

AN ANALYSIS OF THE LABOR FORCE OF THE
LINCOLN COUNTY AREA IN CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA

A SUMMARY REPORT PRESENTED TO

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and

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Introduction

Sponsored by the Lincoln County Industrial Authority and the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, this report is the latest in a series of local labor force studies in Oklahoma.

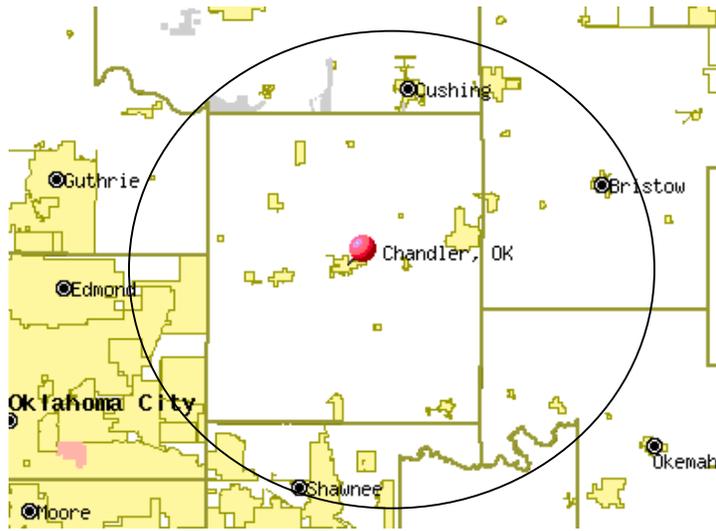
The report examines the availability of labor in Lincoln County and parts of Payne County, Creek County, Oklahoma County, and Pottawatomie County located in central Oklahoma. These counties comprise the 'labor market area' referred to in this report.

The data contained in this report were collected by telephone from randomly selected adults in the fall of 2001. The results are based on 943 interviews of persons 18 years old or older who reside in areas served by the telephone prefixes for localities in the areas listed above. The number of interviews completed by county is shown in the Appendix. Results are subject to a sampling error of +/- 3.2 percentage points with a confidence level of 95 percent.

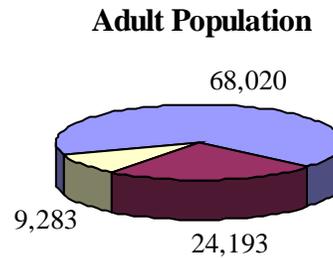
REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- A total of 15,261 workers are either actively looking for other work or are willing to change jobs for the right opportunity.
- Of these workers 9,322 are Underemployed.
- In addition to the Underemployed, 5,939 workers have looked for other work during the previous three months.
- The Underemployed exhibit a variety of occupations and skills.
- About 30.3 percent of Underemployed workers hold at least a bachelor's degree.
- The typical Underemployed worker is willing to change jobs for an increase in pay of 10% to 15%.
- A job that pays \$10 an hour is viewed as desirable by 4,647 Underemployed and 3,001 workers looking for other work.

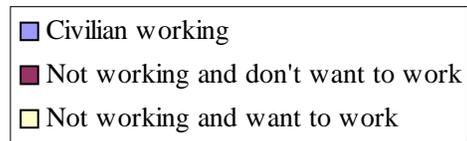
Labor Market Area



Of the 101,496 adults who reside in the labor market area, 68,020 are employed. Approximately 9 percent live in Creek County, 23 percent in Lincoln County, 24 percent in Oklahoma County, 12 percent in Payne County, and 32 percent in Pottawatomie County.



As is the case in any labor market area, a significant number of adults do not work outside the home including retirees,



