



Job Growth During the Recovery

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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. Members of the 112th Congress are interested in the labor market's response to these measures to help them decide how well the legislation has worked and whether additional job creation as well as retraining legislation may be warranted in light of the pace and composition of job growth since the recession's official end in June 2009.

One way to assess the extent and nature of recovery in the labor market is to compare employment data from the end of the recession 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 between the recovery's start in June 2009 and January 2011. (January 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 during the 10 prior recoveries. Data for January 2011 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. Employment data by job and individual characteristics for December 2007, June 2009, and January 2011 also are analyzed to ascertain how different sectors and demographic groups have fared during the recession and recovery.

A "jobless recovery" prevailed across employers in the private nonfarm sector until March 2010. That is to say, after the latest recession's end in June 2009 the number of jobs generally continued to fall until nine months into the recovery. The recovery was jobless until October 2010, 16 months into the recovery, across all employers. At that point, net job growth began *not* because government employment started to rise but because it fell more slowly while private sector employment continued to grow. By January 2011, the number of jobs in the private sector had surpassed its level at the recovery's start. At the rate that job growth recently has been occurring at private sector employers, however, it likely will take quite a few years to recoup the almost 7.7 million jobs lost during the recession.

In two of the industry groups hardest hit by the recession—construction and manufacturing—employment was lower in January 2011 than in June 2009, when the recovery began. Some of the states with the most depressed housing markets as well as manufacturing-dependent states have experienced relatively large job losses (Arizona, California, Florida, Indiana, Michigan, Nevada, Ohio). Smaller job losses among women than men during the recession are partly explained by construction and manufacturing having predominantly male workforces. Further job losses among women during the recovery compared to a small gain among men are partly explained by women's substantial presence in the occupations (e.g., teachers) that account for much of local and state government workforces. The employment of Hispanic workers is returning fairly quickly to its level at the recession's start, despite the ethnic group's employment concentration in the hard-hit construction industry. Hispanic employment also is concentrated in the leisure and hospitality industry group which, as of January 2011, had recouped over 96% of jobs lost during the recession. Workers with at least a bachelor's degree fared better than less educated workers during the recession and recovery, having regained all their job losses by late 2010.

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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. Members of the 112th Congress nonetheless remain interested in the labor market's response to these measures to help them decide how well the legislation has worked and whether additional job creation as well as retraining legislation may be warranted in light of the pace and composition of job growth since the recession's official end in June 2009. This report provides a snapshot of the current situation in the labor market to better inform policymakers with regard to further assisting groups such as workers laid off from industries that may have permanently downsized employment.

One way to assess the extent and nature of the recovery in the labor market is to compare employment data from the recession's end (i.e., the trough of the business cycle) 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 in June 2009, to January 2011 (the latest month for which data were available at the time of the report's preparation). To provide historical context, the timing and strength of job growth during the current recovery is compared to the prior 10 recoveries. Data for January 2011 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). Lastly, employment data by job and individual characteristics for December 2007, June 2009, and January 2011 also are analyzed to ascertain how different sectors and demographic groups have fared during the recession and recovery.

Slow Job Growth Overall, Led by 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.³ Initially, some had hoped that the deep 2007-2009 recession would not be followed by a "jobless recovery" such as occurred after the two immediately preceding recessions in 1990-1991 and 2001, when employers kept shedding jobs for a year or more after their end. The hope was instead for a quick and strong rebound such as occurred after the two severe recessions of 1973-1975 and 1981-1982. Neither these nor the other U.S. recessions of the postwar period were precipitated by a financial crisis, however. The

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 CRS Report R41578, *Unemployment: Issues in the 112th Congress*, 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.

evidence from other countries that experienced recessions associated with financial crises instead suggests a slow recovery for the United States.⁴

