



Job Growth During the Recovery

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September 30, 2010

Congressional Research Service

7-5700

www.crs.gov

R41434

Summary

Congress in recent years passed a number of bills intended in part to jump-start a recovery in the labor market from the recession that began in December 2007. Policymakers are interested in how employment has responded to stimulus measures to determine how effective the legislation has been and to decide whether additional job creation legislation is warranted.

One way to assess the extent of recovery in the labor market since the passage of stimulus legislation is to compare employment data from the end of the recession in June 2009 with more recent data gathered in surveys that the government regularly conducts. Accordingly, to determine if and how much job growth has occurred thus far in the recovery, this report examines the change in the number of jobs over the June 2009-August 2010 period. (August 2010 was the latest month for which data were available at the time of the report's preparation.) To provide historical context, the results are compared with job growth at a comparable point (14 months) from the start of the prior 10 recoveries of the postwar period. Data for August 2010 are compared with December 2007, as well, to discern how close the number of jobs has come to the level at the recession's onset, and to provide historical context, the results are compared with job growth at a comparable point (32 months) from the start of the prior 10 recessions. Lastly, employment data by job and individual characteristics in December 2007, June 2009, and August 2010 are analyzed to ascertain how different sectors and demographic groups have fared in recent years.

A "jobless recovery" has been underway since the recession's end in June 2009. That is to say, the number of jobs at private and public sector employers generally decreased between June 2009 and August 2010. After falling in the second half of 2009, overall employment rose through May 2010 partly as a result of the Census Bureau hiring workers temporarily to help conduct the decennial count of the population. Total employment subsequently resumed declining, driven in part by state and local governments laying off workers in an effort to address budget shortfalls. In contrast, after decreasing for six months from the recession's end, the number of jobs in the private sector (i.e., excluding federal, state and local government) began to steadily increase in January 2010. Despite this recent job growth, there were fewer jobs at private sector firms in August 2010 than at the recession's end.

Employment rebounded faster during almost all of the prior 10 recoveries of the postwar period. At a comparable point in the business cycle (14 months into the current recovery as of August 2010), the number of jobs overall and in the private sector exceeded their levels at the start of eight earlier recoveries. The exceptions are the two recoveries that immediately preceded the current one (i.e., the recoveries that followed the 1990-1991 and 2001 recessions).

Two of the industry groups hardest hit by the recession—construction and manufacturing—have continued to lose jobs during the recovery, although at a lower rate than during the recession. Some of the states with the most depressed housing markets as well as manufacturing-dependent states have experienced relatively large decreases in total employment (Arizona, California, Florida, Indiana, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio). Smaller job losses among women than men during the recession partly are explained by construction and manufacturing having predominantly male workforces. Larger job losses among women than men during the recovery partly are explained by women's substantial presence in the occupations (e.g., teachers) that account for much of local and state government workforces.

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Congress in recent years passed a number of bills intended in part to jump-start a recovery in the labor market from the recession that began in December 2007. One of the bills, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-5), requires the Council of Economic Advisers and executive branch agencies to estimate the number of jobs dependent on some or all of the act's provisions. The methodologies they have used to estimate the number of jobs created or maintained have been criticized, however.¹ Moreover, ARRA is not the only job creation bill enacted into law.² Congress did not include a requirement to estimate job growth associated with the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment (HIRE) Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-147), for example. Policymakers nonetheless remain interested in the labor market's response to these measures to help Members decide how well the legislation is working and whether additional job creation legislation is warranted.

One way to assess the extent of recovery in the labor market since the passage of stimulus legislation is to compare employment data from the recession's end (i.e., the trough of the business cycle) in June 2009 with more recent data gathered in surveys that the government regularly conducts. Accordingly, to determine the extent of job growth thus far in the recovery, this report examines the number of jobs from the trough of the business cycle to August 2010 (the latest month for which data were available at the time of the report's preparation). To provide historical context, the results are compared with job growth at a comparable point (14 months) from the start of the prior 10 recoveries of the postwar period. Data for August 2010 are compared with December 2007, as well, to discern how close the number of jobs has come to its level at the recession's onset (i.e., the peak of the business cycle), and to provide historical context, the results are compared with job growth at a comparable point (32 months) from the start of the prior 10 recessions. Lastly, seasonally adjusted employment data that are available by job and individual characteristics in December 2007, June 2009, and August 2010 are analyzed to ascertain how different sectors and demographic groups have fared in recent years.

