

Modest Recovery Largely Leaves Women Behind (updated September 2011)¹

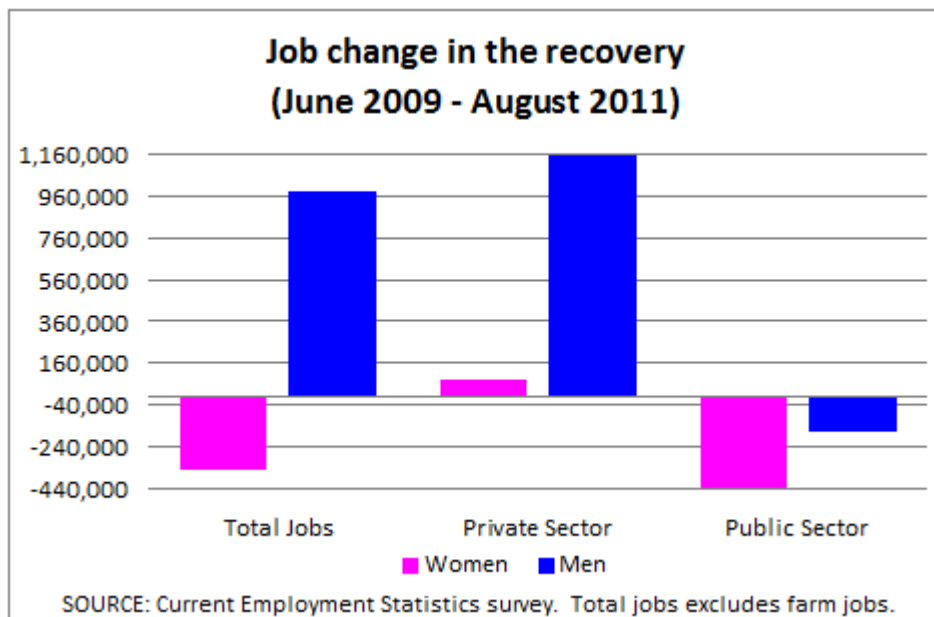
The deep recession that began in December 2007 cost workers nearly 7.5 million jobs before it officially ended in June 2009. Overall job growth during the recovery has been weak; the economy added only 639,000 jobs between June 2009 and August 2011.² Although unemployment remains high and job growth unacceptably slow for both men and women, it is striking that women have actually lost jobs during the recovery.

Key Facts

- During the recovery, women lost 345,000 jobs, while men gained 984,000.
- Over the course of the recovery, women's overall unemployment rate increased from 7.7 percent to 8.0 percent while men's dropped from 9.9 percent to 8.9 percent.
- Women's losses in the recovery have been driven by the loss of public sector jobs – women lost 430,000 public sector jobs during the recovery.

Women lost jobs over the course of the recovery while men made modest gains.

- Men fared worse in the recession (December 2007 – June 2009), suffering more than 70 percent of the job loss. However, the recovery has been tougher on women – between June 2009 and August 2011, women lost 345,000 jobs while men gained 984,000.³
- Heavy job losses in public sector employment have disproportionately affected women and contributed to the dismal employment picture for women throughout the recovery. While women represented just over half (57.2 percent) of the public workforce at the end of the recession, they lost the vast majority (72.3 percent) of the 595,000 jobs cut in this sector between June 2009 and August 2011.⁴
- The situation was also grim for women in the private sector. While the private sector picked up 1.23 million jobs over the course of the recovery, women gained just 1 in 15 of those jobs (85,000 jobs).⁵



Women's unemployment rose during the course of the recovery while men's declined.

- Between June 2009 and August 2011, women's overall unemployment rate increased from 7.7 percent to 8.0 percent while men's overall unemployment rate dropped from 9.9 percent to 8.9 percent.⁶

Unemployment for many vulnerable groups remained high during the recovery.

- Between June 2009 and August 2011 unemployment rates increased for African-American women (11.7 percent to 13.4 percent) and African-American men (16.3 percent to 18.0 percent) and single mothers (11.7 percent to 11.9 percent).⁷
- Both Hispanic men's and women's unemployment rates declined during the recovery from 10.7 percent to 8.9 percent and 11.5 percent to 11.4 percent respectively.⁸

Policy makers should spend their time addressing persistently high unemployment rates as opposed to pursuing deep cuts that could jeopardize the fragile recovery, especially for women.

¹ Revisions to the January, February, March, April, May, June, July, and August versions of this analysis reflect changes in the employment picture between December 2010 & January 2011 as well as revisions by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to employment statistics affecting data from January 2006 forward.

² NWLC calculations from U.S. Dep't of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Statistics from the Current Employment Statistics Survey, Table B-5: Employment of women on nonfarm payrolls by industry sector, seasonally adjusted, available at <http://bls.gov/ces/cesbtabs.htm> (last visited Sept. 2, 2011).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ NWLC calculations from U.S. Dep't of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey, Table A-1: Employment status of the civilian population by sex and age, seasonally adjusted, available at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm> (last visited Sept. 2, 2011). (BLS "Current Population Survey")

⁷ NWLC calculations from BLS "Current Population Survey," Table A-2: Employment status of the civilian population by race, sex and age, seasonally adjusted, available at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm> (last visited Sept. 2, 2011) and Table A-10 Selected Unemployment Indicators, seasonally adjusted, available at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm> (last visited Sept. 2, 2011). Data on single mother unemployment are not seasonally adjusted.

⁸ NWLC calculations from BLS "Current Population Survey," Table A-3: Employment status of the Hispanic or Latino population by sex and age, not seasonally adjusted, available at <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm> (last visited Sept. 2, 2011).