

160,000 Worked Less Than 35 Hours Per Week in 1998

Employment was 633,000

On average, about one-fourth of all employees worked less than 35 hours per week from 1994 to 1998. Approximately one-fifth (110,000) of them are actually considered part-time employees because their standard work week is less than 35 hours. There are eight percent (50,200) of the total who are considered full-time employees because their standard work week is more than 35 hours.

So, why did these people work less than 35 hours? The reasons are reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in their *Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment*.¹ Both part- and full-time employees were reported in only two of the same categories, "other reasons" and "slack work or business conditions."

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Reason	Usually Work Part-time	Five-Year Average
Other family or personal obligations <i>Included such things as a sick child, child's field trip, or working around the house, that led them to only work part-time.</i>		31,400
In school or training		28,200
Other reasons <i>Included such things as seasonal work, medical limitations, and full-time work week being less than 35 hours. The total of 19,000 for 1998 showed no change over that of 1994.</i>		18,800
Retired or had social security limits on their earnings <i>This category showed no change in 1998 from the 12,000 reported in 1994. The only other New England state to register no change was Rhode Island.</i>		12,600
Could only find part-time work <i>In 1998 there was a 50 percent decline in this category from the 10,000 reported in 1994.</i>		7,400
Slack work or business conditions <i>In 1998 there were 5,000 fewer in this category than the 9,000 in 1994. As a percentage of the July 1999 population of 1,201,134, this decrease of 0.42 percent was the largest decrease of the six New England states.</i>		6,200
Childcare problems <i>There were 1,000 fewer workers in this category in 1998 than the 5,000 in 1994.</i>		5,000

Reason	Usually Work Full-time	Five-Year Average
Other reasons		17,000
<i>Included such things as childcare problems, labor dispute, and civic or military duty. The total for 1998 was 3,000 under the 18,000 of 1994.</i>		
<i>Using the five-year average from 1994 to 1998 and excluding the "other reasons" category for persons working 1 to 34 hours, the most cited reason for working less than full-time hours by people who usually work full-time was taking a:</i>		
Vacation or personal day.		16,800
<i>Using the five-year average from 1994 to 1998 and excluding the "other reasons" category for persons working 1 to 34 hours, the second most given reason for not being at</i>		
<i>work over 34 hours was taking a day off for a:</i>		
Holiday, whether legal or religious.		9,000
Slack work or business conditions		4,200
<i>In 1998 there were 2,000 fewer in this category than the 5,000 in 1994. As a percentage of July 1999 population, this was a decrease of 0.17 percent tying Vermont with the second largest decrease of the six New England states (Rhode Island-0.20 percent).</i>		
Weather related curtailments		3,200

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In 1998 the number of persons working 1 to 34 hours because of a holiday, legal or religious, was a sizeable 22,000. This is a substantial increase over the 7,000 reported in 1994. This spike is likely explained by the calendar cycle where additional holidays fall within the reporting period. All other states also experienced this same type of jump. As a percentage of July 1999 population, New Hampshire's total increased by 1.25 percent.

All other New England states increased by less with the exception of Massachusetts, which matched our increase as a percentage of population.

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¹ United States Department of Labor. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Geographic Profile of Employment and Unemployment. 1994-1998, published 1995-1999.