Job Growth Overall and in the Private Sector

The Business Cycle Dating Committee at the National Bureau of Economic Research announced that the 11th recession of the postwar period ended in June 2009, but job growth typically does not commence until a recovery has been underway for some time. The usual length of time before an upward trend in employment began following the end of the prior 10 recessions was four months. After the end of the two shallow recessions that immediately preceded the 2007-2009 recession, however, sustained job growth across all nonfarm employers did not begin until 12 months into the recovery from the 1990-1991 recession and until 22 months into the recovery from the 2001 recession.³ Initially, some had hoped that the deep 2007-2009 recession would be followed by a strong rebound such as occurred after the severe 1973-1975 and 1981-1982 recessions. But, neither these nor the other U.S. recessions of the postwar period were precipitated by a financial

¹ For information on the methodology utilized to develop job creation estimates related to the ARRA see CRS Report R40080, *Job Loss and Infrastructure Job Creation Spending During the Recession*, by Linda Levine.

² For information on stimulus legislation see CRS Report R41006, *Unemployment: Issues and Policies*, by Jane G. Gravelle, Thomas L. Hungerford, and Marc Labonte.

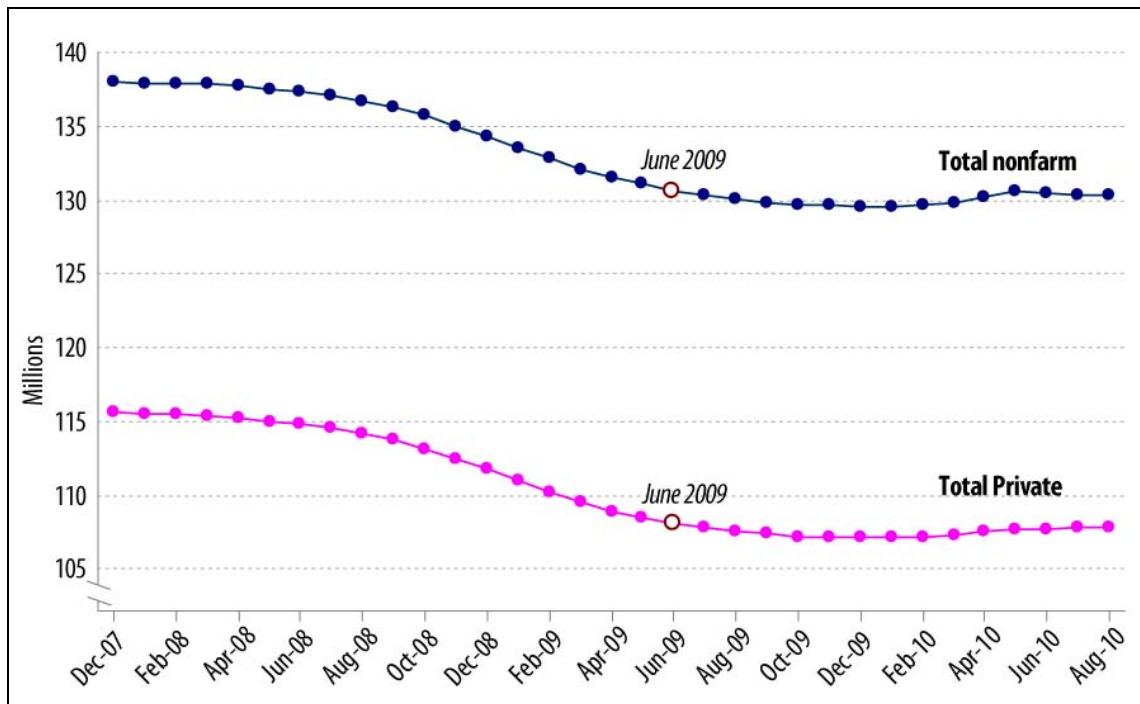
³ CRS Report R40798, *Unemployment and Employment Trends Before and After the End of Recessions*, by Linda Levine.