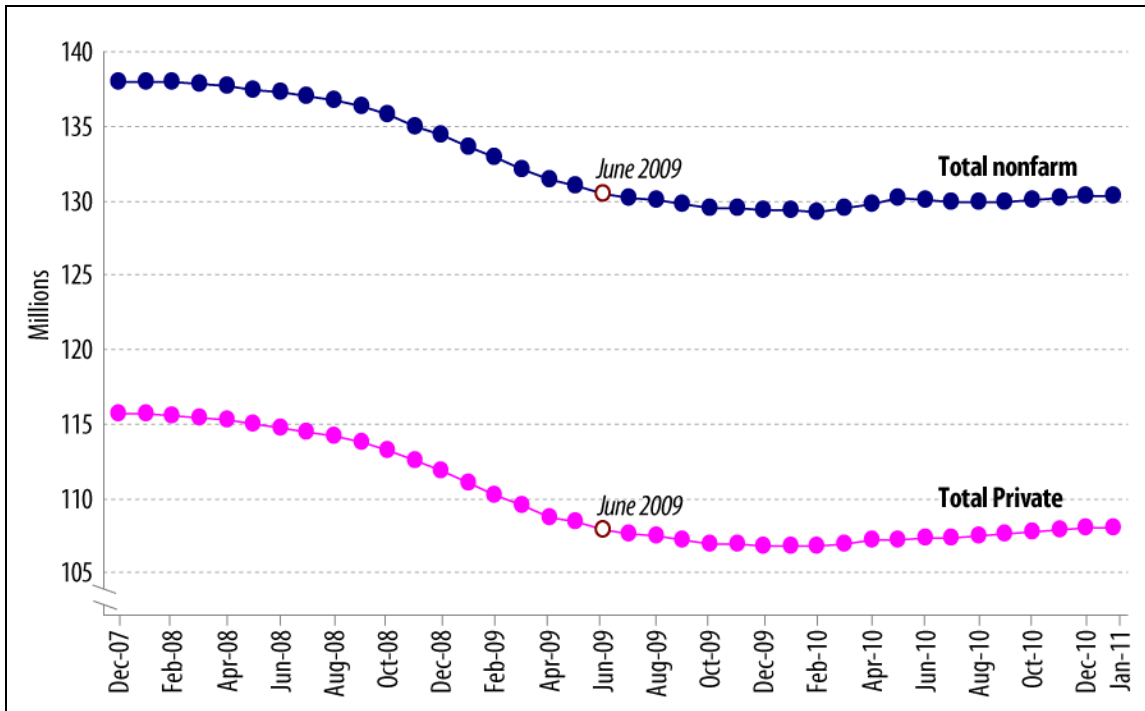
A jobless recovery prevailed across employers in the private nonfarm sector until March 2010. As shown in **Figure 1**, sustained job growth did not begin until nine months from the latest recession's end in June 2009. By January 2011, the number of jobs in the private sector had surpassed its level at the recovery's start. However, at the rate that private sector firms recently have been hiring additional workers, it likely will take quite a few years to recoup the almost 7.7 million jobs lost during the recession.

A jobless recovery prevailed until October 2010, 16 months into the recovery, across all employers. At that point, net job growth began *not* because government employment started to rise but because it fell more slowly while private sector employment continued to grow. As shown in **Figure 1**, the number of jobs on all employers' payrolls fell between June 2009 and March 2010. After briefly rising, it resumed declining through September 2010. The few months of job growth during early the first half of 2010 was fueled in part by the Census Bureau's temporarily hiring workers to help conduct the decennial count of the U.S. population. More recently, declining employment has occurred chiefly at state and local government levels due to budget difficulties. (Additional discussion of employment trends in government and other industries appears later in the report.) Although aggregate employment began to increase after September 2010, only 105,250 net jobs per month were added on average through January 2011—a number which usually is not sufficiently large to have much, if any, effect on the U.S. unemployment rate.⁵

⁴ For additional information see CRS Report R41332, *Economic Recovery: Sustaining U.S. Economic Growth in a Post-Crisis Economy*, by Craig K. Elwell.

⁵ Because the jobs number and the unemployment rate come from two different surveys, any estimate of the net change in jobs sufficient to lower or raise the unemployment rate is necessarily imprecise. In addition, the unemployment rate is affected not only by the number of unemployed workers (the numerator) but also by the number of labor force participants (the denominator). As the number of persons in the labor force is related in part to the size of the working-age population, a commonly cited rule-of-thumb is that in order to keep pace with population growth a net increase in jobs per month of 125,000 is needed to keep the unemployment rate unchanged.

