

Gender and Racial Wage Gaps Marginally Improve in 2022 but Pay Equity Still Decades Away

ANNUAL GENDER WAGE GAP BY RACE AND ETHNICITY 2022

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

- **In 2022, women working full-time year-round made 84.0 cents per dollar earned by men (a wage gap of 16.0 percent),** a marginal improvement compared to 2021 (83.7 cents per dollar) and significantly higher than in pre-COVID-19 2019 (82.3 cents).¹ Based on median annual earnings in 2022, this meant \$9,990 fewer dollars in the pockets of a typical woman who worked full-time year-round.²
- **The gender wage gap for all with earnings (including full-time, part-time, full-year and part-year workers) also improved slightly.** In 2022, a typical woman was paid 78.3 cents per dollar a man was paid (a wage gap of 21.7 percent), compared with 76.9 cents on the dollar in 2021 (a wage gap of 23.1 percent).³
- **If progress continues at the same rate as it has since 1960, it will still take over three decades for women workers to reach pay equity with men.** Pay equity between all women and all men with earnings will take until 2053, and pay equity between full-time year-round workers will take even longer, until 2058.
- **Racial and gender wage gaps are profound.** In 2022, a typical Hispanic or Latina woman earned 57.5 cents per dollar earned by a White non-Hispanic man; a Black woman 69.1 cents, a White non-Hispanic woman 80.0 cents, and an Asian⁴ woman 98.6 cents.
- **Latinas were the only group with a fall in inflation-adjusted median annual earnings for both full-time year-round (by 3.4 percent) and all workers with earnings (by 4.1 percent).** Full-time year-round real median annual earnings also fell for White (by 4.0 percent) and Black (by 1.4 percent) but rose for Asian women workers (by 2.5 percent) while Asian, Black, and White women also saw rises in median annual earnings for all with earnings. Changes in real earnings reflect changes in the composition of the post-COVID-19 workforce as much as changes in the earnings of individual workers.



In 2022, Gender Earnings Ratios Improved Marginally as Women's Full-time Year-Round Work Increased

In 2022, the gender earnings ratio for all workers with earnings (whether working full-time, part-time, full-year or part-year) was 78.3 percent (a gender wage gap of 21.7 percent), compared to 76.9 percent (a gender gap of 23.1 percent) in 2021. The improvement is more marked when comparing to pre-COVID-19; in 2019 women's median annual earnings were just 73.5 percent of men's (Figure 1 and Table A1). A higher number of women worked full-time year-round in 2022 than in 2019, and the share of full-time year-round workers among all women with earnings increased from 64.4 percent in 2019 to 65.6 percent in 2022.⁵

