1882	2,201	579	26.3	99	2	2.3	4,096	545	13.3
	1895	2,062	519	25.2	264	9	3.5	5,956	992	16.7
	1907	1,977	477	24.1	686	64	9.3	8,593	1,563	18.2
C. Trade and Commerce <sup>3,8</sup>	1882	702	151	21.5	142	3	2.2	727	144	19.9
	1895	844	203	24.0	262	12	4.6	1,233	365	29.6
	1907	1,012	247	24.4	506	80	15.8	1,960	605	30.9
Total A. to C. <sup>4</sup>	1882	5,191	1,007	19.4	307	11	3.7	10,705	2,941	27.5
	1895	5,474	1,069	19.5	622	39	6.3	12,817	3,745	29.2
	1907	5,490	1,052	19.0	1,291	160	12.4	17,836	6,422	36.0

1 Includes gardening, animal raising, forestry, and fishing.

2 Includes mining, construction, and trades.

3 Includes restaurants and taverns.

4 Domestic workers who live in or outside their employer's household (including those engaged in various types of wage labor). For a definition, see *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs* [*Statistics of the German Reich*], 202 (1907), p. 117. The number of persons engaged in various types of wage labor stood at 235,506 in 1882, at 200,919 in 1895, and at 155,696 in 1907.

5 Including church and municipal administration.

6 Includes individuals living off their own assets, pensions, and subsidies, inmates of various kinds of charitable institutions; school-age children, students, and wards living outside of their families; persons without an occupation and without any occupational information.

7 In the individual occupation categories A, B, and C, gainfully employed persons are divided into (a) self-employed, including executive civil servants and other kinds of business managers (owner, proprietor, co-owner or co-proprietor, lessee, hereditary lessee, master tradesmen, entrepreneur, director, administrator).

(b) non-executive civil servants, and in general the scientifically, technically, or commercially trained administrative and supervisory personnel, as well as accounting and office personnel.

(c) other assistants, apprentices, factory, wage, and day laborers, including family members and domestics working in the trades.

(d) family members without a regular occupation and who do not live in other households. The allocation is done according to the primary occupation and social standing of the gainfully employed person who provides the support and in whose household the individual lives.

8 According to estimates by the present authors [Hohorst, et. al.], the occupational category "worker" included 166,000 sales clerks (of which approx. 32,000 were women) in 1882, 268,868 (81,838 women) in 1895 (according to *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, vol. 111), and 406,385 (173,611 women) in 1907 (according to *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, vol. 203), who, in modern terms, should be counted among salaried employees. – In sector B, foremen were still counted among workers in 1882, after 1895 among salaried employees.

9 Especially in the category Agriculture (A), the "helping family members" – almost entirely women – are incompletely recorded in the statistics of 1882 and 1895. As a result, the surge in the share of female workers from 33.2% to 46.5% of gainfully employed individuals in agriculture between 1895 and 1907 was caused entirely by a change in the definition of "gainful" employment. According to Hoffmann, *Das Wachstum der deutschen Wirtschaft* [*The Growth of the Germany Economy*], pp. 182-84, 210, if one applies the recording methods of 1907, there were already 3,935,000 women employed in agriculture in 1882, and 4,153,000 in 1895. For trade and the restaurant business (part of C), Hoffmann, thanks to a better counting of helping family members, arrives at a much higher figure, especially of female workers. By contrast, deviations from the official statistics are substantially fewer in Industry and Mining (B). If we use the figures of Hoffmann (pp. 205,210), which correct the

official statistics, the share of female workers among the total number of the gainfully employed was: 1882 – 35.91%; 1895 – 34.86%; 1907 – 34.88%.

Source: Gerd Hohorst, Jürgen Kocka, and Gerhard A. Ritter, eds., *Sozialgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch: Materialien zur Statistik des Kaiserreichs 1870-1914* [*Social History Workbook: Materials on Kaiserreich Statistics 1870-1914*]. Munich, 1975, vol. 2, p. 67-68. The statistics were compiled by the editors and drawn from the following sources: (for 1882) *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs* [*Statistics of the German Reich*], new version, vol. 2 (1884) and new version vol. 4, 3 (1884); (for 1895) *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, new version, vol. 111 (1899); and (for 1907) *Statistik des Deutschen Reichs*, vol. 203 (1910).

Translation: Thomas Dunlap