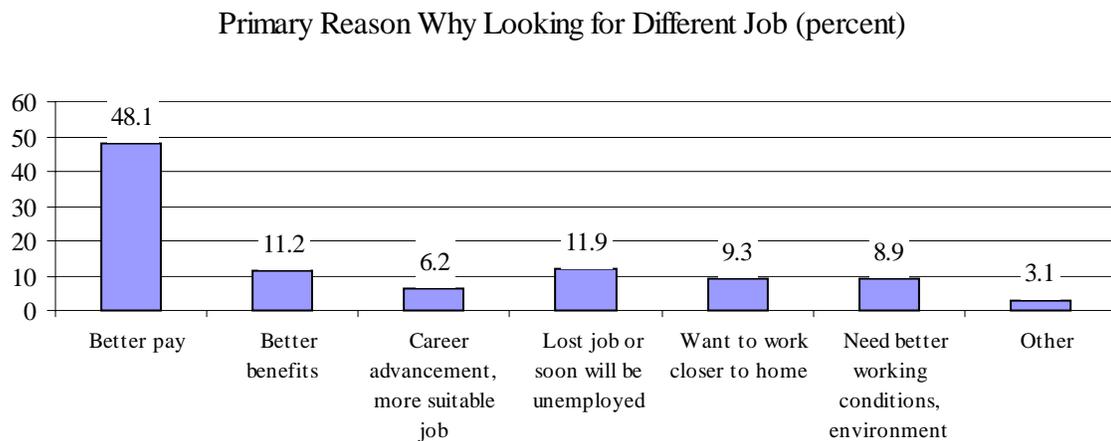
students, homemakers, the disabled, and the unemployed. Approximately 33,476 adults are presently not working. Most (24,193) do not desire to work

Persons Not Working			
<u>Reason Not Working</u>	<u>Want to Work</u>	<u>Don't Want to Work</u>	<u>Total</u>
Retired	3,409	13,730	17,139
Disabled or unable to work	298	3,268	3,566
Don't work outside the home	1,083	3,766	4,850
Student	1,263	2,260	3,523
Family responsibilities	378	329	708
Just moved into area	64	0	64
Laid off, lost job	2,735	190	2,925
Don't have reliable transportation	0	0	0
Other	52	650	702
Total	9,283	24,193	33,476

citing as reasons retirement, inability to work, or a preference not to work outside the home (table). A smaller number of adults (9,283) want to work; this group consists primarily of persons who have recently lost their jobs, students, persons who want to go back to work, and homemakers who are looking for work outside the home. Only a small portion of those who want to work could be classified as unemployed. Using the U.S. Department of Labor definition, a person is unemployed if he or she is without work and engages actively in job-searching activities. Using this definition, approximately 4.3 percent of the labor force in Lincoln County was unemployed on average during the fall of 2001, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Actively Looking for a Different Job

Approximately 5,939 workers, 8.7 percent of those working in civilian jobs, took actions in the previous three months to find a new job. Better pay was the primary reason for looking for a different job for most workers while probable unemployment and better benefits were mentioned next most often.



Education

The percentage of workers with at least a Bachelor's degree is below the Oklahoma state average (table). More workers in the labor market area have completed at least some college, compared with state averages.

Highest Level of Education of Working Persons 18 Years Old or Older (percent)		
	Labor Market	
<u>Level of Education</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>State</u>
Less than high school	5.9	10.8
High school	36.6	37.0
Some college	29.4	20.1
Associate degree	4.9	6.5
Bachelors degree	15.0	16.2
Postgraduate degree	7.6	9.4
Bachelors degree or higher	22.6	25.7
Note: State averages are compiled from the Current Population Survey conducted in March 1999 by the U.S. Census Bureau		

Household Mobility

Many households are very mobile, moving from one residence to another after a stay of only a few years. Among households in this study, 19.8 percent lived in a different residence in the same county, 11.4 percent lived in a different county in Oklahoma, and 7.6 percent lived in a different state. In all, 39.9 percent lived in a different house or apartment five years ago. Not surprisingly, Job Shifters are the most mobile of households: 27.3 percent lived in a different county or different state five years ago compared with 19.2 percent for the Underemployed and 17.9 percent for Job Keepers.

Commuting Patterns

Forty-seven percent of workers who live in Lincoln County commute to jobs in other counties, primarily Oklahoma County (3,037 commuters) and Pottawatomie County (1,328 commuters). Among workers who live in the Shawnee area of Pottawatomie County, 10,024 commute to jobs located in Oklahoma County. Interestingly, approximately 1,800 workers from the study area commute to jobs in Tulsa County. The vast majority of workers who reside in Payne County and Oklahoma County are employed in the county of residence.

