



# Fact Sheet

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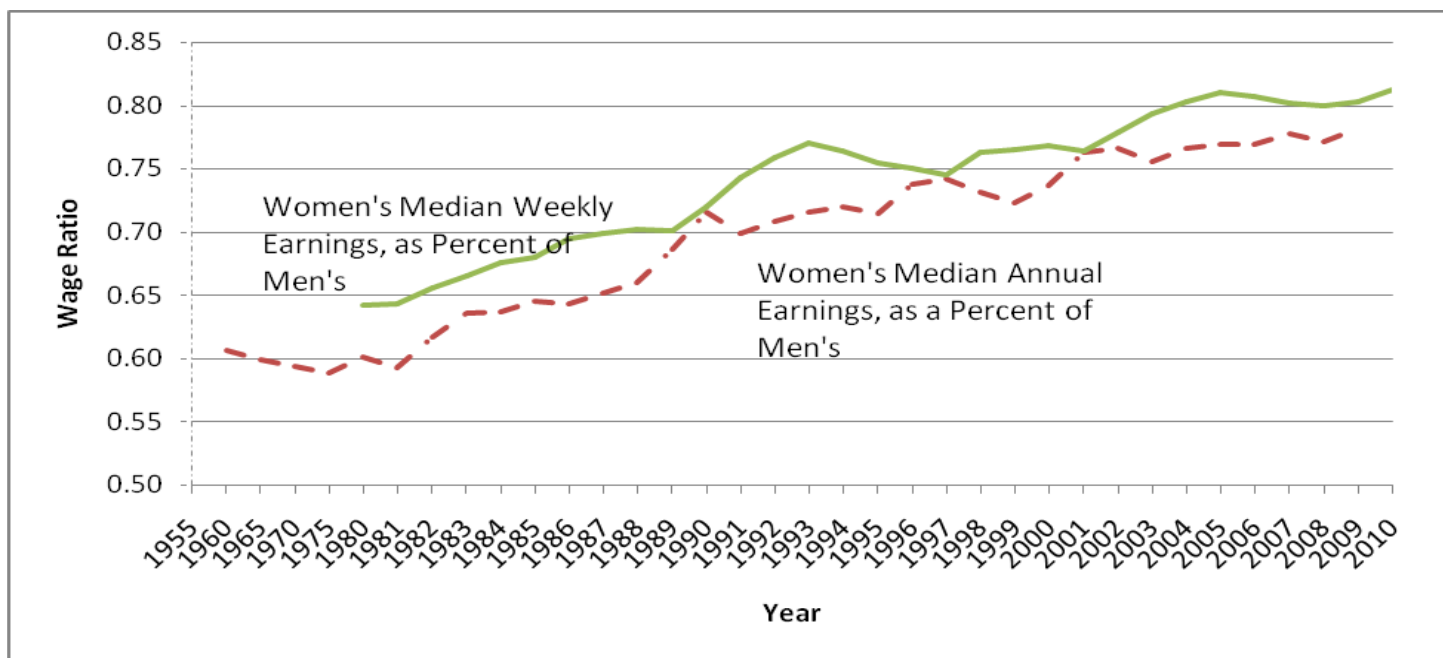
## The Gender Wage Gap: 2010

During 2010 the weekly gender wage gap narrowed slightly. Median weekly earnings of female full-time workers were \$669, compared with male median weekly earnings of \$824. Based on these data, the ratio of women's to men's median weekly earnings was 81.2, slightly higher than in 2009 (80.3) and above the historical high of 81.0 in 2005. During recessions the gender wage gap typically narrows because bonus and overtime payments, which on average account for a larger share of male than female earnings, are cut back. In real terms, women's median weekly earnings did not increase during 2010; men's median weekly earnings decreased by just under one percent.

Another measure of the earnings gap, the ratio of women's and men's median annual earnings for full-time year-round workers, was 77.0 in 2009 (data for 2010 are not yet available), essentially unchanged since 2008. (This means the annual gender wage gap for full-time year-round workers is 23 percent.)

The annual earnings ratio for full-time year-round workers, which includes self-employed workers, tends to be slightly lower than the ratio for weekly earnings (which excludes the self-employed and includes full-time workers who work only part of the year). The two series exhibit the same general trend over the long term (even though they often move in different directions in the short-term).