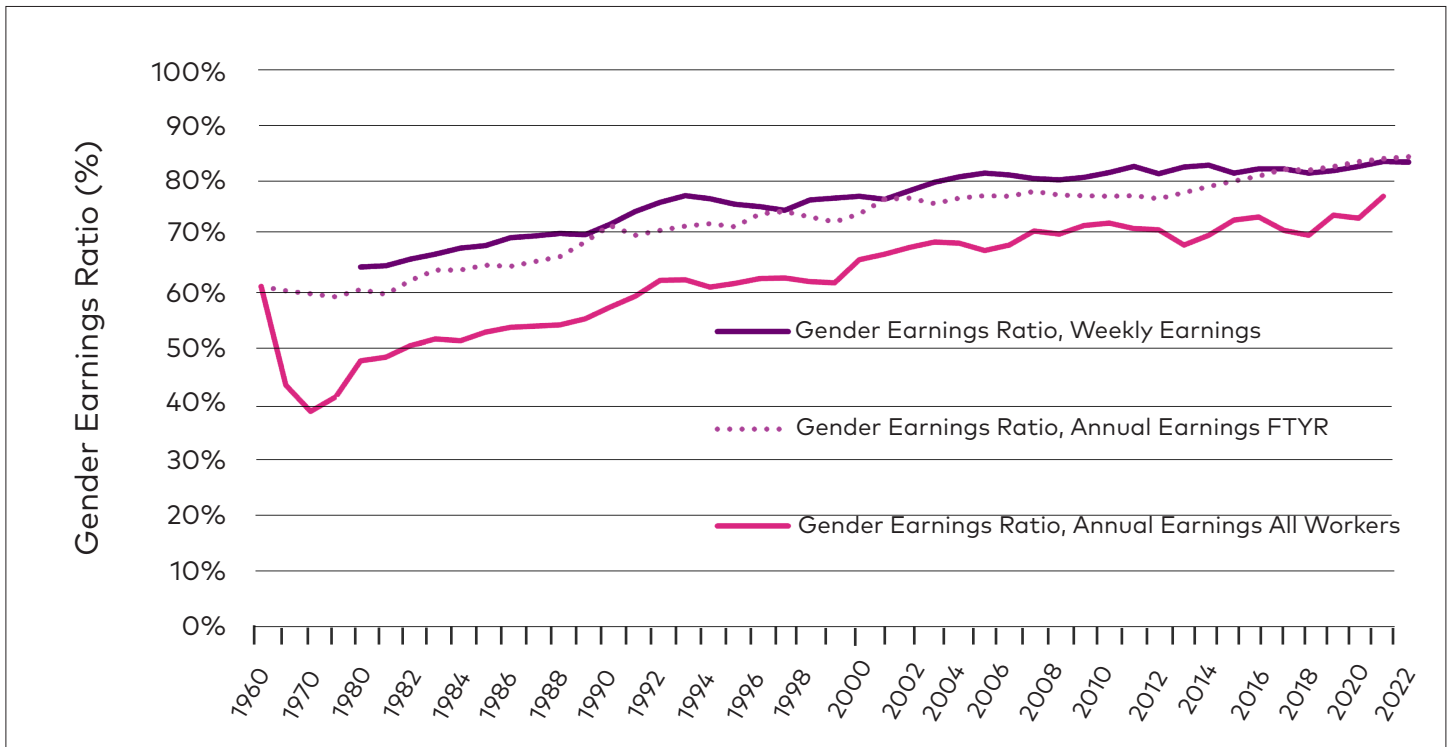
The gender earnings ratio for full-time year-round workers also saw marginal but not statistically significant improvements between 2022 and 2021 (84.0 and 83.7 percent respectively) but is also significantly higher than in 2019, when it was 82.3 percent (Figure 1 and Table A1).

The increase in full-time work, as well as a shift to better paid full-time jobs, resulted in the improvement in the earnings ratio. Women are less likely than men to work full-time year-round because they do more unpaid family care work than men and because full-time year-round work is harder to find in jobs predominantly done by women in the care sector, retail, leisure, and hospitality.⁶ As the economy recovered during 2022, women's numbers grew in professional and managerial jobs, with better pay and more stable hours, as well as in predominantly male fields such as construction, transportation, and wholesale, that typically offer both more hours and better hourly pay than traditional female jobs.⁷

Progress in eliminating the gender wage gap has slowed down substantially during recent decades (Figure 1). When projecting change in the gender earnings ratio from 1960 to 2022 forward, it will take more than three decades, until 2053, for all women to reach pay equity with all men with earnings. It will take even longer, until 2058, for pay equity between full-time year-round workers.⁸



FIGURE 1: The Gender Earnings Ratio for Full-Time and All Workers with Earnings, 1960-2022



Notes and Sources: See Table A1

Women Across Racial and Ethnic Groups Earned Less than White Men

Latina and Black women’s median annual earnings were substantially below those of White and Asian women, as well as those of men in all the largest racial and ethnic groups (Tables 1A and B). In 2022, the median annual earnings for a year of full-time work for Hispanic or Latina women were \$41,140, leaving an adult with two children near poverty.⁹ Latinas’ earnings were just 57.5 percent¹⁰ of the median annual earnings for full-time year-round work of White non-Hispanic men (\$71,590; Table 1a). The full-time year-round gender earnings ratio compared to White non-Hispanic men respectively was 69.1 percent for Black women, 80.0 percent for White women, and 98.6 percent for Asian women.¹¹ Women across the largest racial and ethnic groups saw small improvements in full-time year-round earnings ratios compared to 2021 (Table 1A).

