

BEYOND THE HEADLINES

At a Glance: Jobs, Workers & the Economy

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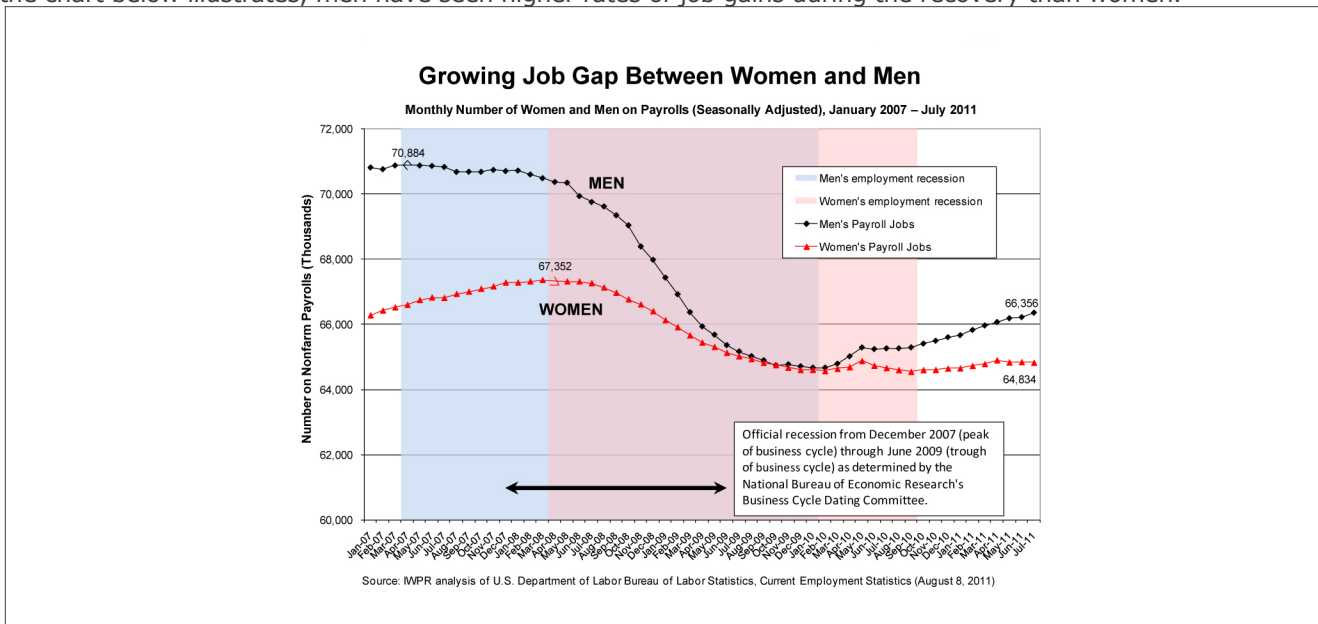
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FOCUS: U.S.