**The Gender Earnings Ratio, 1955-2010, Full-Time Workers**



Progress in closing the gender earnings gap has slowed considerably since the early 1990s, as measured by both data series. While the gender earnings ratio for annual earnings increased by 11.8 percentage points from 1980 to 1994, it grew by only 5 percentage points across the next fifteen years. For median weekly earnings the ratio increased by 12.1 percentage points during the first period and only 4.8 percent during the next sixteen years. If the pace of change in the annual earnings ratio continued at the same rate as it has since 1960, it will take another 45 years, until 2056, for men and women to reach parity.

Both earnings ratios (for weekly full-time workers and for year-round full-time workers) reflect gender differences in both hourly wages and the number of hours worked each year (above the definition of full-time). If part-time and part-year workers were included, the ratios of women's to men's earnings would be much lower, as women are more likely than men to work reduced schedules in order to manage childrearing and other caregiving work.

As illustrated by Table 1, African American and Hispanic workers of both sexes earn considerably less than white males, yet the wage gap is particularly marked for women of color (except for Asian American women). African American women on average only earned 69.6 percent for every dollar earned by a white male per week, and Hispanic/ Latina women only 59.8 cents. With the exception of Hispanic women, earnings of women of all ethnic groups marginally increased compared to the earnings of white men (Table 1).

Asian American workers as a group have the highest median weekly earnings, primarily because of historically higher rates of educational attainment for both genders; relative to Asian American men, Asian American women earn only 82.6 percent. African American women earn 93.5 percent of median weekly earnings of African American men; Hispanic women earn 90.7 percent of median weekly earnings of Hispanic men (data not shown).

**Table 1: Median Weekly Earnings (Annual Average) and Gender Wage Gap for Full-Time Workers, 16 Years and Older by Race/Ethnic Background, 2010**

<b>Race/Ethnic Background*</b>	<b>Female (\$) 2010</b>	<b>Male (\$) 2010</b>	<b>Female Earnings as % of White Male Earnings 2010</b>	<b>Female Earnings as % of White Male Earnings 2009</b>
<b>All Races/Ethnicities</b>	669	824	81.2%	80.3%
<b>White</b>	684	850	80.5%	79.2%
<b>African-American</b>	592	633	69.6%	68.9%
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	508	560	59.8%	60.2%
<b>Asian American</b>	773	936	90.9%	92.2%

**Notes:** \*These categories are not exclusive because workers who identified themselves as Hispanic/ Latina/ o are classified by both ethnicity and race and may be of any race.

**Source:** Institute for Women's Policy Research compilation of Current Population Survey Labor Force Statistics, 2010 (<http://www.bls.gov/webapps/legacy/cpswktab2.htm>; retrieved February 28, 2011)

Closing the wage gap is not a zero-sum game – gains for one gender do not require losses for the other. For the gender wage gap to close, women's real wages must rise faster than men's but, as the economy becomes more productive, one would expect real wages to rise for both men and women. Yet, as can be seen from Table 2, since 1980 real wages for men have remained virtually unchanged, while women's real earnings have increased across the same time period. Women's earnings have become increasingly important to family incomes.