Yet, there was less uniformity in the change in the gender earnings ratios by race and ethnicity for all with earnings. The gender earnings ratio for Hispanic and Latina women compared to non-Hispanic men worsened by 1.6 percentage points, from 53.6 percent in 2021 to 51.9 percent in 2022. The gender earnings ratios for Black women improved by 1.0 percentage points, for White women by 2.8 percentage points, and Asian women by 2.9 percentage points (IWPR calculation based on Table 1B).

TABLE 1A. Median Annual Earnings and Gender Earnings Ratio for Full-time Year-Round Workers, by Race/Ethnicity, 2022 and 2021

Racial/Ethnic Background*	Full-time Year Round Workers, 2022				Full-time Year-Round Workers, 2021 (in 2022 \$)			
	Women (\$)	Men (\$)	Female Earnings as % of Male Earnings of Same Group	Female Earnings as % of White Male Earnings	Women (\$)	Men (\$)	Female Earnings as % of Male Earnings of Same Group	
All Races/Ethnicities	\$52,360	\$62,350	84.0%	N/A	\$55,240	\$65,970	83.7%	N/A
Hispanic or Latina	\$41,140	\$47,420	86.8%	57.5%	\$42,600	\$49,410	86.2%	57.1%
Black	\$49,470	\$51,640	95.8%	69.1%	\$50,190	\$54,120	92.7%	67.2%
White	\$57,250	\$71,590	80.0%	80.0%	\$59,660	\$74,660	79.9%	79.9%
Asian*	\$70,580	\$87,410	80.7%	98.6%	\$68,870	\$88,200	78.1%	92.2%

TABLE 1B. Median Annual Earnings and Gender Earnings Ratio for All Workers with Earnings, by Race/Ethnicity, 2022 and 2021

Racial/Ethnic Background*	All Workers with earnings, 2022				All Workers with earnings, 2021 (in 2022 \$)			
	Women (\$)	Men (\$)	Female Earnings as % of Male Earnings of Same Group	Female Earnings as % of White Male Earnings	Women (\$)	Men (\$)	Female Earnings as % of Male Earnings of Same Group	Female Earnings as % of White Male Earnings
All Races/Ethnicities	\$41,320	\$52,770	78.3%	N/A	\$42,270	\$54,970	76.9%	N/A
Hispanic or Latina	\$31,600	\$40,720	77.6%	51.9%	\$32,940	\$43,150	76.3%	53.6%
Black	\$40,450	\$45,480	88.9%	66.5%	\$39,150	\$44,010	89.0%	63.7%
White	\$45,190	\$60,830	74.3%	74.3%	\$45,080	\$61,470	73.3%	73.3%
Asian*	\$54,120	\$72,020	75.1%	89.0%	\$52,880	\$73,300	72.1%	86.0%

Notes: Workers ages 15 years and older. Hispanic/Latina/o workers may be of any race; White alone, not Hispanic; Black alone; and Asian alone. *Data for Asian American, Hawaiian Natives, and Pacific Islanders (AAHNPI) are not yet available for 2022; in 2021 the gender earnings ratio for AANHPI women compared to White men was 80.0 percent; the ratio for full-time year-round workers was in 2021 was 92.3 percent.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2023. "Historical Income Tables: Table P-41. Work Experience—Workers by Median Earnings and Sex." <<https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-income-people.html>>. AAHNPI data are IWPR analysis of CPS-ASEC 2021 microdata.

Women Across Racial and Ethnic Groups Earn Less than Male Counterparts

Hispanic or Latino and Black men earn substantially less than White men, and as a result, the overall gender gap is wider than the within-group gender gap. Nevertheless, within each group, men have higher earnings for full-time year-round work than women of the same race or ethnicity. Women of each of the largest racial and ethnic groups have lower earnings than men in the same group, and for each the earnings differences become larger when part-time and part-year workers are included instead of focusing on full-time year-round workers (Tables 1A and 1B).