Commuting Patterns for Residents of the Labor Force Area					
<u>Employed in:</u> (county)	<u>Resides in (county):</u>				
	<u>Creek</u>	<u>Lincoln</u>	<u>Oklahoma</u>	<u>Payne</u>	<u>Pottawatomie</u>
Cleveland		43	464		
Creek	4,356	126		86	
Lincoln		7,782	119	138	589
Logan			234		
Mayes	129	41			
Noble				224	
Okfuskee	129	43			
Oklahoma		3,037	14,311	86	10,024
Okmulgee	129				
Payne	85	716		7,247	
Pottawatomie		1,328	245		9,334
Seminole		93			
Tulsa	1,362	305		168	
Other Oklahoma	85	581	1,603	415	1,042
Various (travels)		498		189	374
Unknown		177		86	
Total	6,275	14,770	16,974	8,638	21,363
Employed in Home County					
Number	4,356	7,782	14,311	7,247	9,334
Percent	69.4%	52.7%	84.3%	83.9%	43.7%

Type of Employment

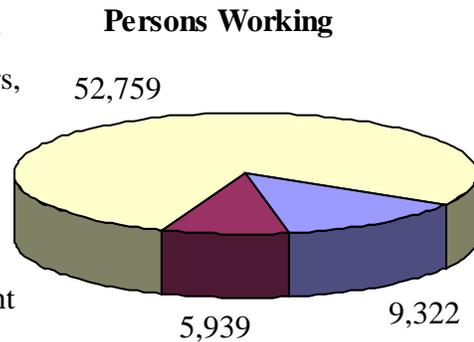
Eighty-one percent of civilian workers have full-time, permanent jobs. A significant proportion of civilian workers have part-time jobs, about two of every thirteen. About 20 percent of part-time workers would like to work full-time. Lack of full-time work, health problems, retirement, child care obligations, and school are given as reasons why some are working part-time and not full-time (table).

Type of Employment	
Full-time	
Permanent	55,410
Temporary	1,920
Unknown	94
Part-time	
Permanent	6,804
Temporary	2,203
Unknown	1,588
Total	68,020

Reasons for Working Part-time (percent)	
Could only find part-time work	6.2
Retired / Social Security limit on earnings	1.8
Child care obligations /problems	6.5
Other family / personal obligations	8.1
School / training	3.4
Health medical limitations	32.4
Slack work / business conditions	17.5
Other	1.0

Availability of Labor

This study identified 15,261 workers who are readily available for other work, including workers who have looked for other work during the past three months (Job Shifters), and workers who are Underemployed. In addition to these two types of workers, the study identified workers who are neither Underemployed nor looking for other work (Job Keepers), and persons who are not working but want to work (Job Seekers).



■ Underemployed
 ■ Looking for other work
 ■ Rest of employed

Job Shifters

Approximately 5,939 workers in the labor market area looked for other work during the previous three months. Most engaged in what the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics refers to as active job-search methods, including contacting employers and employment agencies, sending out resumes and completing employment applications, and answering help wanted ads (table).

Jobsearch Methods Used by Workers Looking for Other Work	Number of <u>Workers</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<i>Active Jobsearch Methods</i>		
Contacted employer directly / interview	1,484	25.0
Contacted public employment agency	810	13.6
Contacted private employment agency	230	3.9
Contacted friends or relatives	1,049	17.7
Contacted school / university employment center	743	12.5
Sent out resumés / filled out applications	2,739	46.1
Checked union / professional registers	-	0.0
Placed or answered ads	923	15.5
<i>Passive Jobsearch Methods</i>		
Looked at want ads	2,876	48.4
Attended job training programs / courses	41	0.7
At least one <i>active</i> jobsearch method	5,090	87.6
Note: more than one jobsearch method is possible.		

Underemployed

This study estimates that 9,322 workers in the labor market are Underemployed, 13.7 percent of all workers. In order to be classified as Underemployed in this study, all three of the following conditions must be satisfied.

The worker must:

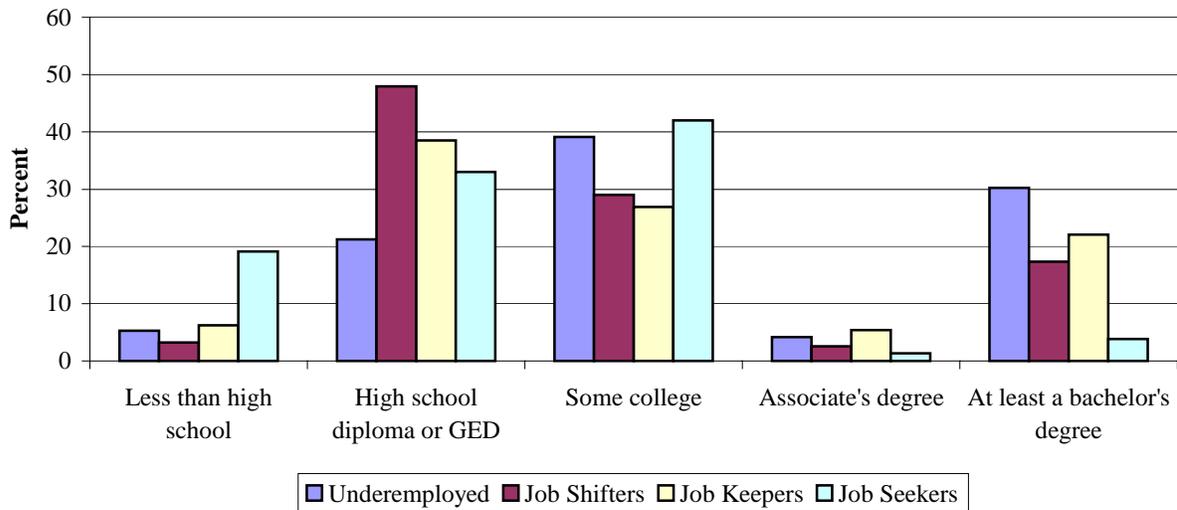
- feel underutilized in present employment,
- possess training or education that is not required by his or her current job, and

- be willing to change jobs in order to better utilize his or her skills and education.

Characteristics of Workers

The Underemployed have the highest percentage of college graduates, about 30 percent, followed by Job Keepers at 22.0 percent. Job Seekers have the lowest percentage of college graduates.

Workers by Level of Education



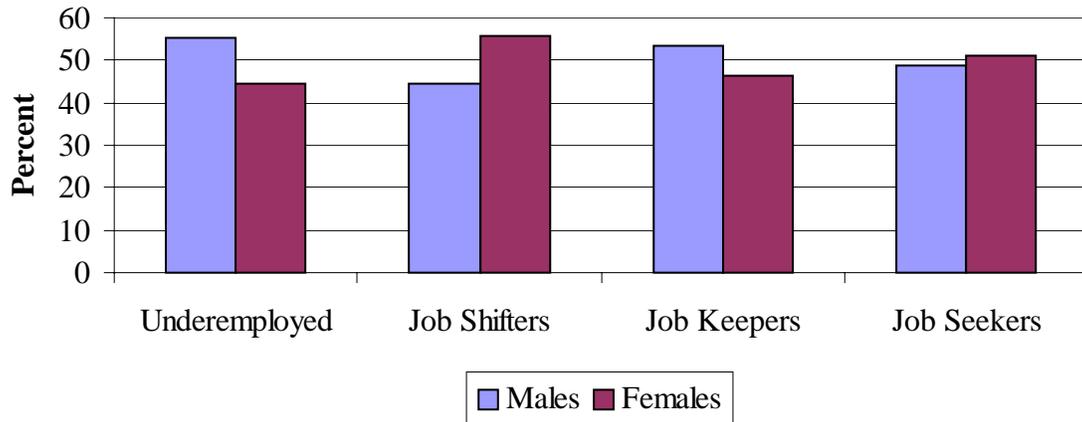
Job Shifters are the youngest, while Job Seekers are the oldest group. Job Keepers have the largest percentage in the 45 to 64 age group.