crisis. The evidence from other countries that experienced recessions caused by financial crises instead suggests a slow recovery for the United States.⁴

At 14 months into the recovery that began in June 2009, sustained job growth in the total nonfarm economy has not yet begun. As shown in **Figure 1**, the number of jobs on employers’ payrolls fell during the second half of 2009. Overall employment then rose through May 2010, before resuming its decline through August. The brief period of job growth earlier in 2010 was fueled in part by the Census Bureau’s usual practice of temporarily hiring workers to help conduct the decennial count of the U.S. population.

Employment in the nonfarm private sector (i.e., excluding federal, state and local government)—which accounts for more than four of every five jobs in the labor market—has exhibited a consistently positive trend during 2010. Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) monthly survey of employers in the nonfarm economy show that the number of jobs in private industry has been steadily increasing since January 2010. Thus far in 2010, then, private sector firms increased the size of their payrolls by almost 750,000 jobs.

Figure 1. Employment Trend During the December 2007-June 2009 Recession and Subsequent Recovery



Source: Created by CRS from establishment survey data of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Employment rebounded faster during almost all of the prior 10 recoveries of the postwar period. At a comparable point in the business cycle (14 months into the current recovery as of August 2010), the number of jobs overall and in the private sector exceeded their levels at the start of eight earlier recoveries. The exceptions are the two recoveries that immediately preceded the

⁴ CRS Report R41332, *Economic Recovery: Sustaining U.S. Economic Growth in a Post-Crisis Economy*, by Craig K. Elwell, pp. 11-12.

current one. At 14 months into the recovery from the 1990-1991 recession, the number of jobs overall exceeded the number at the recovery's outset but the number of private sector jobs did not. At 14 months after the end of the 2001 recession, both total and private sector employment were lower than at the recovery's start—by 0.5% and 0.9%, respectively. Hence the phrase “jobless recovery” came into common usage. It is also being applied to the current recovery because total employment decreased by 0.3%, and private industry employment decreased by 0.2%, between June 2009 and August 2010. (See **Table 1**.) The *less* sluggish pace of the current recovery compared to 14 months into the recovery from the 2001 recession may be related to differences in the stimulus legislation enacted to mitigate the two recessions.⁵

The last two columns of **Table 1** show how much employment must increase from its depressed level in August 2010 to recoup all the jobs lost since the beginning of the latest recession in December 2007. Total nonfarm employment at 32 months from the recession's start was 7.6 million jobs (5.5%) below its pre-recession level. Employment at private sector firms in August 2010 was farther below its level at the recession's outset (7.7 million jobs, 6.7%).

In contrast, total and private sector employment at 32 months from the start of all prior postwar recessions exceeded or more nearly approached their pre-recession levels. All jobs lost during each of eight recessions were fully recouped by 32 months from their outset. Compared to August 2010's 5.5% shortfall from total nonfarm employment in December 2007, the number of jobs was closer to its cyclical peak at 32 months from the start of two recessions: overall employment at 32 months from the beginning of the 1990-1991 recession was 1.1% below its level at the recession's outset; at the same point following the 2001 recession's start, total employment was 1.7% lower. Compared to August 2010's 6.7% shortfall from private sector employment in December 2007, the number of jobs was closer to its cyclical peak at 32 months from the start of the same two recessions: private sector employment at 32 months from the start of the 1990-1991 recession was 1.5% below its level at the recession's outset; at the same point following the 2001 recession's start, it was 2.6% lower.

