

Trends in jobs, employment, and earnings

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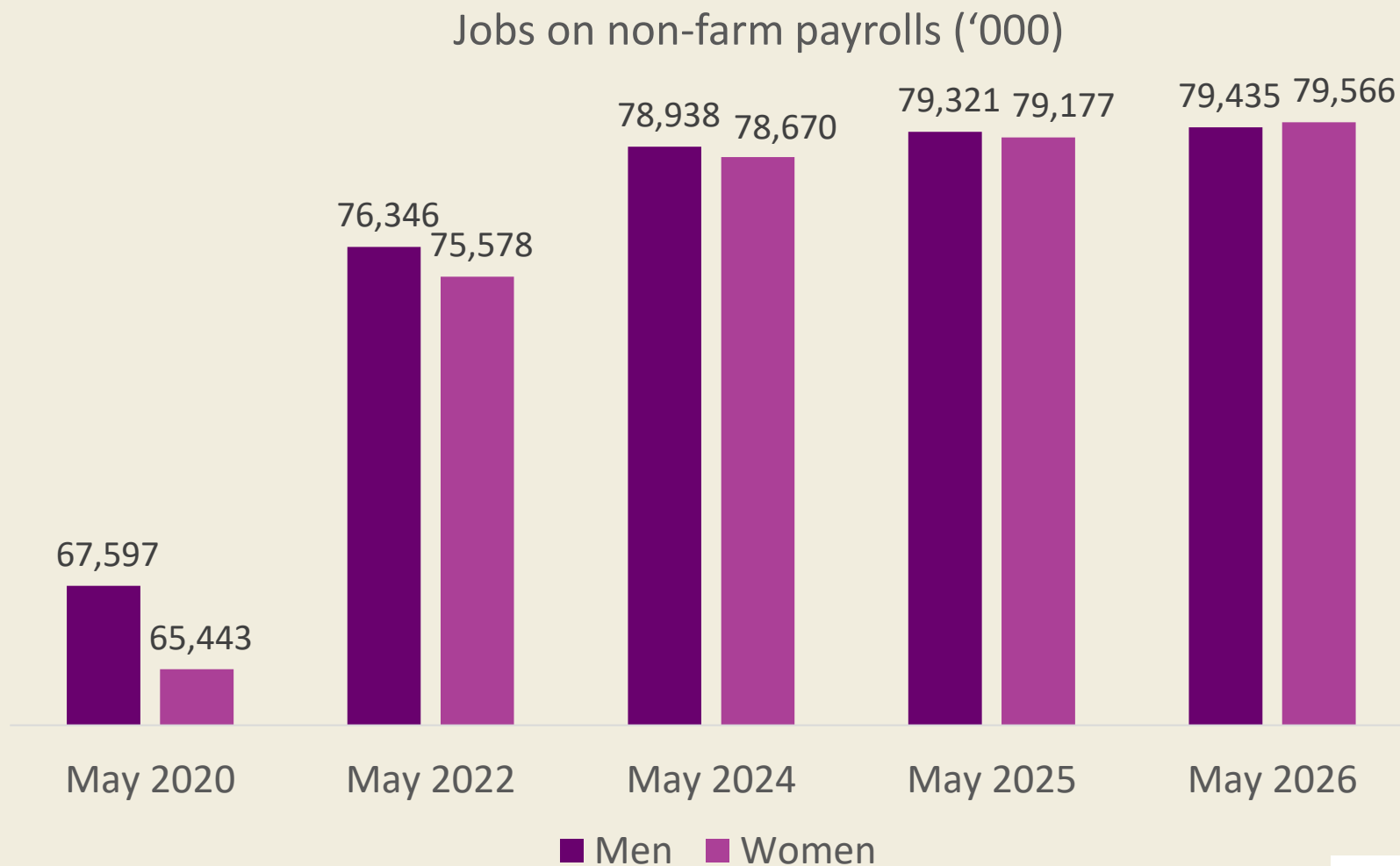
**Clearinghouse for Women's Issues:
Tracking Inequality: Current Administrative Policy
Changes and Women's Work**

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Trends in jobs, employment, and earnings: what I will discuss

- **The labor market** has stabilized, including for Black women. But...
- **Reproductive restrictions** are reducing women's labor force participation, and national and state GDP.
- **The gender wage gap** is not narrowing; women of color still are generations away from pay equity.
- **Student debt:** College education is needed for higher earnings but wage gaps are largest in jobs requiring college.
- **States are making a difference:** paid leave, minimum wage, enforcement, childcare, reproductive rights.