Real Earnings Fell in 2022 for Most but not All Groups of Workers

While gender earnings ratios marginally improved, real earnings (adjusting for inflation) fell for most workers. The median annual earnings of women working full-time year-round in 2022 were 5.2 percent lower than in 2021, with men's declining slightly more, by 5.5 percent. With the exception of Asian women, whose median annual earnings increased by 2.5 percent, real earnings fell for women of the largest racial and ethnic groups, by 4.0 percent for White women, 3.4 percent for Hispanic or Latina women, and 1.4 percent for Black women (IWPR calculations based on Table 1A).

The change in real earning among all women with earnings (including part-time and part-year workers) is more mixed. Irrespective of race and ethnicity, median annual earnings fell by 2.2 percent, compared with 4.0 percent for men. Yet, the Hispanic and Latina women are the only group whose median annual earnings declined, by 4.1 percent, while Black women saw an increase in real earnings by 3.3 percent, Asian women by 2.3 percent, and White women marginal change of 0.2 percent (IWPR calculation based on Table 1B). Changes in real earning reflect changes in the composition of the workforce as well as in the earnings of individuals.

Policies are Needed to Tackle Gender and Racial Inequity in Earnings

Women's lower earnings are due to many factors and a range of policy interventions will be necessary to tackle the inequity. These factors include lower earnings in many occupations done mainly by women, including very low wages in care jobs; lack of paid family leave and affordable quality care; and discrimination in compensation, recruitment, and hiring. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the pernicious effects of earnings inequality, leaving particularly Hispanic and Black women and their families with few resources to face an economic crisis. Over a lifetime, lower earnings also mean lower contributions to retirement savings. Consequently, women must live on less in retirement than men and more often rely on social security as their main source of income. Particularly for women of color, diminished opportunities to build wealth and support their families mean inequality not just for current but also future generations.

Women and their families need policies to strengthen equal pay statutes, improve women's access to high quality jobs, raise the minimum wage, ensure universal access to paid family and medical leave, and provide affordable and quality child care and care for all who need it. This will require urgent and bold action by Congress and the White House as COVID-19-era emergency measures expire and existing government funding for child care and other social safety net programs is discontinued.

This fact sheet was prepared by Ariane Hegewisch and Cristy Mendoza. It was made possible with the support of Kresge and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundations.

TABLE A1: The Gender Wage Ratio and Real Earnings, 1960-2022, Full-Time Workers and All Workers with Earnings (in 2022 Dollars)