Some have looked to the 2001 recession and subsequent jobless recovery, when the rate of increase in productivity growth also uncharacteristically rose, to gauge how long it might be before all jobs lost since December 2007 are recouped. The rate of increase in productivity growth usually does not rise during recessions, but it did so during and for some years after the 2001 recession; it has done so again during and after the 2007-2009 recession.⁶ (An increasing productivity growth rate enables businesses to produce the same amount of goods and services with fewer workers.)⁷ After the annual rate of change in nonfarm business productivity had diminished to a decade-low of 0.9% in 2006, it measured 3.5% in 2009. BLS data show the productivity growth rate continued to accelerate in the first and second quarters of 2010 (at annual increases of 6.3% and 3.7%, respectively). Partly due to similarly high rates of increase it took 47 months (until February 2005) from the 2001 recession's start before all job losses were

⁵ The Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-16) was passed to speed the recovery from the 2001 recession by amending the Internal Revenue Code. For information on the stimulus approaches included in legislation to mitigate the effects of the 2007-2009 recession (e.g., income tax relief, infrastructure spending, assistance to state and local governments) see CRS Report R41006, *Unemployment: Issues and Policies*, by Jane G. Gravelle, Thomas L. Hungerford, and Marc Labonte.

⁶ Bob McTeer, “Productivity and the Job Market,” *New York Times*, December 3, 2008, available at <http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/12/03/productivity-and-the-job-market/>.

⁷ For information on productivity growth in the short- and long-run, see CRS Report RL34677, *Productivity Growth: Trends and Prospects*, by Brian W. Cashell.

recouped and 50 months (until May 2005) before private sector job losses were recouped. The greater stimulus measures enacted by Congress to mitigate the impact of the deeper 2007-2009 recession may have contributed to the less sluggish ongoing recovery in the labor market compared to the recovery from the 2001 recession. If these measures also were to mitigate most of the greater job losses incurred during the 2007-2009 recession compared to the 2001 recession, then by early 2012, about four years from the December 2007 onset of the latest recession, employment may return to its pre-recession level. But, as previously mentioned, the 2007-2009 recession was precipitated by a financial crisis, from which a recovery is especially difficult according to the experiences of other countries.

Some within the public policy community also believe the increase since earlier in the decade in offshoring of jobs historically performed in the United States may be a factor in addition to accelerating productivity growth that has sapped the strength of job growth in recent years.⁸ This perspective arguably contributed to Congress's support for a Buy America provision in the ARRA to increase demand for goods manufactured in the United States. Although not expressly intended as an offshoring measure, a tax provision in the HIRE Act encourages firms to maintain and expand their U.S. employment.

⁸ For additional information see CRS Report RL32292, *Offshoring (a.k.a. Offshore Outsourcing) and Job Insecurity Among U.S. Workers*, by Linda Levine, pp. 1-9.

Table I. Employment Change During the 2007-2009 Recession and the Ensuing Recovery by Industry
(numbers in thousands)

Industry	Employment Change								
	Number of Jobs			During the Recession, Dec. 2007-June 2009		During the Recovery, June 2009-Aug. 2010		Since the Recession's Start, Dec. 2007-Aug. 2010	
	Dec. 2007	June 2009	Aug. 2010 ^a	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
All nonfarm industries	137951	130640	130311	-7311	-5.3	-329	-0.3	-7640	-5.5
All private nonfarm industries	115574	108075	107870	-7499	-6.5	-205	-0.2	-7704	-6.7
Goods-producing sector	21956	18503	18031	-3453	-15.7	-472	-2.6	-3925	-17.9
Mining and logging	739	692	741	-47	-6.4	49	7.1	2	0.3
Construction	7491	6029	5611	-1462	-19.5	-418	-6.9	-1880	-25.1
Manufacturing	13726	11782	11679	-1944	-14.2	-103	-0.9	-2047	-14.9
Private service-providing sector	93618	89572	89839	-4046	-4.3	267	0.3	-3779	-4.0
Wholesale trade	6038	5613	5592	-425	-7.0	-21	-0.4	-446	-7.4
Retail trade	15566	14546	14434	-1020	-6.6	-112	-0.8	-1132	-7.3
Transportation and warehousing	4549	4223	4179	-326	-7.2	-44	-1.0	-370	-8.1
Utilities	557	561	553	4	0.7	-8	-1.4	-4	-0.7
Information	3023	2797	2714	-226	-7.5	-83	-3.0	-309	-10.2
Financial activities	8227	7742	7576	-485	-5.9	-166	-2.1	-651	-7.9
Professional and business services	18051	16453	16714	-1598	-8.9	261	1.6	-1337	-7.4
Education and health services	18559	19165	19611	606	3.3	446	2.3	1052	5.7
Leisure and hospitality	13535	13105	13124	-430	-3.2	19	0.1	-411	-3.0
Other services	5514	5367	5343	-147	-2.7	-24	-0.4	-171	-3.1
Government	22377	22565	22441	188	0.8	-124	-0.5	64	0.3