Figure I. 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 more quickly and strongly during almost all of the prior 10 recoveries of the postwar period. The exceptions are the two recoveries that immediately preceded the current one. As noted above, private sector employment began to steadily rise at 9 months into the latest recovery. In contrast, employment in the private sector did not start a sustained increase until 12 months into the recovery from the 1990-1991 recession, and until 21 months into the recovery from the 2001 recession. As shown in column 7 of **Table 1**, employment at private sector firms in January 2011 was 0.1% above its level at the recovery’s start.⁶ In contrast, at a point comparable to January 2011 (19 months from the 2001 recession’s end), job growth had not yet begun.

While total nonfarm employment started to steadily rise earlier (12 months) into the recovery from the 1990-1991 recession compared to the current recovery (16 months), it began to trend upward much later (22 months) into the recovery from the 2001 recession. As shown in column 7 of **Table 1**, overall employment in January 2011 was 0.2% below its level at the recovery’s start.⁷ In contrast, at 19 months after the 2001 recession’s end, job growth across all employers had not yet begun and was 0.8% lower than at the jobless recovery’s outset. The *less* sluggish pace of the current recovery compared to the recovery from the 2001 recession may be partly related to differences in the stimulus legislation enacted to mitigate the two recessions.⁸

⁶ At a point comparable to January 2011 (19 months into the recovery from the 1990-1991 recession), private sector job growth was slightly stronger (0.2%) compared to today.

⁷ At a point comparable to January 2011 (19 months into the recovery from the 1990-1991 recession), job growth across all nonfarm employers was somewhat stronger (0.5%) compared to today.

⁸ 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 (continued...)

The last two columns of **Table 1** show how much employment must increase from its level in January 2011 to recoup all the jobs lost since the beginning of the latest recession in December 2007. Total nonfarm employment in January 2011 was about 7.5 million jobs below its level 37 months earlier at the latest recession's start. There were almost 7.7 million fewer jobs at private sector firms in January 2011 than in December 2007.

In contrast, total and private sector employment at 37 months from the start of all prior postwar recessions exceeded or more nearly approached their pre-recession levels. For example, compared with January 2011's 5.6% shortfall from total nonfarm employment in December 2007, overall employment at 37 months from the beginning of the 2001 recession was 2.0% below its level at the recession's outset. Compared with January 2011's 6.6% shortfall from private sector employment in December 2007, private sector employment at 37 months from the beginning of the 2001 recession was 3.0% below its level at the recession's outset.

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 immediately after the 2007-2009 recession. (An increasing productivity growth rate enables businesses to produce the same amount of goods and services with fewer workers.) 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 and 3.6% in 2010.⁹ 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 recouped and 50 months (until May 2005) before private sector job losses were recouped. While applying this time frame to the start of the latest recession in December 2007 suggests that job losses may be fully recouped by early 2012, the 2007-2009 recession having been precipitated by a financial crisis suggests that returning to the pre-recession level of employment will take longer based on the experiences of other countries.

Some within the public policy community also believe that an increase in offshoring of jobs historically performed in the United States may be an additional factor that has sapped the strength of job growth in recent years. 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 to dampen offshoring, a tax provision in the HIRE Act encourages firms to maintain and expand their U.S. employment as well. However, the widespread nature of worker displacement during the recession and the fact that the jobs of workers in the especially hard hit construction industry do not possess characteristics making them vulnerable to offshoring suggests that offshoring has had a smaller effect than macroeconomic conditions on the pace of recovery.¹⁰

(...continued)

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 R41578, *Unemployment: Issues in the 112th Congress*, by Jane G. Gravelle, Thomas L. Hungerford, and Marc Labonte.

⁹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Productivity and Costs: Fourth Quarter and Annual Averages 2010, Preliminary*, February 3, 2011.