Women have fully caught up on post COVID-19 job losses, and are back at 50% of payroll jobs (=with W2s)

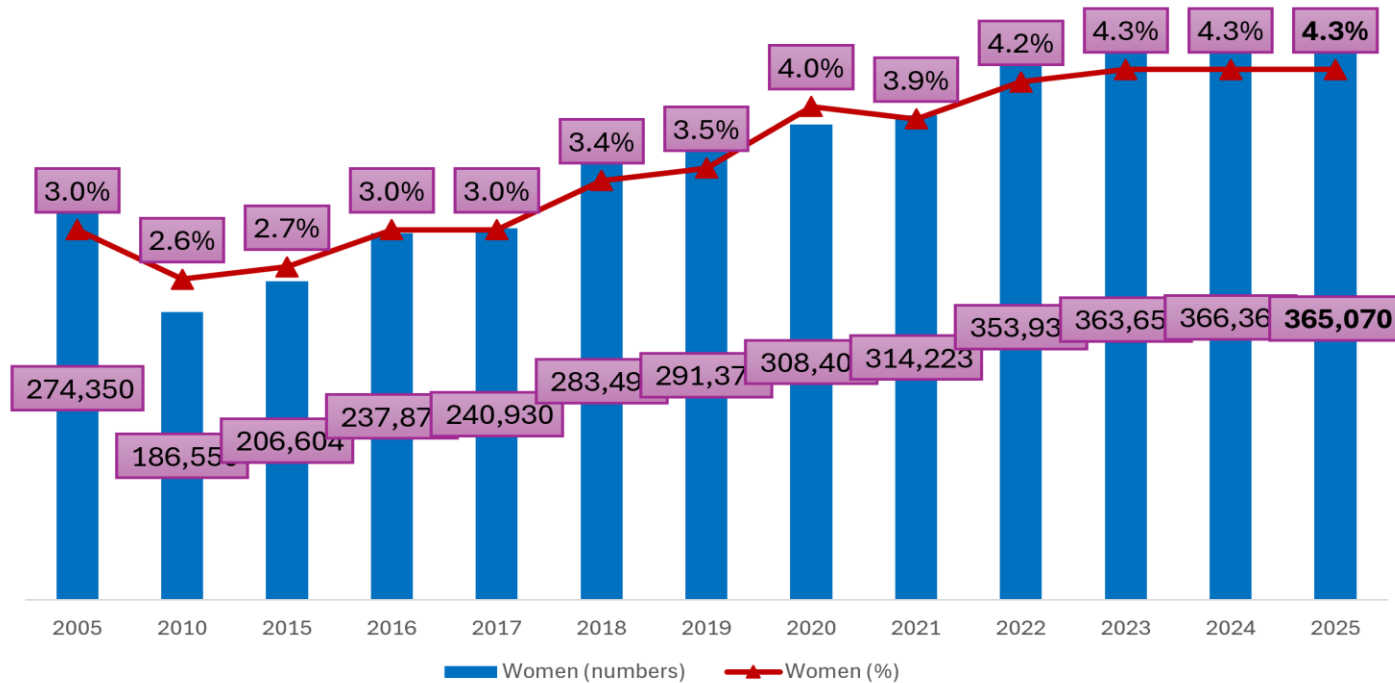


Source: IWPR analysis of U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics. Data released on June 5, 2026.

Women in construction: mostly holding up for now

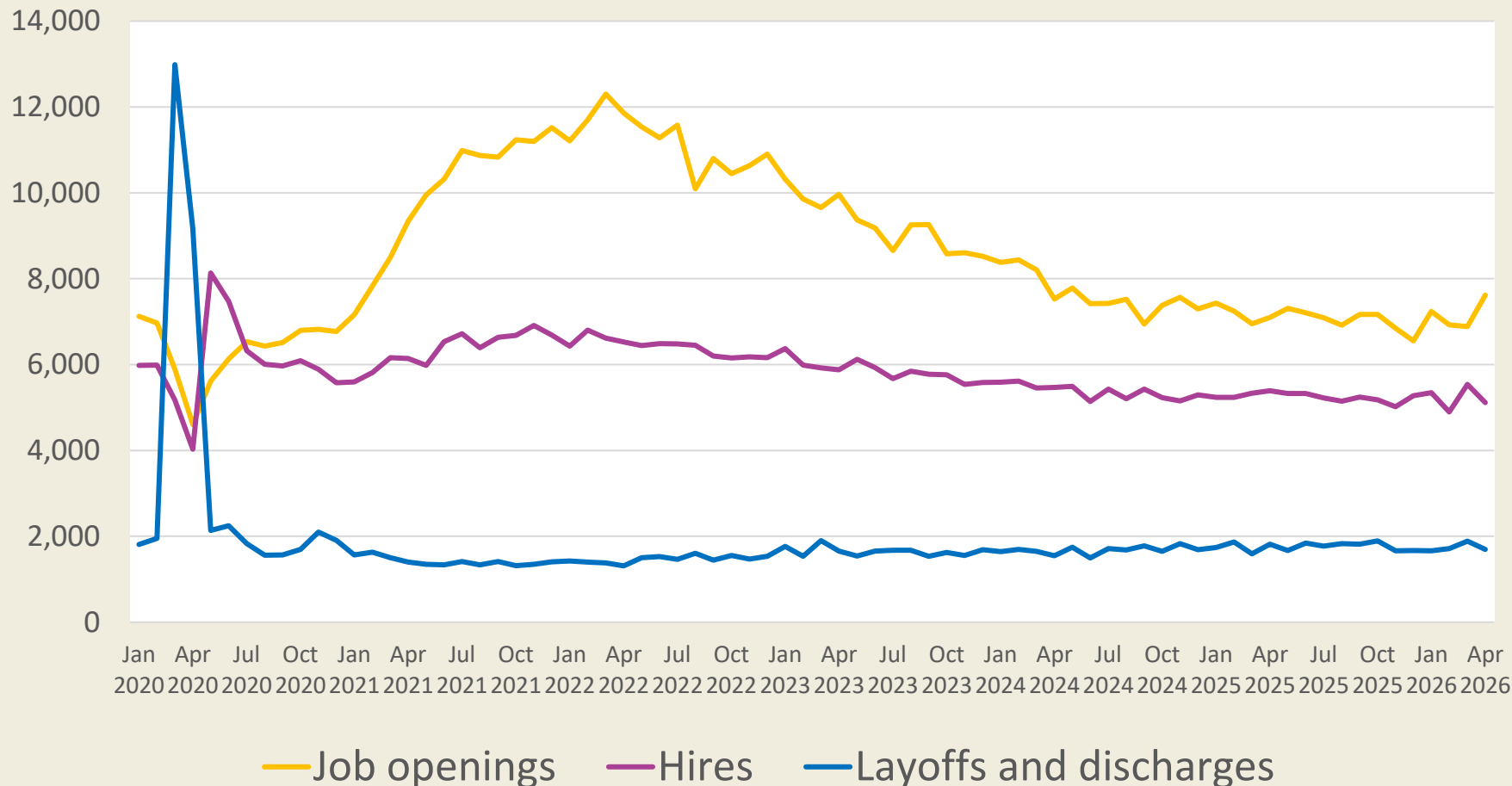
- Women **marginally increased** their share of all construction industry payroll jobs in **2025** (from 14.2 to 14.4%)
- Women **held share** of construction industry apprenticeships (at 5.0%).
- Women **lost** almost 30,000 jobs as construction managers (share fell from 10.5 to 8.5%).