Source: Calculated by CRS from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' establishment survey data.

Notes: The establishment survey is asked of nonfarm employers and covers all employees on their payrolls.

- a. Data for August 2010 are preliminary. The establishment survey revises initial monthly estimates twice (in the immediately succeeding two months) after they have been published to improve the data series by incorporating additional information that was not available at the time of their initial publication.

Job Characteristics

The idea that offshoring may have slowed the pace of U.S. job growth differs from the contention that certain industries' percentages of national employment will not return to their shares at the recession's outset. Some suggest that the latest recession, like the 2001 recession, was accompanied by a substantial reallocation of labor across sectors because many of the jobs lost in recent years may reflect the permanent downsizing of certain industries due to such factors as globalization and technological among other innovations. As a result, workers displaced during the recession may endure unusually long spells of unemployment while they search for new jobs in faster-growing industries. However, no consensus has yet been reached among economists about whether displacement during recent recessions has involved an increase in structural vis-à-vis cyclical unemployment.⁹ The remainder of this section of the report will analyze recent changes in employment by industry.

The two industries that accounted for almost one of every two jobs lost during the latest recession have had markedly different experiences during the recovery. Construction firms cut payrolls by 1.5 million jobs, and manufacturers by 1.9 million jobs, out of a total of 7.3 million nonfarm jobs lost between December 2007 and June 2009. Both industry groups have continued to shed jobs since then, but construction has been recovering much more slowly than manufacturing. Manufacturers lost 130,000 jobs (a 0.9% decrease) during the first 14 months of the recovery, whereas construction lost 418,000 jobs (a 6.9% decrease). As a result, one of every four construction jobs and one of every seven manufacturing jobs at employers in December 2007 did not exist in August 2010. Expressed another way, the construction industry must gain almost 1.9 million jobs and the manufacturing industry over 2.0 million jobs to return to their levels at the recession's outset. (See the last two columns of **Table 1**.)

The bursting of the housing bubble led to those who worked for residential builders and for specialty trade contractors in residential construction to be the hardest-hit groups within the construction industry. Employment in residential building construction fell by 259,000 jobs (28.9%) during the recession and by 64,100 jobs (10.1%) during the recovery thus far, according to BLS data. Similarly, employment at specialty trade contractors in residential construction fell by 551,400 jobs (25.4%) during the recession and by 93,900 jobs (5.8%) during the recovery.

Some of the states with the weakest housing markets have experienced comparatively large cutbacks in employment of the industry's mostly blue-collar work force. In Nevada and Arizona, for example, employment in the construction industry (i.e., residential and nonresidential building construction, heavy and civil engineering construction, and specialty trades contractors) was about halved between December 2007 and August 2010. BLS data by state also show that in California and Florida there were over one-third fewer construction jobs in August 2010 than in December 2007.

Within manufacturing, the problems at General Motors, Chrysler, and motor vehicle parts suppliers were so grave during the recession that the Bush and Obama Administrations chose to provide them with financial assistance.¹⁰ The industry's employment, like that of a few other

⁹ CRS Report R41179, *Long-Term Unemployment and Recessions*, by Gerald Mayer and Linda Levine.