Civilian Workers by Age Group



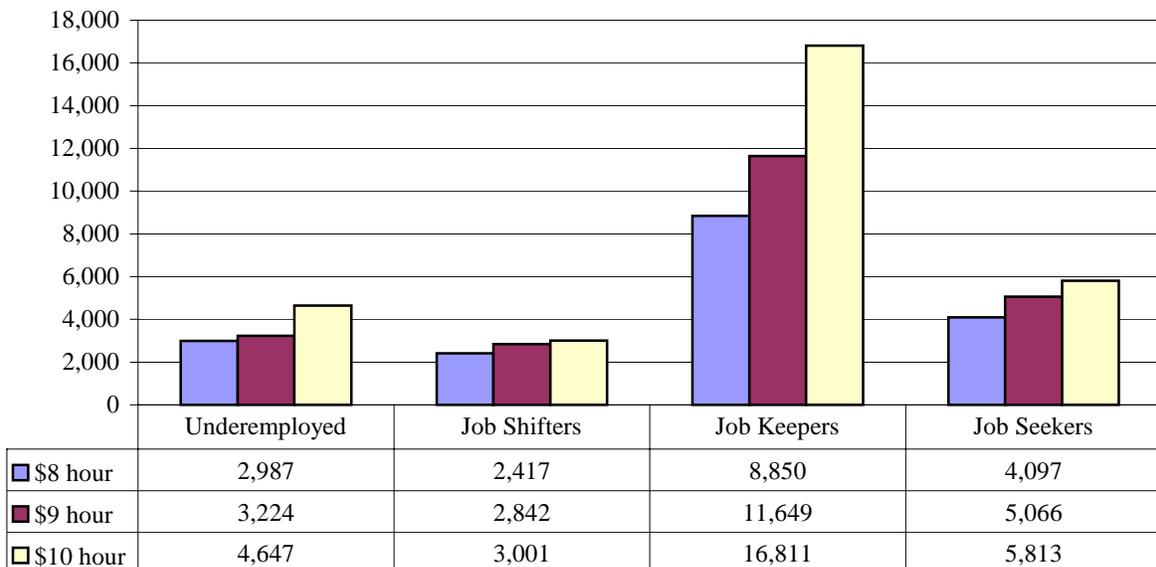
Job Shifters are predominantly female, while a slight majority of the Underemployed and Job Keepers are male.

Workers by Gender



About one in five workers finds a wage of \$8 per hour attractive, including 2,987 Underemployed, 2,417 Job Shifters, and 8,850 Job Keepers, as well as 4,097 Job Seekers. For a wage offer of \$9 per hour the number of available workers increases by about 24 percent, and rises another 37 percent if the wage is \$10 per hour.

Number of Persons Willing to Work by Wage Rate



The attractiveness of a particular wage rate varies greatly with the worker's level of education. For example, only 9.7 percent of workers with Bachelor's degrees find \$8 per hour attractive compared with 19.6 percent of those with two years of college or Associate's degrees and 26.6 percent of those with only a High School diploma (see Table 2 in the Appendix).

The Underemployed and Job Shifters display a variety of occupations and skills, from executives and other professionals to craftsmen and clerks. The largest occupations are precision production, craft, and repair (2,823), executive, administrative and managerial (2,555), and service occupations (2,208).

	Underemployed and Job Shifters by Occupation		
	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Job Shifters</u>	<u>Total</u>
Executive, Administrative, and Managerial	1,272	1,283	2,555
Professional Specialty	1,040	624	1,664
Technicians and Related Support	402	543	944
Sales	952	119	1,071
Administrative Support, Including Clerical	1,328	424	1,751
Service Occupations	1,176	1,032	2,208
Farming, Forestry, and Fishing	86	-	86
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair	1,741	1,082	2,823
Machine Operators, Assemblers, and Inspectors	795	408	1,203
Transportation and Material Moving	530	52	582
Other	-	374	374
	9,322	5,939	15,261

Workers with workplace skills that are not being used offer potential recruits for employment opportunities that better use their skills. This study found that 14.6 percent of those with skills not presently in use have computer skills of one type or the other (see Table 5 in the Appendix). Knowledge of word processing was most often mentioned, followed by work on machines and bookkeeping (table).

Workers with Computer Skills (among workers with skills not in use)			
<u>Strongest Computer Skill (percent)</u>	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Job</u>	
		<u>Shifters</u>	<u>Total</u>
Word processing (MS-Word)	1,188	637	1,826
Bookkeeping (Quicken)	52	42	94
Computer assisted design (CAD)	0	0	0
Work on machines, troubleshooting	272	52	324
Computer programming (C, SAS, SPSS)	43	0	43