Steady Climb: Women in Construction & Extraction Occupations, 2005 to 2025



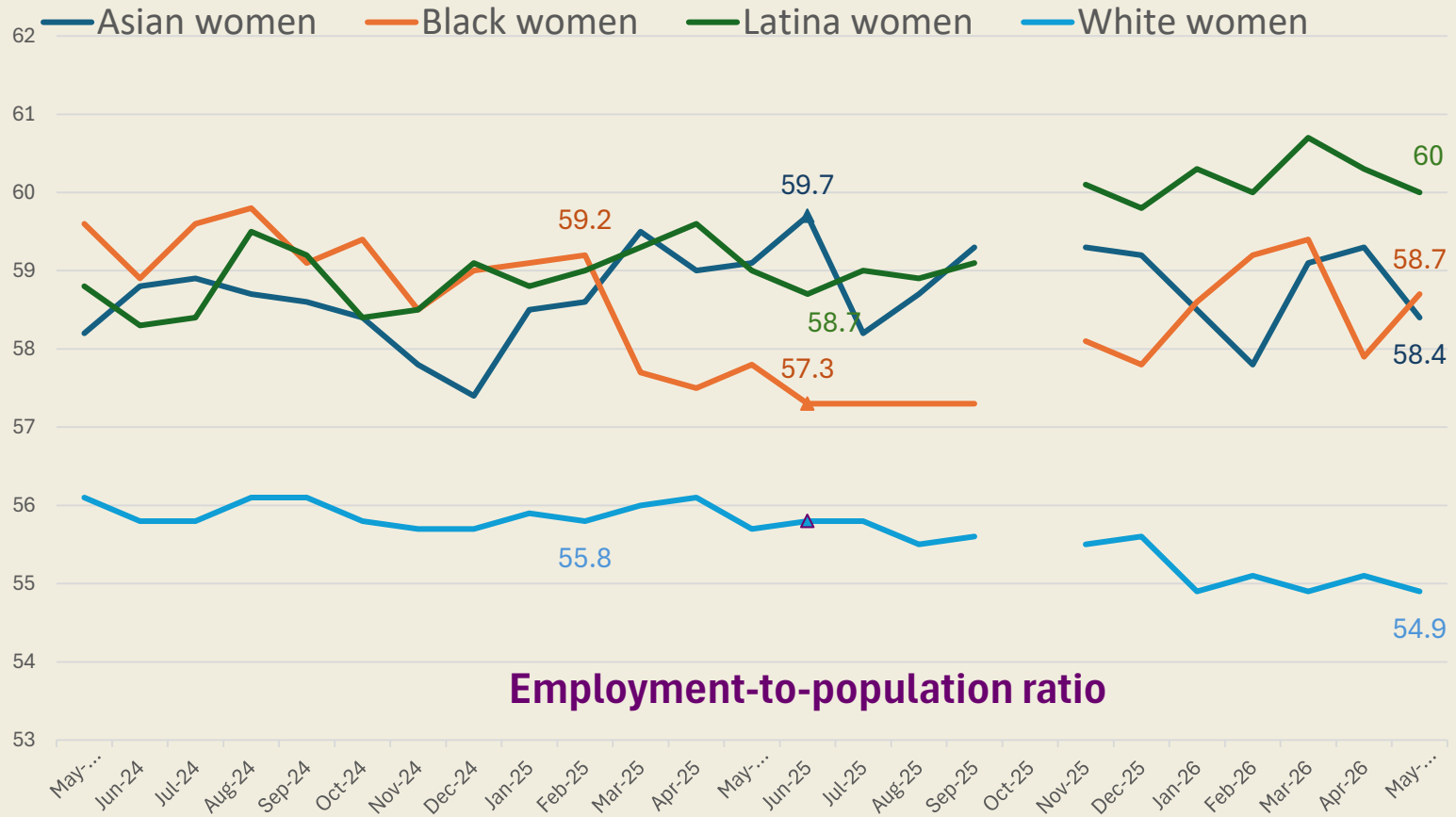
Source: IWPR calculations based on BLS Current Population Survey Annual Averages Table 11, <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat11.htm>

For the last two years employer demand for workers has been fairly flat. Federal job cuts do not really register.