¹⁰ CRS Report R40003, *U.S. Motor Vehicle Industry: Federal Financial Assistance and Restructuring*, coordinated by Bill Canis.

manufacturers (i.e., primary and fabricated metal products, food, plastics and rubber products), has subsequently increased. After employment at motor vehicle and parts manufacturers fell by 326,100 jobs (34.2%) between December 2007 and June 2009, it then rose by 56,100 jobs (9.0%).¹¹ Temporary programs enacted by Congress to increase demand for vehicles (e.g., “cash for clunkers,” P.L. 111-32, enacted in June 2009) likely led automakers and their parts suppliers to subsequently recall from layoff their predominantly blue-collar workforce to rebuild depleted inventories.¹² Nonetheless, one of four jobs at motor vehicle and parts manufacturers when the recession started did not exist 32 months later in August 2010.

Manufacturing-dependent states tend to be especially vulnerable to economic downturns, a time during which consumers and businesses usually postpone buying costly long-lasting products in particular (e.g., household appliances, cars, farm and construction machinery). Manufacturing industries also are sensitive to weakened global demand and impaired access to credit, such as has occurred in recent years. More than one in 10 employees in Indiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Ohio, and Wisconsin worked for durable goods manufacturers in 2006, the last full year before the onset of the recession.¹³ Three of the five states—Michigan, Indiana, and Ohio—recorded among the largest decreases in nonfarm employment during the recession (9.8%, 7.2%, and 6.9%, respectively).¹⁴

A third industry group that incurred many of the recession’s job losses is professional and business services. (See **Table 1.**) More than one-fifth of all jobs lost during the recession occurred at firms that provide professional and business services (e.g., accounting, computer, and other professional-technical services; and administrative support services). Temporary help agencies accounted for one-half of the 1.6 million decrease in employment at professional and business services providers between December 2007 and June 2009.¹⁵ Unlike the two industries hardest hit by the recession—construction and manufacturing—employment in professional and business services grew since the recovery began. The employment rebound at professional and business services providers largely was due to a 358,500 job gain at temporary help agencies, which outweighed losses elsewhere in the industry group. When companies are unsure of a recovery’s robustness they typically prefer to temporarily hire employees from the help industry rather than commit themselves to hiring permanent employees.

Retail trade is another industry group in which a sizeable share of the recession’s job losses occurred. The decrease of over 1 million jobs at such firms as automobile dealers, clothing and accessories stores, department stores, furniture and home furnishings stores, and building material and garden supply stores accounted for 14% of all jobs lost between December 2007 and June 2009. Retail employment continued to contract during the recovery (0.8% or 112,000 jobs), albeit at a fraction of the pace that occurred during the recession (6.6% or 1.0 million jobs). Nonetheless, one of every 14 jobs at retail establishments in December 2007 no longer existed in

¹¹ Calculated by CRS from BLS establishment survey data.

¹² CRS Report R40654, *Accelerated Vehicle Retirement for Fuel Economy: “Cash for Clunkers,”* by Brent D. Yacobucci and Bill Canis.

¹³ Calculated by CRS from BLS establishment survey data.

¹⁴ The four states previously mentioned as having experienced very large decreases in construction jobs because of conditions in their housing markets recorded large decreases in total employment as well. Employment in Nevada was 11.6% lower in June 2009 than in December 2007; in Arizona, 10.0% lower; Florida, 8.9% lower; and in California, 7.3% lower.

¹⁵ Calculated by CRS from BLS establishment survey data.

August 2010. Put differently, retail employment must expand by more than 1.1 million jobs to return to its cyclical peak (see the last two columns of **Table 1**).

Despite the recession having been precipitated by a financial crisis, employment conditions within the financial activities industry group have varied greatly. Almost one of every five job losses in financial activities during the recession and ensuing recovery occurred among real estate agents and other employees of the real estate industry.¹⁶ Employment declined by 86,800 (5.8%) in the real estate industry as the housing market collapsed between December 2007 and June 2009, and by another 31,700 (2.3%) through August 2010 as conditions in the housing market continued to be a drag on the economy. At 32 months into the recovery, the real estate industry had 118,500 (7.9%) fewer jobs than at the recession's outset. In contrast, the number of jobs at securities brokers, securities and commodity contracts brokers and exchanges, and other investment firms, which is linked to non-residential uses of credit, decreased by 6.6% compared to the private sector average of 6.7% between December 2007 and August 2010. The decline in employment has been even milder at commercial banks, savings institutions, and credit unions (3.9%) through August 2010. But job losses at consumer finance providers that do not accept deposits (e.g., credit card issuers, automobile financiers) and at firms that engage in activities related to credit intermediation (e.g., mortgage and nonmortgage loan brokers, check cashing and money order providers, credit card processors) have been quite steep (16.4%).