¹⁰ For additional information see CRS Report RL32292, *Offshoring (or Offshore Outsourcing) and Job Loss Among U.S. Workers*, by Linda Levine.

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-Jan. 2011		Since the Recession's Start, Dec. 2007-Jan. 2011	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	Dec. 2007 ^a	June 2009 ^a	Jan. 2011 ^b	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
All nonfarm industries	137983	130493	130265	-7490	-5.4	-228	-0.2	-7718	-5.6
All private nonfarm industries	115606	107936	108030	-7670	-6.6	94	0.1	-7576	-6.6
Goods-producing sector	21967	18417	17804	-3550	-16.2	-613	-3.3	-4163	-19.0
Mining and logging	740	686	732	-54	-7.3	46	6.7	-8	-1.1
Construction	7487	6003	5455	-1484	-19.8	-548	-9.1	-2032	-27.1
Manufacturing	13740	11728	11617	-2012	-14.6	-111	-0.1	-2123	-15.5
Private service-providing sector	93639	89519	90226	-4120	-4.4	707	0.8	-3413	-3.6
Wholesale trade	6038	5580	5490	-458	-7.6	-90	-1.6	-548	-9.1
Retail trade	15581	14533	14471	-1048	-6.7	-62	-0.4	-1110	-7.1
Transportation and warehousing	4556	4223	4229	-333	-7.3	6	0.1	-327	-7.2
Utilities	557	561	549	4	0.7	-12	-2.1	-8	-1.4
Information	3024	2795	2698	-229	-7.6	-97	-3.5	-326	-10.8
Financial activities	8225	7752	7606	-473	-5.8	-146	-1.9	-619	-7.5
Professional and business services	18052	16444	16929	-1608	-8.9	485	2.9	-1123	-6.2
Education and health services	18555	19174	19768	619	3.3	594	3.1	1213	6.5
Leisure and hospitality	13538	13084	13062	-454	-3.4	-22	-0.2	-476	-3.5
Other services	5514	5374	5424	-140	-2.5	50	0.9	-90	-1.6
Government	22377	22557	22235	180	0.8	-322	-1.4	-142	-0.6

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

Notes: The establishment survey is asked of a sample of nonfarm employers and covers wage and salary workers on their payrolls.

- a. Data for December 2007 and June 2009 differ from previously reported statistics for the two months because near the beginning of each year BLS adjusts the establishment survey series to take into account more comprehensive information obtained from unemployment insurance tax records filed by almost all employers with state employment security agencies.
- b. Data for January 2011 are preliminary. Initial monthly estimates are revised twice in the immediately succeeding months to incorporate additional information that was not available at the time of their original publication.

Industry Characteristics of Job Loss and Gain

Saying that offshoring may have slowed the pace of U.S. job growth is not the same as saying 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 as certain industries permanently downsized employment due to 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, economists disagree about whether displacement during recent recessions has involved an increase in structural vis-à-vis cyclical unemployment.¹¹

This section of the report analyzes the recent changes in employment by industry shown in **Table 1**. The two industries that accounted for nearly one of every two jobs lost during the latest recession have had markedly different experiences during the recovery. Construction firms cut payrolls by almost 1.5 million jobs, and manufacturers by 2.0 million jobs, out of a total of 7.5 million nonfarm jobs lost between December 2007 and June 2009. (See column 4 in **Table 1**.) Both industry groups have continued to shed jobs since then, but manufacturing has been recovering much faster than construction. Manufacturers lost 111,000 jobs (a 0.9% decrease) during the first 19 months of the recovery, whereas construction lost 548,000 jobs (a 9.1% decrease). (See columns 6 and 7 in **Table 1**.) As a result, one of every four construction jobs and one of every seven manufacturing jobs at employers in December 2007 no longer existed in January 2011. Expressed another way, the construction and manufacturing industries must each gain at least 2.0 million jobs to return to their employment levels at the recession's outset. (See the last two columns in **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 262,800 jobs (29.4%) during the recession and by 74,600 jobs (11.8%) during the recovery thus far, according to BLS establishment survey data. Similarly, employment at specialty trade contractors in residential construction fell by 566,800 jobs (26.2%) during the recession and by 147,300 jobs (9.2%) 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, employment in the construction industry (i.e., residential and nonresidential building construction, heavy and civil engineering construction, and specialty trades contractors) dropped by over 50% between December 2007 and December 2010 (the latest month for which state data are available). Construction employment in December 2010 was 46% less than at the recession's start in Arizona, 41% less in Florida, and 37% less in California.

