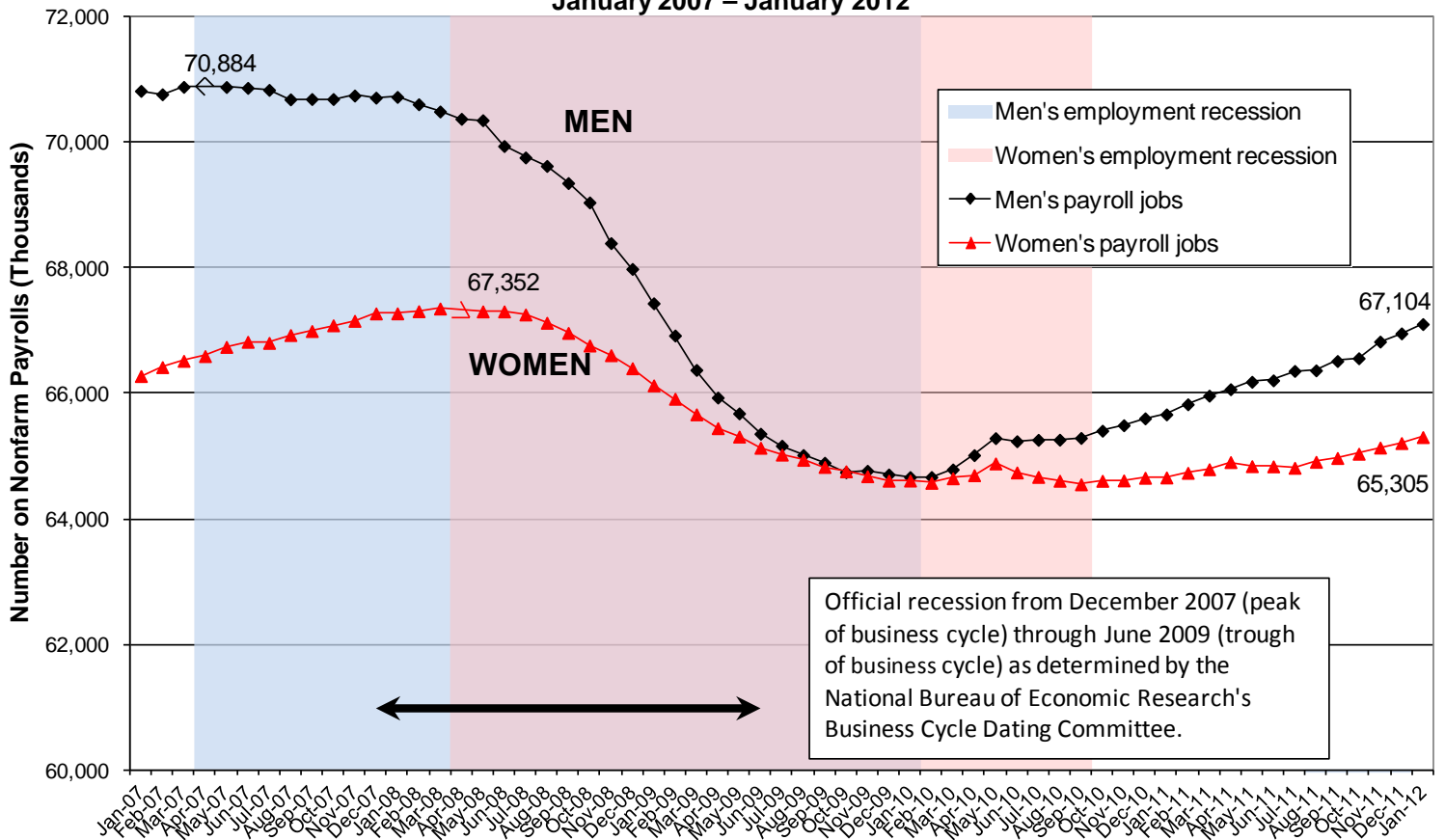


Improved Job Growth in January for Both Women and Men Women Re-Entering the Labor Force, But Men Leaving

Monthly Number of Women and Men on Payrolls (Seasonally Adjusted),
January 2007 – January 2012



Source: IWPR analysis of U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics (February 3, 2012)

According to an Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) analysis of the February 3rd employment report from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, job growth improved in January with 243,000 jobs added to nonfarm payrolls. In January, women gained 95,000 jobs (almost 40 percent, above their share for the past year) and men gained 148,000.

The unemployment rate remained steady from December to January for women aged 16 and older (8.3 percent), but fell for men (from 8.7 percent to 8.3 percent). Some of the apparent improvement for men is due to workers ending their job search and no longer being counted among the unemployed. Overall, the male civilian labor force (men aged 16 and older employed or unemployed and actively seeking work) shrank by 303,000 between December and January. While women were leaving the labor force in the last three months of 2011, the female labor force grew by 812,000 in January compared with December.

November and December's job totals were revised upwards by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in January. The revised jobs numbers for November and December are much more favorable for men: an additional 81,000 new jobs in the two months for women were reported compared with an additional 448,000 new jobs for men. With these revisions, of the 809,000 total jobs gained in the last four months (October–January), women gained 33 percent (265,000) while men gained 67 percent (544,000).

In the last year, from January 2011 to January 2012, of the 2.1 million jobs added to payrolls, 643,000 or 31 percent were filled by women and 1,438,000 or 69 percent were filled by men. Since October of 2009, when men's and women's total jobs numbers were virtually equal, women have gained 545,000 jobs, whereas men have gained 2,359,000. The gap between women's and men's employment in January is 1.8 million.

Women have regained about one out of four (752,000 or 28 percent) of the total jobs they lost in the recession (2.7 million from December 2007 to the trough for women's employment in September 2010, which occurred more than one year after the recession officially ended). The picture looks somewhat better for men, who have gained more than 40 percent (2.4 million) of the jobs they lost since December 2007 (6.0 million). Men are recovering more quickly than women, but 12.8 million workers remain unemployed as of January.