

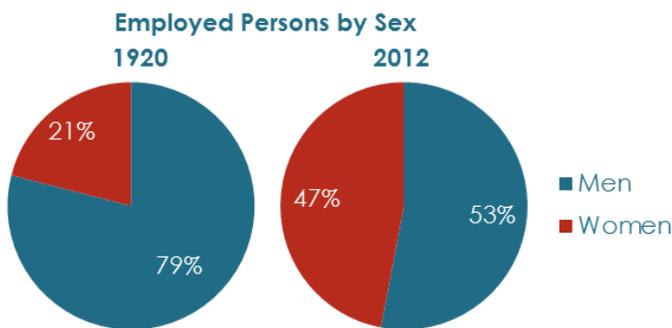


OVERVIEW

WORKING WOMEN TODAY

Today, women make up nearly half of our workforce, and many women are the primary breadwinners for their families. In fact, more than 75 percent of single mothers are the sole provider for their family.

The increased number of women in the labor force has both reflected and contributed to a major social transformation over the past several decades.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Women's notable progress over the years is reflected in their increased educational attainment, higher earnings, greater occupational diversity, and a larger presence in leadership positions and entrepreneurial fields.

THE WOMEN'S BUREAU'S GOALS

- Reduce barriers that inhibit or prevent women's access to – and retention in – better jobs
- Ensure women's fair treatment in the workplace

WHAT WE DO

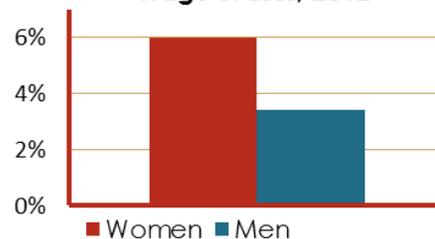
For more than 90 years, the Women's Bureau has been meeting its mandate by: identifying, researching and analyzing the topics working women care about most; pioneering innovative policies and programs to address them; and enhancing public education and outreach efforts to raise awareness on key issues and developments affecting women in the workforce.

We work to level the playing field for all women in the labor force, recognizing that true equal opportunity would have a positive impact not only on women's own financial stability, but also on the broader economic security of their families and on the wellbeing of our nation.

CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

Millions of women in the United States are more likely to live in poverty than men and still face significant barriers to economic security and stability, including: occupational segregation; barriers to moving into higher-level positions; low wages and unequal pay; inadequate workplace flexibility; and pregnancy and sex discrimination.

Percentage of Workers Earning Minimum Wage or Less, 2012



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey

Women continue to earn less than men, and almost twice as many women as men earn minimum wage or less each year. In 2012, women earned about 81 cents for every dollar a man earned. The wage gap results in significant lost wages that continue to add up over a woman's lifetime.



OUR STRATEGIES

- IMPROVE WORKPLACE PRACTICES AND SUPPORTS
- PROMOTE GREATER ACCESS TO AND PREPARATION FOR BETTER JOBS FOR WOMEN
- PROMOTE FAIR COMPENSATION AND EQUAL PAY

Improving Workplace Practices and Supports:

The Women's Bureau identifies, fosters, and promotes policies and efforts that enable women to succeed in their work and personal lives. Today's labor force comprises an increasing number of working mothers and women who care for disabled or elderly family members. Many low-paying occupations that tend to employ large shares of women lack adequate flexibility, benefits, and supports.

Promoting Greater Access to and Preparation for Better Jobs for Women:

The Women's Bureau aims to help women prepare for, participate and advance in, and retain non-traditional, high-growth, and higher-paying jobs. Female-dominated occupations have been found to pay less than male-dominated occupations with the same skill levels, and women have relatively low shares of employment in high-paying jobs such as those in transportation, construction, and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields.

Promoting Fair Compensation and Equal Pay:

The Women's Bureau seeks to educate workers on their rights and employers on their legal obligations to ensure fair compensation. Although women earn less than men for reasons such as the lower-paying jobs they traditionally perform, around 40% of the difference in wages remains unexplained. The Bureau conducts research to identify additional factors that contribute to the wage gap and how to overcome them, as well as look for ways to improve compensation for lower-wage jobs that employ large numbers of women.

CONTACT US

By E-mail: WomensBureau@dol.gov

By Mail:

Women's Bureau
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

By Phone:

1-800-827-5335 or (202) 693-6710

Website: www.dol.gov/wb/

For information on our regional office locations, please call or visit:
www.dol.gov/wb/regions

For more information you may also contact the U.S. Department of Labor:
1-866-4-USA-DOL (1-866-487-2365)
www.dol.gov

WOMEN'S BUREAU ACROSS THE U.S.

Since 1920, the Women's Bureau has worked out of its national office at the Department of Labor in Washington, D.C. We recognize that women's labor issues can be unique from one place to the next, so we also operate through our 10 regional offices around the country to engage local stakeholders and collaborators, and to make sure that women's rights are being upheld across the country.

The Women's Bureau works with other offices and agencies within the Department of Labor to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights.

Latifa Lyles
Director
Women's Bureau
U.S. Department of Labor