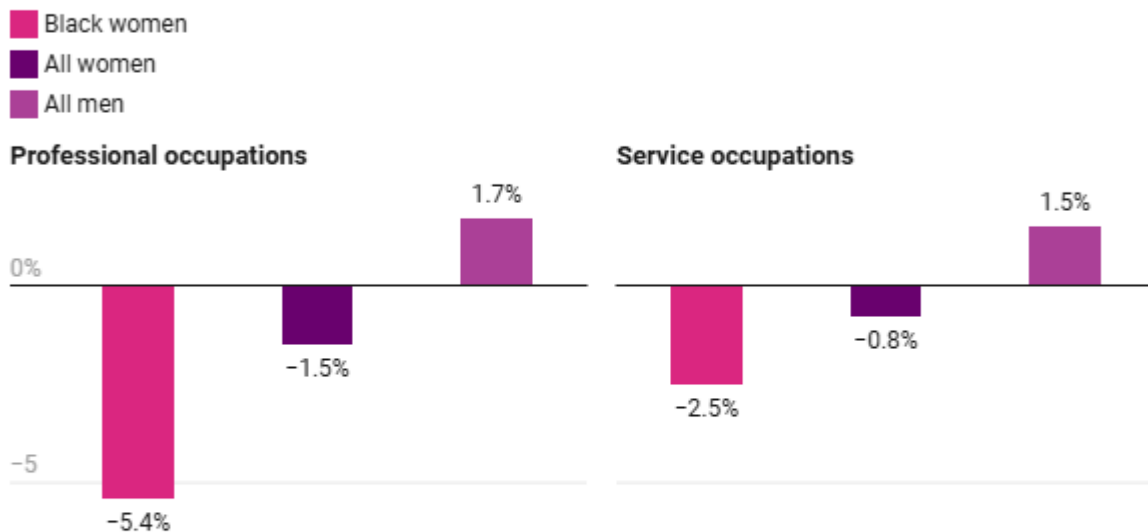
Source: IWPR analysis of BLS Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey (JOLTS) data

Black women's employment-to-population ratio dropped between February and Jul 2025, stabilized, and from late 2025 grew again (adults 20 and older)



Source: IWPR analysis of U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Employment Statistics. Data released on June 5, 2026.

Figure 2. Proportional Losses (and Gains) in Professional and Service Occupations for Black Women, All Women, and All Men (2025)



Source: IWPR analysis of Current Population Survey Basic Monthly microdata, January–December 2025, as made available by Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven Ruggles, J. Robert Warren, Daniel Backman, Etienne Breton, Grace Cooper, Julia A. Rivera Drew, Stephanie Richards, David Van Riper, and Kari C.W. Williams. IPUMS CPS: Version 13.0 [Current Population Survey Basic Monthly]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V13.0>.

Notes: Estimates are based on employment, not seasonally adjusted, for Black women (including both Hispanic and nonHispanic Black women), all women, and all men (irrespective of race or ethnicity), aged 20 years or older, between January and December 2025. Losses (or gains) are measured as the difference in employment for each group between January and December 2025, divided by their employment in January 2025 in professional and service occupations, respectively. Professional and service occupation workers do not include those in federal or state/local government (Robbins and Haider et al., "The economy lurches towards disaster.").

Black women lost 30% of their federal government jobs during 2025, proportionately much more than all women (11.6%) and all men (8.1%).

Gallagher Robbins & Haider 2025; and Wilson 2025

Source: Chatterjee and Turner. 2026. "One Year Into Trump's Second Term, Black Women Face Disproportionate Job Losses." IWPR

The labor market has stabilized but:

- Stabilization of labor market means continued inequality:
 - Ratio of Black to White women's unemployment 'down' to 1.6; Latina to White women to 1.5
 - Continued long-term effects on wealth and earnings because of unemployment
- Inflation one factor behind high labor force participation.

Abortion restrictions carry high economic costs

Abortion restrictions lead to lower labor force participation, which in turn leads to lower collective earnings.

- \$140,481,487,489 or 0.5% of GDP in 2025;
- 324,963 fewer women at work (0.7%).