Government and utilities are the only two industry groups that gained jobs during the recession but lost jobs during the recovery thus far. The increase in government employment during the recession occurred at the federal, state, and local levels. Federal employment was higher in August 2010 than at the recession's end in June 2009, despite the Census Bureau letting go workers in 2010 that it had hired to assist the agency while it conducted the decennial population count.¹⁷ The decrease in government employment overall since the recovery began has occurred in state government, excluding education, and in local government. Congress was motivated by the fiscal problems of state and local governments to include assistance for them in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (P.L. 111-5) enacted in February 2009, and in the Education Jobs and Medicaid Funding bill (P.L. 111-226) enacted in August 2010.

Individual Characteristics

The employment trends of women and men over the course of a business cycle are related in part to their differing employment distributions by industry. From the start of the latest recession in December 2007 until August 2010, women lost jobs at almost half the rate of men (3.4% and 6.1%, respectively). (See **Table 2**.) The gender difference is due largely to men accounting for more than seven out of 10 employees in the recession-wracked construction and manufacturing industries, which continued to shed jobs during the recovery.¹⁸ Although women and men lost jobs throughout the period, women went from losing fewer jobs than men during the recession (1.6 million and 4.5 million, respectively) to losing more jobs than men during the recovery

¹⁶ Calculated by CRS from BLS establishment survey data.

¹⁷ In the *Employment Situation—August 2010*, BLS noted that the number of temporary workers hired for Census 2010 peaked in May 2010 at 564,000. By August, their number had fallen to 82,000.

¹⁸ According to data from the BLS establishment survey, women comprised just 28.7% of employment across all manufacturing industries and just 20.4% of employment in the residential building construction industry in 2006, the last full year before the latest recession began.

(669,000 and 273,000, respectively). In this instance, the relatively greater presence of women in the occupations that populate local governments in particular (e.g., teachers) likely worked against them.¹⁹ As previously discussed, employment in local and state governments, excluding education, decreased during the recovery after having posted gains during the recession.

The oldest and youngest workers have had very different experiences since December 2007. As shown in **Table 2**, persons aged 55 and older enjoyed job growth not only during the recovery but also during the recession. The seniority that usually comes with age appears to have worked to their advantage. Not surprisingly, given the industry distribution of employment discussed above, older women have reported even greater job growth than older men.

In contrast, the employer practice of “last hired, first fired” operated to the disadvantage of the youngest workers. Employment decreased more precipitously among 16- to 19-year-olds than any other age group. One in four jobs held by teenagers at the start of the recession had disappeared by August 2010; this was true for girls and boys alike. Black teens suffered steeper job losses than white teens: employment of black 16- to 19-year-olds dropped 32.6% whereas employment of white teenagers fell 23.0% between December 2007 and August 2010.²⁰

Employment among black workers, regardless of age, has fallen to a greater degree than among white workers. As shown in **Table 2**, employment of black workers was 6.4% less in August 2010 than in December 2007 whereas employment of white workers was 4.5% less. Employment decreased to a greater extent among black than white workers during the recession (5.9% and 4.0%, respectively). When teenagers are excluded and the data for black and white workers aged 20 and older are further disaggregated by gender, adult black men lost jobs at the highest rate during the recession (8.4%) compared with adult white men (5.2%), adult black women (2.7%) and adult white women (1.7%).²¹ Employment of black and white workers aged 16 and older continued to decline during the recovery, but at a much slower rate (0.5%). When teenagers are excluded and the data for black and white workers aged 20 and older are further disaggregated by gender, adult black women lost jobs at a higher rate than adult white women (1.1% and 0.5%, respectively) during the recovery whereas adult black men experienced job growth at a higher rate than adult white men (1.2% and 0.2%, respectively).