Year	Median Annual Earnings FTYR	Median Annual Earnings	Female-to-male earnings ratio (FTYR)	Female-to-male earnings ratio (All with Earnings)	Median Usual Weekly Earnings FT	Median Usual Weekly Earnings FT	Female-to-male earnings ratio (FT weekly)
	Women	Men			Women	Men	
1960	\$26,560	\$43,770	60.7%	40.6%			
1965	\$29,320	\$48,930	59.9%	42.9%			
1970	\$33,820	\$56,960	59.4%	38.2%			
1975	\$35,040	\$59,570	58.8%	40.9%			
1980	\$35,770	\$59,460	60.2%	47.3%	\$705	\$1,097	64.2%
1985	\$38,280	\$59,280	64.6%	52.5%	\$746	\$1,095	68.1%
1986	\$39,120	\$60,870	64.3%	53.3%	\$770	\$1,108	69.5%
1987	\$39,430	\$60,490	65.2%	53.6%	\$774	\$1,108	69.9%
1988	\$39,580	\$59,930	66.0%	53.8%	\$777	\$1,107	70.2%
1989	\$40,420	\$58,860	68.7%	54.9%	\$775	\$1,107	70.0%
1990	\$40,710	\$56,850	71.6%	56.9%	\$780	\$1,084	72.0%
1991	\$40,730	\$58,310	69.9%	58.9%	\$794	\$1,071	74.2%
1992	\$41,310	\$58,360	70.8%	61.8%	\$806	\$1,064	75.8%
1993	\$41,020	\$57,350	71.5%	61.9%	\$813	\$1,055	77.0%
1994	\$40,980	\$56,950	72.0%	60.6%	\$810	\$1,057	76.6%
1995	\$40,560	\$56,790	71.4%	61.3%	\$804	\$1,065	75.5%
1996	\$41,650	\$56,470	73.8%	62.2%	\$806	\$1,074	75.1%
1997	\$42,950	\$57,910	74.2%	62.3%	\$813	\$1,093	74.4%
1998	\$43,880	\$59,970	73.2%	61.6%	\$849	\$1,113	76.2%
1999	\$43,740	\$60,490	72.3%	61.3%	\$864	\$1,127	76.6%
2000	\$44,130	\$59,860	73.7%	65.5%	\$869	\$1,130	76.9%
2001	\$45,910	\$60,150	76.3%	66.5%	\$878	\$1,149	76.4%
2002	\$46,880	\$61,200	76.6%	67.7%	\$894	\$1,147	77.9%
2003	\$46,710	\$61,830	75.5%	68.7%	\$910	\$1,147	79.4%
2004	\$46,340	\$60,510	76.6%	68.5%	\$921	\$1,147	80.3%
2005	\$45,920	\$59,660	77.0%	67.2%	\$909	\$1,122	81.0%
2006	\$45,550	\$59,200	76.9%	68.2%	\$904	\$1,119	80.8%
2007	\$47,940	\$61,620	77.8%	70.6%	\$898	\$1,122	80.1%
2008	\$47,100	\$61,090	77.1%	70.1%	\$899	\$1,125	79.9%
2009	\$47,990	\$62,340	77.0%	71.6%	\$930	\$1,159	80.2%
2010	\$48,140	\$62,570	76.9%	72.1%	\$932	\$1,148	81.2%
2011	\$46,980	\$61,010	77.0%	71.1%	\$923	\$1,123	82.2%
2012	\$46,920	\$61,340	76.5%	70.9%	\$913	\$1,127	81.0%
2013	\$47,590	\$61,360	77.6%	68.1%	\$919	\$1,121	82.0%
2014	\$47,930	\$60,940	78.6%	69.9%	\$920	\$1,116	82.5%

2015	\$49,320	\$61,990	79.6%	72.7%	\$929	\$1,145	81.1%
2016	\$49,860	\$61,960	80.5%	73.1%	\$945	\$1,154	81.8%
2017	\$50,250	\$61,530	81.7%	70.8%	\$951	\$1,163	81.8%
2018	\$52,130	\$63,910	81.6%	69.9%	\$951	\$1,174	81.0%
2019	\$53,870	\$65,440	82.3%	73.5%	\$929	\$1,139	81.5%
2020	\$57,500	\$69,160	83.1%	73.0%	\$1,008	\$1,225	82.3%
2021	\$55,240	\$65,970	83.7%	76.9%	\$986	\$1,186	83.1%
2022	\$52,360	\$62,350	84.0%	78.3%	\$958	\$1,154	83.0%

Notes (Figure 1 and Table A1): Annual earnings data include self-employed workers; weekly data are for wage and salary workers only. Annual earnings are for people 15 years old and older beginning in 1980 and people 14 years old and older for previous years. Before 1989 annual earnings are for civilian workers only. Weekly earnings are for full-time civilian workers aged 16 and older and are not restricted to full-year workers. Full-time is work for at least 35 hours per week, full-year for at least 50 weeks per year. Annual median earnings data are typically released in September by the U.S. Census Bureau, and the annual average of weekly median earnings in February by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Both data series are derived from the Current Population Survey. Adjustments for weekly data from earlier years to 2022 dollars are computed on the basis of the Consumer Price Index Research Series (CPI-U-RS); U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Consumer Price Index: CPI-UR-S Home Page" (Washington DC: United States Department of Labor 2022) <<https://www.bls.gov/cpi/research-series/r-cpi-u-rs-home.htm>>.