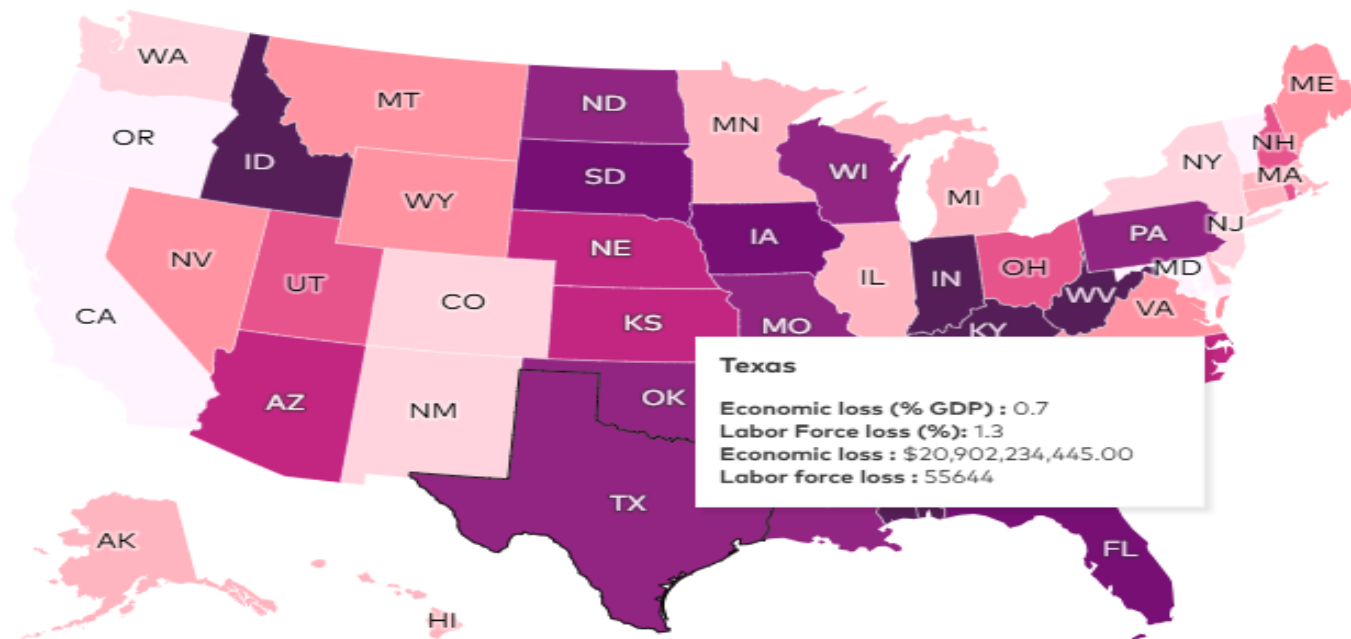
Women across race/ethnicity are impacted but earnings loss is estimated to be highest for Black women:

- 9.9% estimated loss of earnings for Black women
- 8.7% estimated loss of earnings for White women
- 8.2% estimated loss of earnings for Latina women
- 6.1% estimated loss for AAPI women
- **All women ages 15-to 44 years: 8.5% annual earnings loss.**

Economic and Labor Force Impacts of Abortion Restrictions by State, Women Ages 15–44

