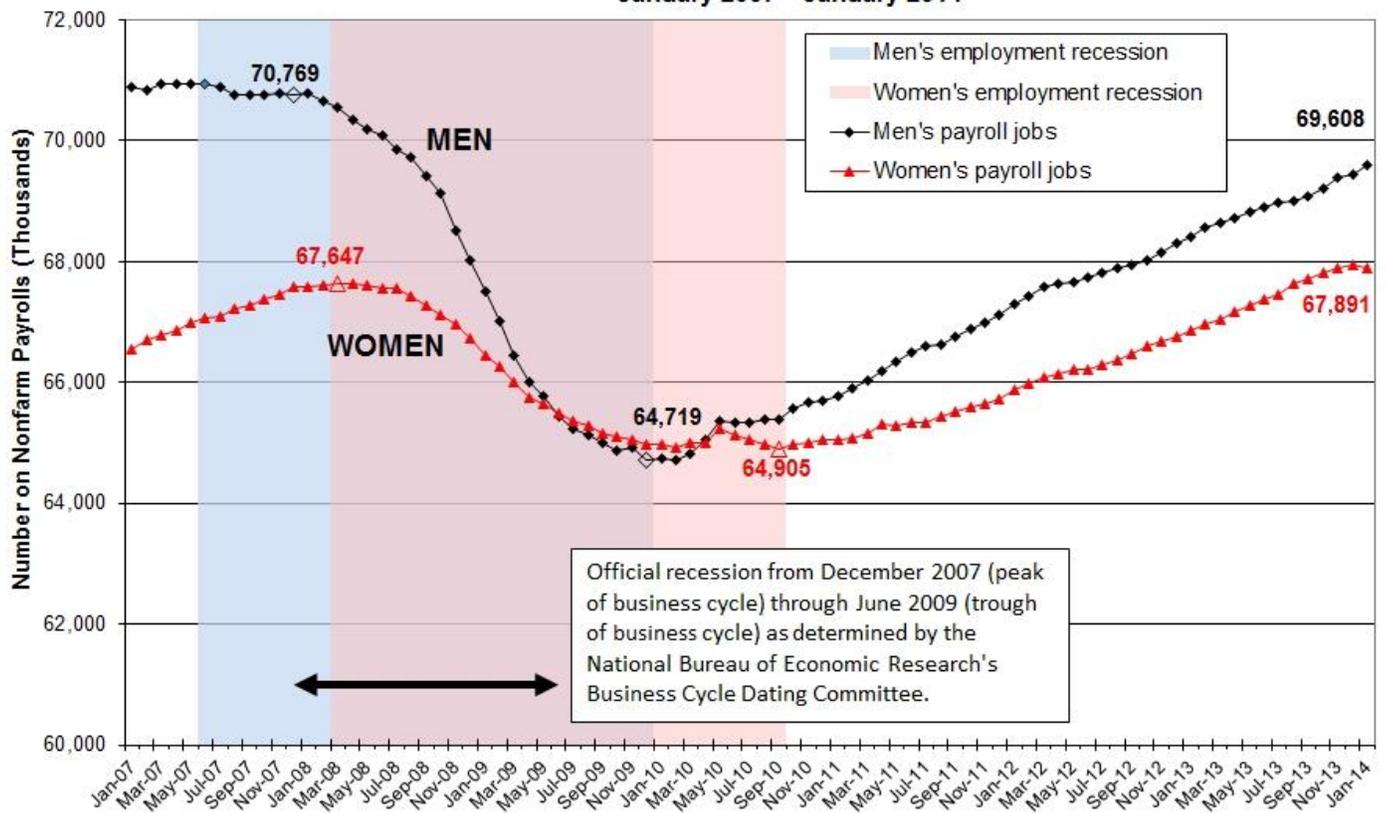


IWPR # Q017

February 2014

## Men Gained 164,000 Jobs in January Women Lost 51,000 Jobs in Mixed Start for 2014

Monthly Number of Women and Men on Payrolls (In Thousands, Seasonally Adjusted),  
January 2007 – January 2014



Source: IWPR analysis of U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics (February 7, 2014)

According to an Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) analysis of the February employment report from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), women lost 51,000 jobs on nonfarm payrolls in January while men gained 164,000 for a net increase of 113,000 jobs in January. In January, women's employment growth was weakest in Government (30,000 jobs lost by women) and Professional and Business Services (14,000 jobs lost by women). Women also lost jobs in Education and Health Services for a second consecutive month (3,000 jobs lost for women in January and 2,000 jobs lost for women in December); this had been a growing sector for women's employment throughout the long recession and recovery.

The February employment report includes annual benchmarking revisions to the establishment payroll data back to January 2009. According to these latest estimates, women held more than half of the jobs on payrolls for a ten month period, from the official end of the recession in June 2009 through March 2010.

Including women's job losses in January, women still hold 12 percent more jobs on payrolls (67.9 million) than at their previous employment peak in March 2008 (67.6 million), indicating they have more than recovered all their jobs lost in the downturn. Men have regained 81 percent (4.9 million) of the jobs they lost between December 2007 (70.8 million) and the trough for men's employment (64.7 million) in December 2009 (6 million jobs lost). The gap between women's and men's employment is 1.7 million jobs in January, substantially less than at the start of the recession (3.2 million jobs in December 2007).

In the last year, from January 2013 to January 2014, of the 2.2 million jobs added to payrolls, 46 percent were filled by women (1,038,000 jobs), and 54 percent were filled by men (1,200,000 jobs). In this time period, women's job gains were strongest in Professional and Business Services (287,000 jobs added for women), Retail Trade (242,000 jobs added for women), Leisure and Hospitality (222,000 jobs added for women), and Education and Health Services (219,000 jobs added for women). In the same one year period, however, women lost 15,000 jobs in Government.

According to the household survey data reported by the BLS, the unemployment rate for women aged 16 and older decreased to 6.4 percent in January from 6.5 percent in December. The unemployment rate for men aged 16 and older remained at 6.8 percent in January and December. Among single mothers (female heads of households), the unemployment rate increased from 8.7 percent in December to 9.1 percent in January, indicating continued difficulty for these women in finding jobs (this series is not seasonally adjusted and can fluctuate due to small sample sizes in the household survey).

The overall labor force participation rate increased 0.2 percentage points from 62.8 percent in December to 63.0 percent in January. Women's labor force participation rate was 57.0 percent in January or 2.4 percentage points lower than the 59.4 percent rate in December 2007. Men's labor force participation rate was 69.3 percent in January or 3.8 percentage points lower than the 73.1 percent rate in December 2007. In a report issued recently (February 4, 2014) the Congressional Budget Office estimated that about half of the decline in total labor force participation is due to the aging of the U.S. population.

As of January, 10.2 million workers remain unemployed and of these 3.6 million (36 percent) have been unemployed for 27 weeks or longer, usually referred to as the long-term unemployed. At the end of 2013, in an unprecedented policy change, the extensions of unemployment insurance that were enacted during the recession and extended while unemployment remained high were allowed to expire by the U.S. Congress. Shierholz (2014, Economic Policy Institute Issue Brief #374) shows that the share of the labor force that is long-term unemployed is *twice* as high compared with the levels when extended unemployment insurance compensation was ended following previous recessions (since 1957). There has been no improvement over the past year in the average (mean) number of weeks spent unemployed and looking for work, 35.4 weeks in January 2013 and January 2014. (The median number of weeks has also remained steady at 16.0 weeks in January 2013 and January 2014.)