Hispanics, who can be of any race, experienced job growth during the recovery after their employment fell at about the average rate for all workers during the recession. (See **Table 2**.) The employment of Hispanic workers is fairly quickly returning to its level at the start of the recession. Some might regard this as surprising because, according to BLS data, one in four workers in the construction industry were of Hispanic origin in 2006, the last full year before the recession’s onset. However, Hispanics also comprised over one in five workers in the accommodation and food services industry in that year. The industry is part of the leisure and hospitality group which, as shown in **Table 1**, was one of only three industry groups in which employment fell during the recession but then rose during the recovery. Additionally, leisure and hospitality experienced among the lowest rates of job loss during the recession.

¹⁹ According to data from the BLS establishment survey, women comprised 59.3% of employment in local government overall and 68.3% of employment in local government’s education function in 2006, the last full year before the latest recession began. Also in that year, women were 51.8% of all state government employees.

²⁰ Calculated by CRS from BLS data from the Current Population Survey.

²¹ Ibid.

The lower a worker's educational attainment, the worse they typically fared between December 2007 and August 2010. As shown in **Table 2**, employment over the 32-month period decreased by 10.2% among workers without a high school diploma, 6.6% among those with a high school diploma, 3.2% among those with some college or an associate degree, and by 0.1% among those with a bachelor's or advanced diploma. The two educational attainment groups that experienced job growth thus far in the recovery are workers with some college or an associate degree and those with a bachelor's or advanced diploma.

Table 2. Employment Change During the 2007-2009 Recession and the Ensuing Recovery by Gender, Age, Race, Ethnicity, and Educational Attainment

(numbers in thousands)

Characteristic	Employment Change								
	Number of Employed Persons ^a			During the Recession, Dec. 2007-June 2009		During the Recovery, June 2009-Aug. 2010		Since the Recession's Start, Dec. 2007-Aug. 2010	
	Dec. 2007	June 2009	Aug. 2010	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>									
Men	78239	73727	73454	-4512	-5.8	-273	-0.4	-4785	-6.1
Women	67934	66311	65642	-1623	-2.4	-669	-1.0	-2292	-3.4
<i>Age</i>									
16-19	5829	4943	4373	-886	-15.2	-570	-11.5	-1456	-25.0
20-24	13722	12745	12838	-977	-7.1	93	0.7	-884	-6.4
25-34	31599	29996	30318	-1603	-5.1	322	1.1	-1281	-4.1
35-44	34072	31706	30584	-2366	-6.9	-1122	-3.5	-3488	-10.2
45-54	34749	33611	33104	-1138	-3.3	-507	-1.5	-1645	-4.7
55 and older	26218	27119	28069	901	3.4	950	3.5	1851	7.1
<i>Race or ethnicity</i>									
White	119914	115102	114470	-4812	-4.0	-632	-0.5	-5444	-4.5
Black	15988	15048	14967	-940	-5.9	-81	-0.5	-1021	-6.4
Hispanic	20465	19609	20002	-856	-4.2	393	2.0	-463	-2.3
<i>Educational attainment</i>									
Less than high school	11317	10449	10165	-868	-7.7	-284	-2.7	-1152	-10.2
High school or equivalent	36787	34719	34373	-2068	-5.6	-346	-1.0	-2414	-6.6
Some college/AA	34969	33786	33850	-1183	-3.4	64	0.2	-1119	-3.2
Bachelor's or advanced degree	43616	43367	43582	-249	-0.6	215	0.5	-34	-0.1

Source: Created by CRS from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' data from the Current Population Survey.

Notes: The survey of households provides data for all workers (including the self-employed, private household workers, and unpaid family workers) in all sectors of the economy (i.e., farm and nonfarm) aged 16 and older, except for educational attainment data which relate to workers aged 25 and older.

a. Data are subject to revision each January based on updated population controls from the Census Bureau. The population controls are used to weight survey sample results to reflect the civilian noninstitutional population.

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