Map. 1 Economic Loss Impact of Abortion Restrictions, by State

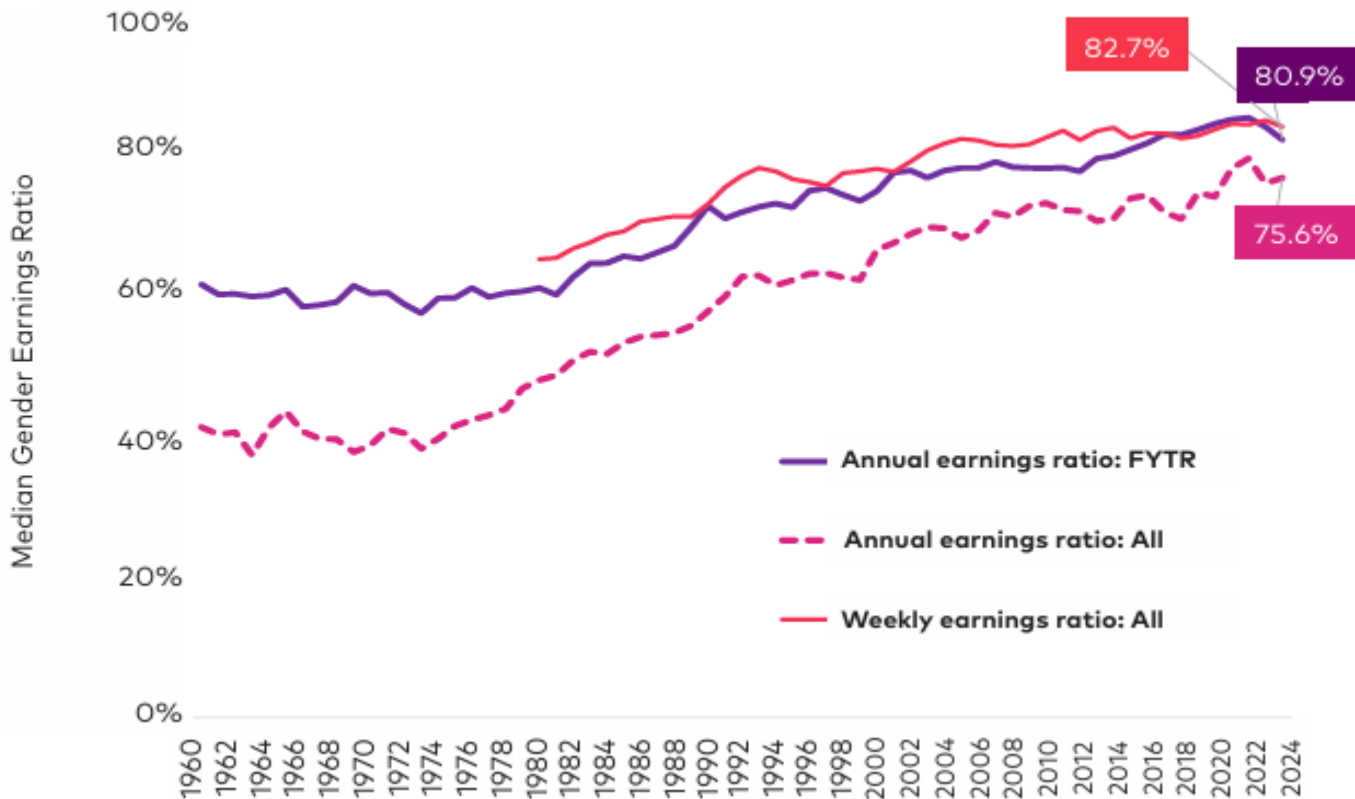
Percent (%) of State GDP



Source: IWPR calculations from Guttmacher Institute, "Interactive Map: U.S. Abortion Policies and Access After Roe," policy data as of December 2026, <https://states.guttmacher.org/policies/>; Sarah Flood, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven

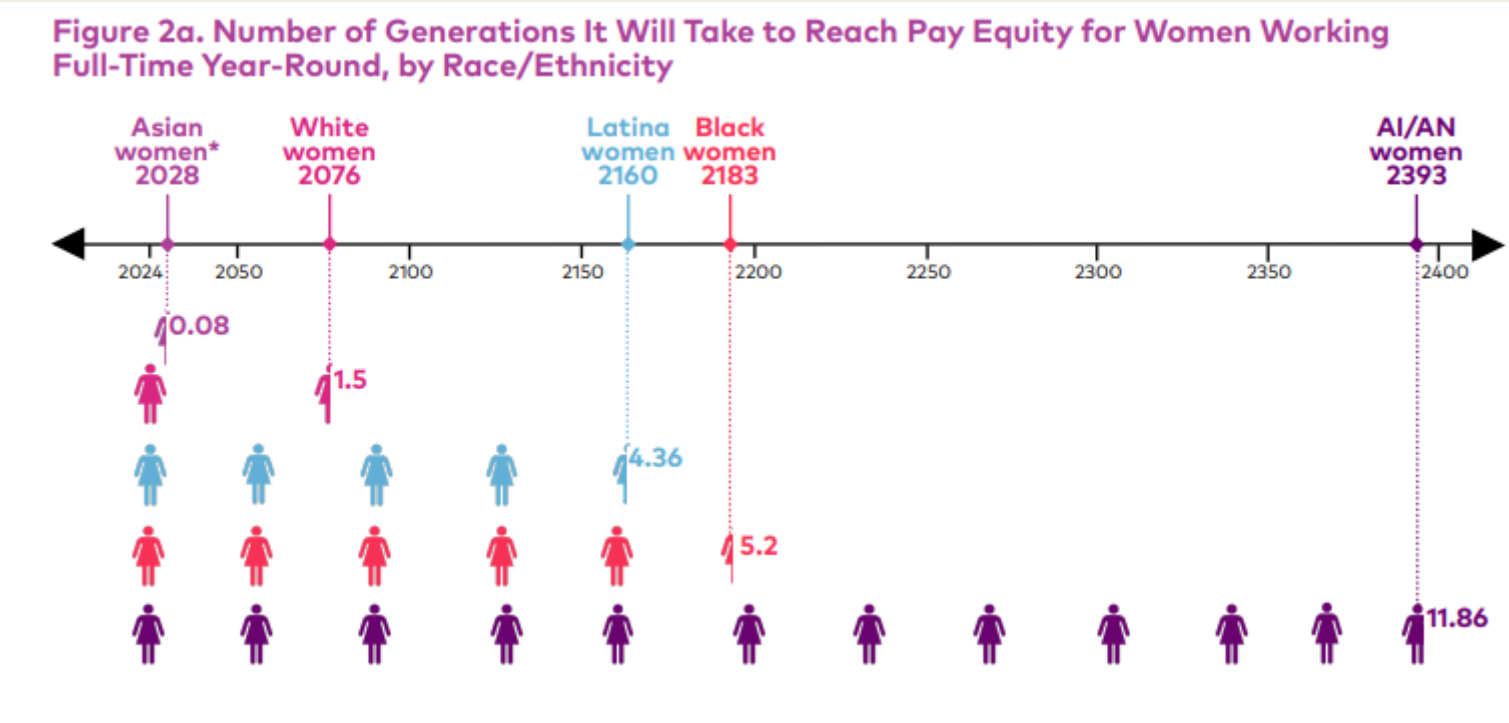
The gender wage gap widened significantly in both 2023 and in 2024: women's earnings did not increase after inflation while men's did. We do not yet know 2025 (or 2026) trends but expect a major impact of inflation on real wages; and another year without progress in closing the wage gap.