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**Table 2: The Gender Wage Ratio and Real Earnings, 1955-2010, Full-Time Workers**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Median Annual Earnings, Women, adjusted to 2010 dollars</b>	<b>Median Annual Earnings, Men, adjusted to 2010 dollars</b>	<b>Median Annual Earnings Ratio, Full-Year Workers</b>	<b>Median Weekly Earnings, Women, adjusted to 2010 dollars</b>	<b>Median Weekly Earnings, Men, adjusted to 2010 dollars</b>	<b>Median Weekly Earnings Ratio</b>
1955			63.9%			
1960	\$ 23,994	\$39,545	60.7%			
1965	\$ 26,499	\$ 44,220	59.9%			
1970	\$ 29,915	\$ 50,389	59.4%			62.3%
1975	\$ 30,414	\$ 51,709	58.8%			62.0%
1980	\$ 29,631	\$ 49,253	60.2%	\$ 532	\$ 828	64.2%
1981	\$ 28,789	\$ 48,601	59.2%	\$ 525	\$816	64.4%
1982	\$ 29,407	\$ 47,627	61.7%	\$ 540	\$ 823	65.7%
1983	\$ 30,464	\$ 47,904	63.6%	\$ 552	\$ 830	66.5%
1984	\$ 31,019	\$ 48,728	63.7%	\$ 556	\$ 823	67.6%
1985	\$ 31,663	\$ 49,032	64.6%	\$ 561	\$ 825	68.1%
1986	\$ 32,295	\$ 50,248	64.3%	\$ 579	\$ 834	69.5%
1987	\$ 32,461	\$ 49,804	65.2%	\$ 582	\$ 833	69.8%
1988	\$ 32,452	\$ 49,134	66.0%	\$ 581	\$ 828	70.2%
1989	\$ 33,006	\$ 48,062	68.7%	\$ 577	\$ 823	70.1%
1990	\$ 33,070	\$ 46,177	71.6%	\$ 577	\$ 802	71.9%
1991	\$ 32,905	\$ 47,103	69.9%	\$ 586	\$ 789	74.2%
1992	\$ 33,221	\$ 46,933	70.8%	\$ 591	\$ 779	75.8%
1993	\$ 32,817	\$ 45,885	71.5%	\$ 593	\$ 770	77.1%
1994	\$ 32,672	\$ 45,397	72.0%	\$ 587	\$ 768	76.4%
1995	\$ 32,189	\$ 45,065	71.4%	\$ 581	\$ 770	75.5%
1996	\$ 32,952	\$ 44,673	73.8%	\$ 581	\$ 774	75.0%
1997	\$ 33,928	\$ 45,750	74.2%	\$ 586	\$ 787	74.4%
1998	\$ 34,597	\$ 47,283	73.2%	\$ 610	\$ 800	76.3%
1999	\$ 34,444	\$ 47,631	72.3%	\$ 619	\$ 809	76.5%
2000	\$ 34,775	\$ 47,172	73.7%	\$ 624	\$ 812	76.9%
2001	\$ 35,971	\$ 47,126	76.3%	\$ 630	\$ 825	76.4%
2002	\$ 36,609	\$ 47,792	76.6%	\$ 641	\$ 823	77.9%
2003	\$ 36,411	\$ 48,195	75.5%	\$ 654	\$ 824	79.4%
2004	\$ 36,062	\$ 47,093	76.6%	\$ 661	\$ 823	80.4%
2005	\$ 35,570	\$ 46,208	77.0%	\$ 653	\$ 806	81.0%
2006	\$ 35,169	\$ 45,711	76.9%	\$ 649	\$ 804	80.8%
2007	\$ 36,916	\$ 47,444	77.8%	\$ 646	\$ 806	80.2%
2008	\$ 36,202	\$ 46,960	77.1%	\$ 646	\$ 808	79.9%
2009	\$ 36,873	\$ 47,900	77.0%	\$ 668	\$ 832	80.2%
2010				\$ 669	\$ 824	81.2%

**Notes:** Annual earnings data include self-employed workers; weekly data are for wage and salary workers only. Annual earnings are for workers aged 14 and older through 1979 and workers 15 and older from 1980 through 2010; weekly earnings are for full-time workers aged 16 and older and are not restricted to full-year workers. The annual average of weekly median earnings is usually released in January by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Annual median earnings data are typically released in late summer or early fall by the U.S. Census Bureau. Both data series are derived from the Current Population Survey. Adjustments to 2010 dollars are computed on the basis of the Consumer Price Index for all urban consumers (CPI-U) that is published by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. <<ftp://fts.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/cpi/cpiiai.txt>> retrieved February 2011). .

**Sources:** Annual data: 1955: Francine D. Blau and Marianne A. Ferber, *The Economics of Women, Men, and Work*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1992), Table 5.6; 1960 through 2009: U.S. Census Bureau, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2009*, Table A-2; U.S. Census Bureau. "Table 38". <<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/histinc/incpertoc.html>> (retrieved January 2010). Weekly data: 1970 and 1975: Blau and Ferber (1992), Table 5.6; 1980 through 2010: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Household Data Annual Averages <<http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat39.pdf>> (retrieved February 2011); U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Highlights of Women's Earnings in 2009*, Table 12, Median usual weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers by selected characteristics, quarterly averages, not seasonally adjusted. Table 2. <<http://www.bls.gov/webapps/legacy/cpswktab2.htm>> (retrieved February 2011 ).

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