A Gendered Recession and Recovery

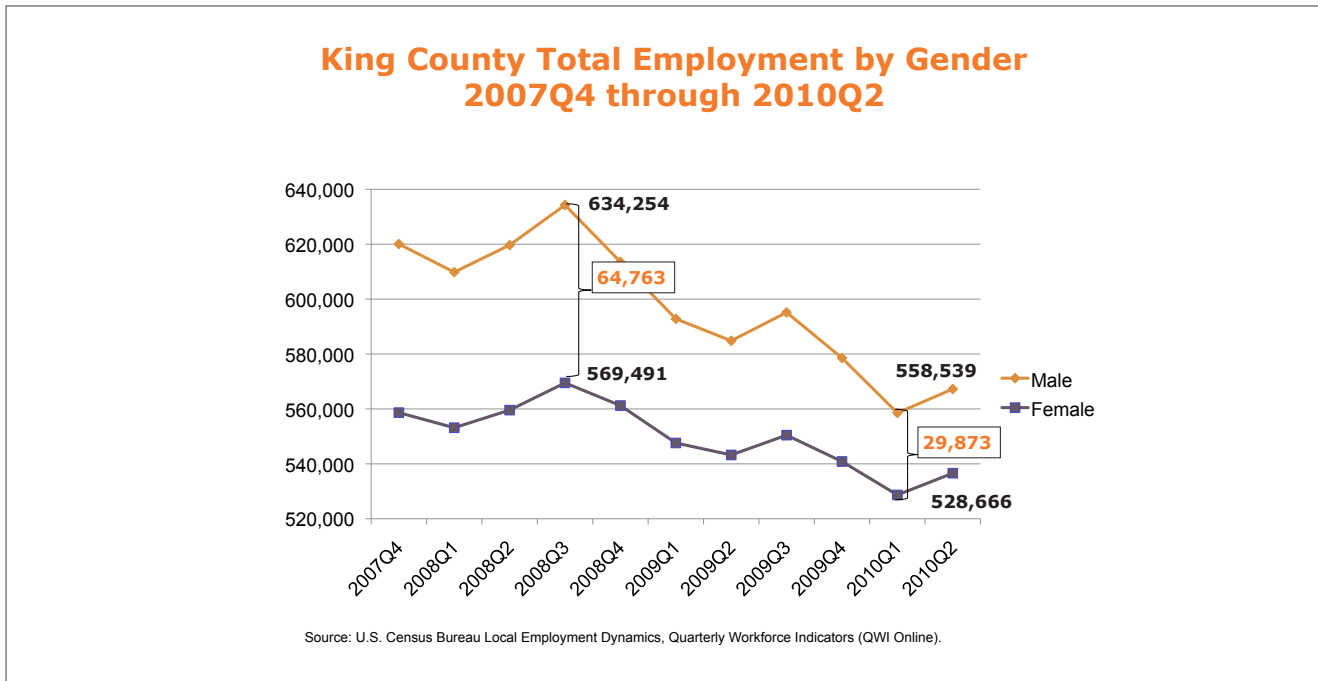
September 2011 data continue to suggest a stagnant national recovery, with over 18,000 jobs lost for the month in Washington and unemployment still hovering above 9% over two years after the official end of the Great Recession in June 2009. Many recent reports predict that this will be the picture for some time, with a wounded labor market outlook paving a slow road well into 2012.

Nationally, the data reveal that the recession was particularly hard on men, who accounted for 5.4 million, or 71% of the 7.5 million jobs that disappeared from the U.S. economy from December 2007 through June 2009.¹ However, as the chart below illustrates, men have seen higher rates of job gains during the recovery than women.²



For Washington state and King County, the effects of the recession hit a few months later than the nation as a whole, and have since seen a lagged and equally long recovery. Still, gendered differences play out locally. The following chart reveals that, since the start of the national recession, men have seen a loss of almost 53,000 jobs in King County employment, while women have seen a smaller loss of roughly 22,000 since the fourth quarter of 2007. The difference in the proportion of total employment locally has also narrowed. At peak

employment in 2008Q3, men held almost 65,000 more jobs than women in the local job market. This margin shrank by over half by the lowest point of employment in 2010Q1, with men only holding roughly 30,000 more jobs than women. It's unclear at this time, due to the lagged nature of King County's economy, whether men will see the same pattern of higher jobs gains, though even in this early recovery data, the gap between male and female employment is beginning again to diverge.



Some reasons that may help explain why these gender differences exist include differences in employment by industry. For instance, male-dominated industries like Construction and Manufacturing were hard hit during the recession, while the recovery has brought with it continued job losses in state and local government, sectors with higher proportions of female employment. At the same time, men are finding employment in areas previously dominated by women, including health care and social assistance and education, both of which have remained relatively resilient to the downturn.

1. "In Two Years of Economic Recovery Women Lost Jobs, Men Found Them" Pew Research Center. July 6, 2011
2. "Growing Job Gap Between Women and Men" Institute for Women's Policy Research. August 2011.

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About Seattle Jobs Initiative

Seattle Jobs Initiative creates opportunities for students, workers and business to succeed by helping education and job training programs meet the demands of a new economy. We find and apply solutions for people to gain the skills they need for good jobs that create prosperity for all in today's marketplace.

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Contact Information

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