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.¹² The industry's employment, like that of some other

¹¹ For more information see CRS Report R41179, *Long-Term Unemployment and Recessions*, by Gerald Mayer and Linda Levine.

¹² For more information see CRS Report R40003, *U.S. Motor Vehicle Industry: Federal Financial Assistance and* (continued...)

manufacturers (e.g., primary and fabricated metal products producers), has subsequently increased. After employment at motor vehicle and parts manufacturers fell by 331,600 jobs (34.7%) between December 2007 and June 2009, it then rose by 71,700 jobs (11.5%).¹³ 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.¹⁴ Nonetheless, more than one in four jobs at motor vehicle and parts manufacturers when the recession started no longer existed 37 months later in January 2011.

Manufacturing-dependent states tend to be especially vulnerable to recessions, 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. 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.¹⁵ 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).¹⁶

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 were 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 2009.¹⁷ Unlike the two industries hardest hit by the recession—construction and manufacturing—employment in professional and business services was greater in January 2011 than in June 2009. The employment rebound at professional and business services providers largely was due to a 441,400 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 many of the recession’s job losses occurred. The decrease of over one 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 (0.4% or 62,000 jobs), as shown in columns 6 and 7 in **Table 1**. But, it did so at a fraction of the pace that occurred during the

(...continued)

Restructuring, coordinated by Bill Canis.

¹³ Calculated by CRS from BLS establishment survey data.

¹⁴ CRS Report R40654, *Accelerated Vehicle Retirement for Fuel Economy: “Cash for Clunkers,”* by Brent D. Yacobucci and Bill Canis.

¹⁵ Calculated by CRS from BLS establishment survey data.

¹⁶ 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, 9.8% lower; Florida, 8.9% lower; and in California, 7.3% lower.

¹⁷ Calculated by CRS from BLS establishment survey data.

recession (6.7% or 1.0 million jobs), as shown in columns 4 and 5 in **Table 1**. Nonetheless, one of every 14 jobs at retail establishments in December 2007 no longer existed in January 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 in **Table 1**).

As the recession was precipitated by a financial crisis whose effects still linger, employment in the financial activities industry group decreased at a fairly rapid rate. About 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.¹⁸ Employment declined by 81,200 (5.8%) in the real estate industry as the housing market collapsed between December 2007 and June 2009, and by another 25,900 (1.8%) through January 2011 as conditions in the housing market continued to be a drag on the economy. At 37 months into the recovery, the real estate industry had 106,800 (7.2%) fewer jobs than at the recession's outset. Employment at securities brokers, securities and commodity contracts brokers and exchanges, and other investment firms fell to a lesser degree (6.0%) between December 2007 and January 2011, as did employment at commercial banks, savings institutions, and credit unions (4.5%). In contrast, consumer finance providers that do not accept deposits (e.g., credit card issuers, automobile financiers) and 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) cut jobs at double-digit rates between December 2007 and January 2011.

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 slightly higher (by 36,000 or 1.3%) in January 2011 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 conducting the decennial population count.¹⁹ 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 budget 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 of Job Loss and Gain

This section analyzes the recent changes in employment by individual characteristics shown in **Table 2**. The employment trends of women and men over the course of a business cycle differ in part due to their employment distributions by industry. From the start of the latest recession in December 2007 until January 2011, women lost jobs to a lesser degree than men (3.6% versus 5.8%, respectively, as shown in column 9, **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.²⁰ As shown in columns 4 and 6 of **Table 2**, women went from losing fewer jobs than men during the recession

¹⁸ Calculated by CRS from BLS establishment survey data.

¹⁹ 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.

²⁰ 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.

