According to an Institute for Women’s Policy Research (IWPR) analysis of the December employment report from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), as of November men hold more jobs (70,954,000) than when the recession began (70,769,000 in December 2007) and even their pre-recession peak (70,946,000 in June 2007). Due to women’s generally stronger job growth, the total number of jobs lost in the recession has been recovered for some time (140,045,000 jobs in November 2014 vs 138,350,000 jobs in December 2007 when the recession began). The overall unemployment rate remained at 5.8 percent in November.
In the past six months, men’s average job growth has outpaced women’s (145,500 for men and 112,000 for women). In November, men gained two out of three new jobs on nonfarm payrolls (213,000 jobs for men and 108,000 for women or 321,000 total jobs added overall).

Women’s employment peaked at 67,647,000 in March 2008 before declining in the remainder of the recession. They surpassed their previous peak in September 2013.

In November, women’s employment growth was strongest in Professional and Business Services (37,000 jobs gained by women), Educational and Health Services (25,000 jobs gained by women), and Retail Trade (23,700 jobs gained by women).

In the last year, from November 2013 to November 2014, of the 2.7 million jobs added to payrolls, 43 percent were filled by women (1,185,000 jobs) and 57 percent were filled by men (1,549,000 jobs). Job growth improved overall compared with the prior year. Women’s job gains were strongest in Education and Health Services (334,000 jobs added for women), Professional and Business Services (311,000 jobs

---

added for women), Leisure and Hospitality (159,000 jobs added for women), and Retail Trade (132,600 jobs added for women). In the same one year period, however, women lost 2,300 jobs in Utilities. Men’s job gains were strongest in Professional and Business Services (385,000 jobs added for men), Leisure and Hospitality (218,000 jobs added for men), and Construction (183,000 jobs added for men).

According to the household survey data reported by the BLS, the unemployment rate for women aged 16 and older decreased to 5.8 percent in November from 5.9 percent in October. The unemployment rate for men aged 16 and older increased to 5.9 percent in November from 5.6 percent in October. Among workers aged 20 and older, unemployment is higher among black women and men (9.6 percent and 11.2 percent respectively) and Hispanic women and men (6.4 percent and 5.8 percent respectively) compared to white women and men (4.5 percent and 4.6 percent respectively). Among single mothers (female heads of households), the unemployment rate decreased to 8.2 percent in November from 8.7 percent in October. Unemployment for single mothers is substantially lower than its peak four years ago, 13.4 percent in July and August 2010. Neither the unemployment rates for Hispanics nor the rate for single mothers are seasonally adjusted and can fluctuate due to small sample sizes in the household survey.

The overall labor force participation rate remained steady at 62.8 percent in October and November. Women’s labor force participation rate increased from 57.0 percent in October to 57.1 percent in November, but remains 2.3 percentage points lower than the 59.4 percent rate in December 2007. Men’s labor force participation rate was 69.0 percent in November, or 4.1 percentage points lower than the 73.1 percent rate in December 2007. In a report issued in February 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 November, 9.1 million workers remain unemployed and, of these, 2.8 million (30.7 percent) have been unemployed for 27 weeks or longer, usually referred to as the long-term unemployed. This share has declined by 6.7 percentage points in the past year, from 37.4 percent in November 2013.

For more information on IWPR reports or membership, please call (202) 785-5100, email iwpr@iwpr.org, or visit www.iwpr.org.

The Institute for Women’s Policy Research (IWPR) conducts rigorous research and disseminates its findings to address the needs of women, promote public dialogue, and strengthen families, communities, and societies. The Institute works with policymakers, scholars, and public interest groups to design, execute, and disseminate research that illuminates economic and social policy issues affecting women and their families, and to build a network of individuals and organizations that conduct and use women-oriented policy research. IWPR’s work is supported by foundation grants, government grants and contracts, donations from individuals, and contributions from organizations and corporations. IWPR is a 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt organization that also works in affiliation with the women’s studies and public policy and public administration programs at The George Washington University.