

Modest Recovery Largely Leaves Women Behind

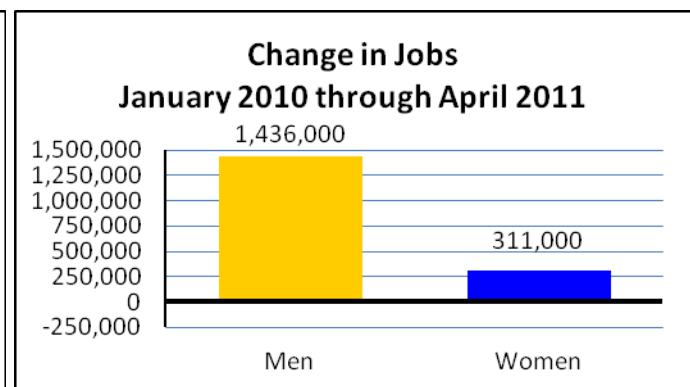
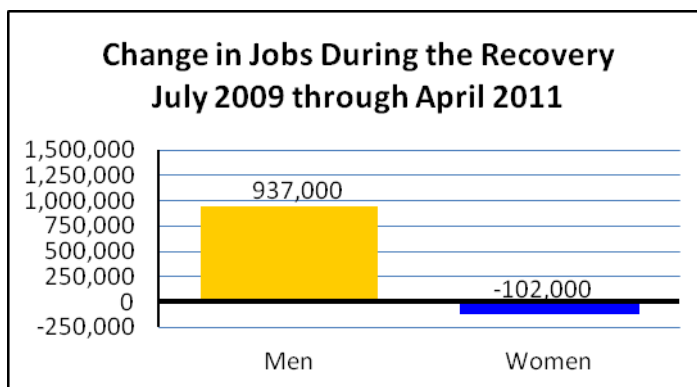
(updated May 2011)¹

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 835,000 jobs between July 2009 and April 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 102,000 jobs, while men gained 937,000, a gap of 1.039 million jobs.
- Over the course of the recovery, women's overall unemployment rate increased from 7.7 percent to 7.9 percent while men's dropped from 9.8 percent to 8.8 percent.
- While women lost nearly 3 out of every 10 jobs lost during the recession, they filled fewer than 2 in 10 jobs since growth picked up beginning in 2010.

- Between July 2009 and April 2011, women lost 102,000 jobs while men gained 937,000, a difference of 1.039 million jobs.³
- The first six months of the recovery (July – December 2009) saw continued job loss for both men and women, but since the pace of the recovery began to quicken in early 2010, women largely have been left behind. Of the 1.747 million jobs added to the economy between January 2010 and April 2011, only 311,000—just 17.8 percent—went to women.⁴
- While women lost nearly three in every ten jobs cut over the course of the recession (December 2007 - June 2009), they have filled fewer than two in every ten since job growth picked up beginning in 2010.⁵



Source: U.S. Dep't of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey

- 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 (57.0 percent) of the public workforce at the end of the recession, they lost the vast majority (74.1 percent) of the 378,000 jobs cut in this sector between July 2009 and April 2011.⁶

- The situation was also grim in the private sector. While the private sector picked up over 1.2 million jobs over the course of the recovery, women gained just 178,000 (14.7 percent) jobs.⁷
- **Women’s unemployment rose during the course of the recovery while men’s declined.**
 - Between July 2009 and April 2011, women’s overall unemployment rate increased from 7.7 percent to 7.9 percent while men’s overall unemployment rate dropped from 9.8 percent to 8.8 percent.⁸
- **Unemployment for many vulnerable groups remained high during the recovery.**
 - Between July 2009 and April 2011 unemployment rates increased for African-American women (11.8 percent to 13.4 percent), and African-American men (16.2 percent to 17.0 percent).⁹
 - The unemployment rate for single mothers decreased over the course of the recovery, from 12.6 percent to 11.7 percent. Additionally, both Hispanic men’s and women’s unemployment rates declined during the recovery from 11.2 percent to 10.3 percent and 11.8 percent to 11.4 percent respectively, but neither approached the drop that white men experienced (from 9.1 percent to 7.9 percent).¹⁰

Policymakers 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 and April 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 May 6, 2011).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ 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 May 6, 2011). (BLS “Current Population Survey”)

⁹ 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 May 6, 2011), 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 May 6, 2011), and Table A-10 Selected Unemployment Indicators, seasonally adjusted, *available at* <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm> (last visited May 6, 2011). For white women unemployment went up slightly from 6.9 percent in July 2009 to 7.0 percent in April 2011. Data are unavailable from BLS for other racial or ethnic groups broken by gender.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*