

Module 04: The End of Optimism? The Great Depression in Europe

Evidence 8: "20,000,000 Unemployed in World," *Revolutionary Age*, April 7, 1930

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Twenty million unemployed! It is practically impossible to tell exactly how many unemployed workers there are in the world. Even in those countries where the government gets up statistics about unemployment these statistics are extraordinarily confused and biased and hardly reflect the real conditions of the labor market. But from these statistics and others some idea may be obtained of the extent of world unemployment.

As far as absolute numbers is concerned, unemployment is highest in the United States. "Officially" it is reported about three million unemployed. But actually the figure is much higher. . . .It can be safely declared that there are at least six million unemployed in the USA.

Germany takes second place. In January [1930] the number of unemployed receiving relief in Germany amounted to 2,500,000. To this number must be added 100,000 unemployed who receive no relief as well as the huge number of workers who work only a couple of days a week. The total number of German workers involved in the unemployment easily reaches four million.

After Germany comes England. The number of officially registered unemployed is 1,500,000 but of course this is far from the actual number of unemployed. In the past few years hundred of thousands of workers have been stricken off the registry and relief lists because "they did not sincerely look for work." With absolute certainty we can say that the number of unemployed in England reaches two million

Everywhere in Europe—in Italy, in Sweden and Norway, in Rumania and Bulgaria—the number of unemployed grows rapidly. The only exception is France. Because of the favorable economic situation and the low birth-rate there is practically no unemployment in France. Tens of thousands of foreign workers have come to France in the last few years for work. With

the least change in the economic conditions they will be thrown out of work and many more also—and unemployment will hit France too. This is how things stand in Europe.

The other parts of the world have also been hit by the wave of unemployment. . . .Without exaggeration it can be said that the total number of unemployed on a world scale reaches the gigantic figure of twenty million.

Source:

"20,000,000 Unemployed in World," *Revolutionary Age* (7 April 1930), 2.