Figure 1. The Gender Earnings Ratio for Full-Time and All Workers with Earnings, 1960–2024



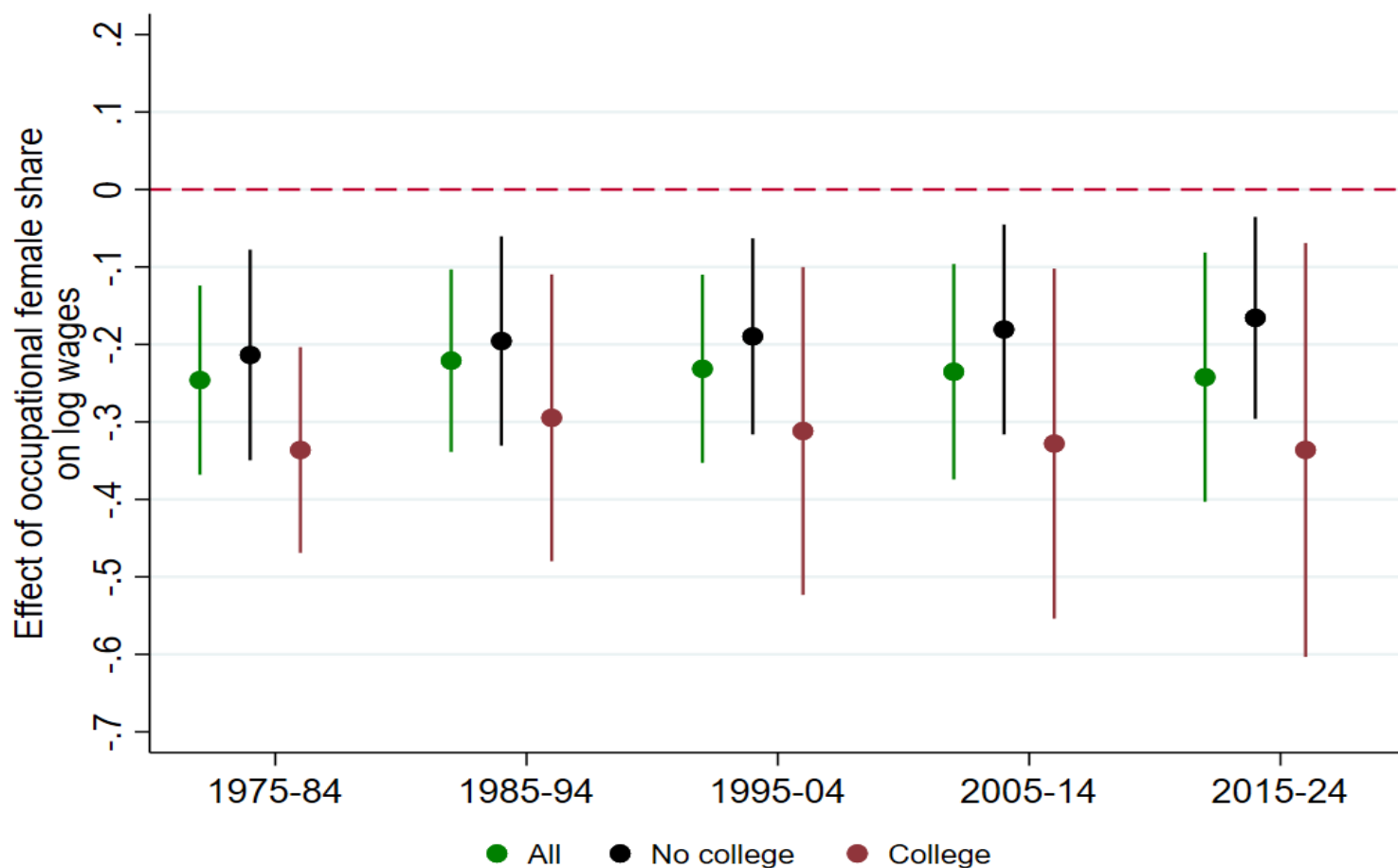
Source: Hegewisch and Peterson. 2025. "Gender Wage Gap Worsens for Second Year in a Row Annual Gender Wage Gap by Race and Ethnicity in 2024." IWPR

On current trends, all women will reach pay equity with men in 2071 for FTYR work, and 2088 for all with earnings. AIAN, Black and Latina women will not reach pay equity with White men for many generations.



Source: Chatterjee. 2025. "The Generational Wage Gap: Pay Equity Decades Away for Women Overall, Centuries Away for Women of Color." IWPR