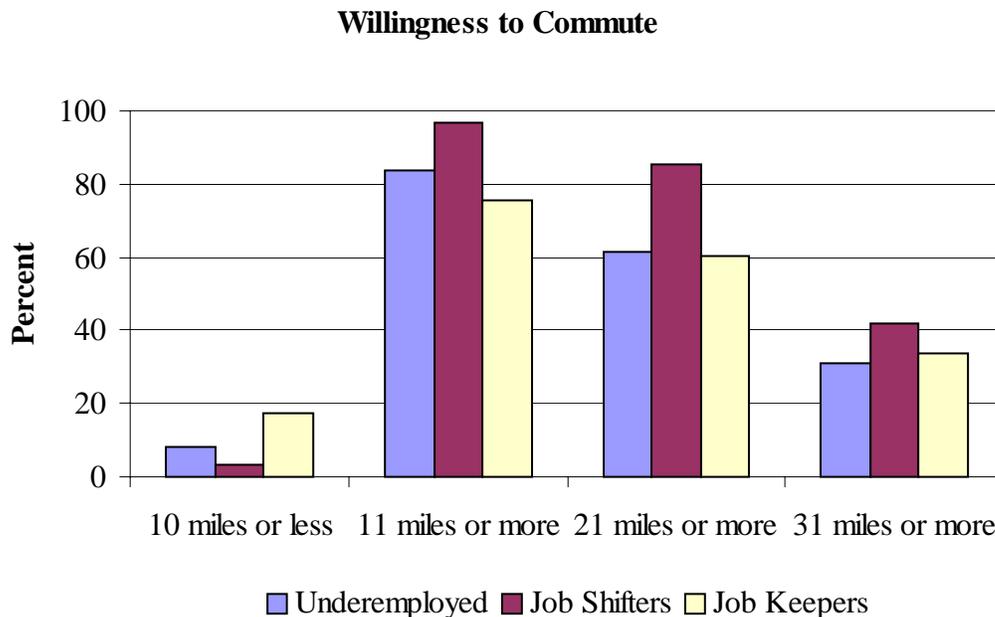
About 58 percent of the Underemployed and Job Shifters are willing to change jobs for an increase in pay of 15 percent or less (table), a potential pool of workers of numbering 8,834. The median Job Keeper, however, would require a raise of more than 20 percent to change jobs. In addition, 30.7 percent of Job Keepers are not interested in changing jobs regardless of the increase in pay.

Workers Willing to Change Jobs by Percent Pay Raise			
<u>Desired raise in pay</u>	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Job</u>	
		<u>Shifters</u>	<u>Keepers</u>
Less than 5%	1,197	1,199	3,122
Between 5% and 10%	546	1,887	8,206
Between 10% and 15%	3,186	820	6,712
Between 15% and 20%	2,257	328	4,098
More than 20%	1,312	764	11,546
Not interested	653	149	15,965
Don't know	43	634	1,429
Refused	-	94	380
Other	128	64	626
Total	9,322	5,939	52,083

About 36 percent of all workers drive at least 21 miles to work. Commuting distances for the Underemployed, Job Shifters, and Job Keepers are similar (table).

	<u>All Workers</u>	<u>Underemployed</u>	<u>Job Shifters</u>	<u>Job Keepers</u>
0 - 5 miles	31.9	34.3	35.2	28.6
6 - 10 miles	10.3	11.6	9.2	10.8
11 - 20 miles	18.7	16.9	14.5	24.8
21 - 30 miles	15.1	15.5	17.1	12.0
30 - 50 miles	15.0	15.6	16.6	14.5
More than 50 miles	6.0	4.6	7.1	6.1

A significant proportion of the Underemployed (31.1 percent) and Job Shifters (41.6 percent) are willing to commute 31 miles or more to a job. About 70 percent of all workers are willing to commute 21 miles or more (graph).



Conclusions

- A significant pool of available labor exists in the labor market area among the Underemployed (9,322 workers) and among workers looking for other jobs, or Job Shifters (5,939 workers).
- Most of the Underemployed and Job Shifters are willing to commute at least 21 miles for a pay increase of 10% to 15%.
- A smaller pool of labor exists among those not working who desire work (Job Seekers). Job Seekers typically are less skilled and not as well educated as most workers.

Appendix: Distribution of Interviews by County

<u>Area</u>	<u>Interviews</u>
Creek County	84
Lincoln County	502
Oklahoma County	170
Payne County	107
Pottawatomie County	80
Total	943

More than 5,600 randomly generated phone numbers were called in order to complete the 943 interviews. Of these phone numbers, approximately 1,798 were not in service. Another 1,063 numbers were not eligible for the study (language barrier, hard of hearing, children's telephone, business or fax). In addition, 1,098 households refused to be interviewed and 385 numbers were never answered after five and six attempts. Of the eligible numbers that were answered, a response rate of 44 percent was achieved.

Completions for each county were weighted by age group, gender, and county population for the data analysis.