Sources (Figure 1 and Table 2): Annual earnings: Table A-7 'Number and Real Median Earnings of Total Workers and Full-Time, Year-Round Workers with Earnings by Sex and Female-to-Male Earnings Ratio: 1960 to 2022, Gloria Guzman and Melissa Kollar, Income in the United States: 2022. Current Population Reports P60-279 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023) <<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2023/demo/p60-279.html>>. Weekly earnings: "Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey: Annual Averages" (<https://www.bls.gov/cps/tables.htm#annual>) and "Table 17. Inflation-adjusted median usual weekly earnings, by age, for full-time wage and salary workers, 1979-2020 annual average." (Washington DC: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). <<https://www.bls.gov/cps/earnings.htm>>. Adjustment to 2022 dollars is using CPU-R-US; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Consumer Price Index: CPI-U-RS Home Page" (Washington DC: United States Department of Labor 2022) <<https://www.bls.gov/cpi/research-series/r-cpi-u-rs-home.htm>>.

ENDNOTES

¹ The 2021 gender earnings ratio is not significantly different from the 2022 gender earnings ratio; Gloria Guzman and Melissa Kollar, *Income in the United States: 2022*. Current Population Reports P60-279 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). <<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/2023/demo/p60-279.html>>.

² 'Typical' refers to workers with earnings at the median- the midpoint- of the earnings distribution at which approximately half earn below, and half above. Full-time is defined as work for at least 35 hours per week; year-round as at least 50 weeks per year.

³ As above.

⁴ Asian earnings data are for 'Asian alone' and do not include Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders who tend to have much lower earnings; 2020 earnings data for Asian, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, are not available until later in 2023.

⁵ The proportion of men working full-time year-round among all men with earnings also increased, but less so, from 75.4% in 2019 to 75.9% in 2022; IWPR calculation based on Table A-7. "Number and Real Median Earnings of Total Workers and Full-Time, Year-Round Workers With Earnings by Sex and Female-to-Male Earnings Ratio: 1960 to 2022; Gloria Guzman and Melissa Kollar, *Income in the United States: 2022*. Current Population Reports P60-279 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023).

⁶ See, for example, Cynthia Hess, Tanim Ahmed, and Jeff Hayes, *Providing Unpaid Household and Care Work in the United States: Uncovering Inequality*. IWPR Brief #C487 (Washington DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2020). Daniel Schneider, and Kristen Harknett. "Consequences of routine work-schedule instability for worker health and well-being." *American Sociological Review* 84, no. 1 (2019): 82-114; Ariane Hegewisch, and Valerie Lacarte, *Gender Inequality, Work Hours, and the Future of Work*. (Washington DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2019).

⁷ Ariane Hegewisch, *Women Earn Less Than Men Whether They Work in the Same or in Different Occupations*, IWPR #C514 (Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2023). <<https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Black-Womens-Age-Gap-Fact-Sheet-2023-Final-1.pdf>>; see also Ariane Hegewisch, *Numbers Matter: Women Working in Construction*. IWPR Quick Figure #106 (Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2023) <<https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Quick-Figure-construction-July-2023.pdf>>

⁸ *Pay Equity Still Decades Away: The Median Gender Earnings Ratio, 1960-2021, with Forecast for Achieving Pay Equity for All Women with earnings, and for Women Working Full-time Year-round*. IWPR Quick Figure#107 (Washington DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2022).

⁹ In 2022, near-poverty (200 percent of the federal poverty threshold) for a family of an adult with two children was \$47,156 per year; U.S. Census Bureau, "Poverty Thresholds: by Size of Family and Number of Related Children Under 18 Years" (Washington, DC: United States Census Bureau, 2023) <<https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html>>

¹⁰ When rounded, the gender earnings ratio for Latinas compared with White non-Hispanic men is 57 percent.

¹¹ See note 4 above regarding Asian data.

OUR MISSION

We win economic equity for all women and eliminate barriers to their full participation in society. As a leading national think tank, we build evidence to shape policies that grow women's power and influence, close inequality gaps, and improve the economic well-being of families.