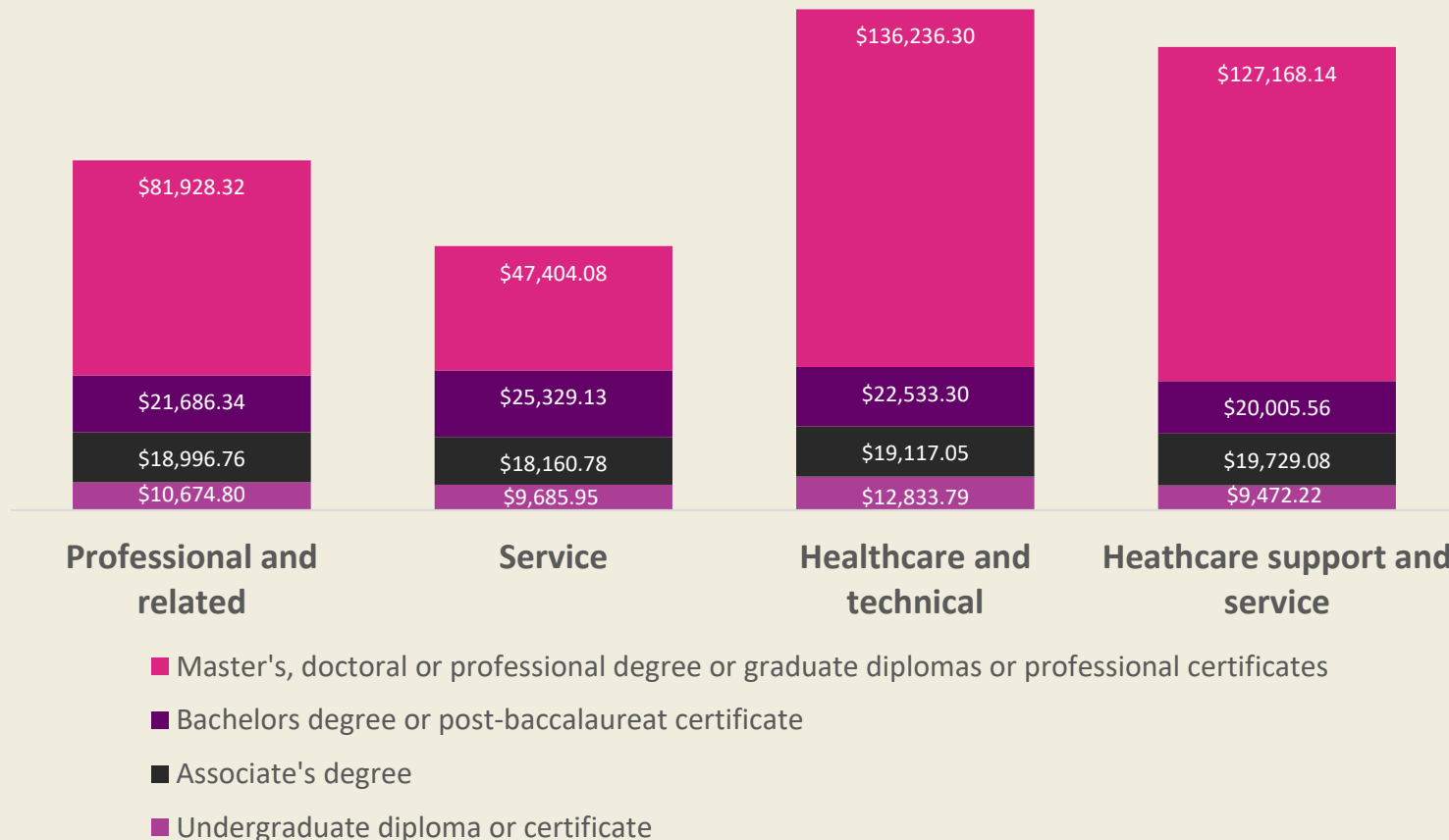
Still undervalued: Predominantly female occupations continue to pay less compared to other occupations; gaps are largest, and widening, in occupations requiring college education.



Source: Liepmann and Hegewisch 2026, "Revisiting occupational segregation and the valuation of women's work."

Decent earnings continue to require college-level education, esp. in undervalued care occupations.

Mean Student Debt for Women by Field of Study and Degree Level, Pooled Student Cohorts of 2019 and 2020



Source: Chatterjee and Turner (IWPR Factsheet forthcoming on 7_16_2026): analysis of College Scorecard Data, U.S. Department of Education, Field of study-level data files for the pooled 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 cohorts, downloaded from <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/data/>

To recap

- In 2026, job growth is to be positive again, but very difficult to assess future (especially for new job market entrants).
 - Inflation and cuts in benefits
- Unexpected stability in some sectors, such as construction. Will it last?
- Wage gap continues. And related policies – repro rights, student loan changes- likely worsen it.
- The destruction of enforcement, oversight, and attack on DEI continues with the gutting of the EEOC and the planned rescission of EEOC EEO-1 occupational data collection from employers/ stop for federal government.
- States are making positive change, e.g. on paid leave, minimum wage, child care, equal pay provisions and data collection.

Questions and comments?

Thanks!

IWPR resources and references

Mrin Chatterjee and Jennifer Turner. 2026. "One Year Into Trump's Second Term, Black Women Face Disproportionate Job Losses." *Institute for Women's Policy Research*. February [link](#)

Mrin Chatterjee. 2025. The Generational Wage Gap: Pay Equity Decades Away for Women Overall, Centuries Away for Women of Color." *Institute for Women's Policy Research*. December 17. [link](#)

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Hannah Liepmann and Ariane Hegewisch. 2026. "Occupational Segregation and the Valuation of Women's Work." IWPR # WP2026-1. [link](#)

Melissa Mahoney and Aashima Sinha. 2026. "More than \$140 Billion in Lost Earnings: Abortion Restrictions Continue to Harm Women and Are a Persistent Drag on the Economy- Costs of Reproductive Health Restrictions: 2026 Analysis." *Institute for Women's Policy Research*. June [link](#).

Katharine Gallagher Robbins and Areeba Haider. 2025. "The economy lurches towards disaster as Black women's unemployment skyrockets | Jobs Day November 2025," National Partnership for Women & Families blog, November 20 [link](#)

Valerie Wilson. 2025. "What's behind rising unemployment for Black workers?," Economic Policy Institute blog, September 19, [link](#).