(1.7 million and 4.6 million, respectively) to losing additional jobs during the recovery (766,000) compared to gains among men (111,000). 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.²¹ As noted earlier, employment in local government 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 columns 4 through 7 of **Table 2**, persons aged 55 and older enjoyed job growth during the recession and the recovery. 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. About one in four jobs held by teenagers at the start of the recession no longer existed in January 2011, as shown in the last column of **Table 2**. Black teens suffered steeper job losses than white teens: employment of black 16- to 19-year-olds dropped 37.1% whereas employment of white teenagers fell 23.6% between December 2007 and January 2011.²²

A larger share of black compared to white workers, regardless of age, has lost jobs since December 2007. As shown in column 5 of **Table 2**, employment of black workers fell by 5.9% whereas employment of white workers fell by 4.1% during the recession. Employment of white workers continued to decline during the recovery, but at a much slower rate (0.8%), whereas employment of black workers increased slightly (0.1%) as of January 2011. (See column 7 in **Table 2**.)

Hispanics, who can be of any race, experienced job growth during the recovery (2.4%) after their employment fell during the recession (4.1%). (See columns 7 and 5, respectively, in **Table 2**.) The employment of Hispanic workers is returning fairly quickly to its level at the recession’s start, as shown in the last column of **Table 2**. Some might regard this as surprising because, according to BLS data from the Current Population Survey, 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 of January 2011, had recouped more than 96% of the jobs lost during the recession. (See column 9, **Table 1**.)

The lower a worker’s educational attainment, the worse they typically fared between December 2007 and January 2011. As shown in the last column of **Table 2**, employment over the 37-month period decreased by 13.8% among workers without a high school diploma, 7.9% among those with a high school diploma, and 3.1% among those with some college or an associate’s degree. In contrast, employment among workers with a bachelor’s or advanced diploma in January 2011 exceeded its level at the recession’s outset. The only other educational group that experienced job growth during the recovery was workers with some college or an associate degree, but the group’s employment in January 2011 remained below its level at the recession’s outset. (See columns 6 through 9 of **Table 2**.)

²¹ 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.

²² Calculated by CRS from BLS data from the Current Population Survey.

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			During the Recession, Dec. 2007-June 2009		During the Recovery, June 2009-Jan. 2011		Since the Recession's Start, Dec. 2007-Jan. 2011	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
	Dec. 2007	June 2009	Jan. 2011 ^a	#	%	#	%	#	%
<i>Gender</i>									
Men	78307	73689	73800	-4618	-5.9	111	0.2	-4507	-5.8
Women	67965	66289	65523	-1676	-2.5	-766	-1.2	-2442	-3.6
<i>Age</i>									
16-19	5856	4962	4341	-894	-15.3	-621	-12.5	-1515	-25.9
20-24	13741	12743	12941	-998	-7.3	198	1.6	-800	-5.8
25-34	31619	29986	30438	-1633	-5.2	452	1.5	-1181	-3.7
35-44	34076	31684	30373	-2392	-7.0	-1311	-4.1	-3703	-10.9
45-54	34770	33551	32946	-1219	-3.5	-605	-1.8	-1824	-5.2
55 and older	26240	27090	28268	850	3.2	1178	4.3	2028	7.7
<i>Race or ethnicity</i>									
White	119981	115085	114197	-4896	-4.1	-888	-0.8	-5784	-4.8
Black	15993	15036	15048	-957	-6.0	12	0.1	-945	-5.9
Hispanic	20470	19629	20099	-841	-4.1	470	2.4	-371	-1.8
<i>Educational attainment</i>									
Less than high school	11329	10375	9770	-954	-8.4	-605	-5.8	-1559	-13.8
High school or equivalent	36876	34727	33972	-2149	-5.8	-755	-2.2	-2904	-7.9
Some college/AA	34969	33817	33878	-1152	-3.3	61	0.2	-1091	-3.1
Bachelor's or advanced degree	43575	43358	44322	-217	-0.5	964	2.2	747	1.7

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. Each January data are subject to revision based on updated population controls from the Census Bureau that are used to weight survey sample results.

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