

# THE FACTS

## about Women in Utah



### POPULATION

- In a change from previous years, men outnumbered women in Utah based on Census 2000 data. Males numbered 1,119,000 compared to females at 1,114,000. This change occurred primarily because of an influx of working-age male Hispanics. According to the 2008 American Community Survey, that relationship still holds true.
  - In the 65 years-or-older category, women far outnumber men in Utah.
- With 31 percent of its population under the age of 18, Utah has the youngest population in the nation.

### MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

- According to the 2008 American Community, 56 percent of Utah's women 15 years and older are married—down from 69 percent in 1950. However, a higher percentage of Utahns are married than in any other state in the nation.

- The share of Utah women who are divorced has increased from 2 percent in 1950 to 10 percent in 2008.
- The median age at first marriage in Utah measures 26.1 for the groom and 23.5 for the bride—lowest in the nation. The median age at first marriage in United States measures 28.0 for the groom and 26.2 for the bride.
- Utah women who have never married comprised 26 percent of all marriageable age women in 2008 compared with 19 percent in 1950.
- Utah's divorce rate typically runs slightly higher than the U.S. average and has done so for decades. In 2007, there were 3.5 divorces in Utah per 1,000 population—only the second time since 1960 that Utah's divorce rate has measured below the national average.
- Divorce rates reached their peak in the early 80s and have since moderated.
- Utahns are more likely to marry, and remarry than their national counterparts.
- Utah's birthrate of 20.4 births per thousand population far outstripped the national

- average of 14.3 births per thousand population in 2007. Utah's birthrate has remained higher than the national average for decades, and ranks as one of the highest in the nation. However, even in Utah, birthrates have declined substantially since their most recent peak in the late 1970s.
- Roughly 14 percent of Utah's family households with children are headed by women (with no husband present)—lower than the national average of 24 percent.
- Utah's families are larger than the U.S. norm. Families in Utah average 3.67 persons compared to 3.22 nationally. In 1960, the average Utah family included 3.99 persons.
- About 5 percent of Utah families include seven or more members compared to only 2 percent nationally.

### EDUCATION

- In 2008, 91 percent of Utah women aged 25 and older had graduated from high



- school. Utah men showed a high school graduation rate of 90 percent. Together, Utah men and women rank seventh highest in the nation for high school graduation rates.
- Roughly 26 percent of Utah women had a bachelor's degree or higher in 2008 compared to 27 percent of U.S. women. Utah men showed a 32 percent rate of college graduation in contrast to the U.S. average of 28 percent.
- While prior to 1990, Utah women showed a higher rate of college graduation than U.S. women, by 2000, Utah women had lost their "bachelor's degree or higher" educational edge.
- Utah shows *by far* the largest gap in the nation between male and female college-graduation rates. The difference for college-educated Utah men and Utah women is 6.0 percentage points. New Jersey shows the next highest gap at 2.7 percentage points, while the national average is a mere 1.3 percentage points.
- Utah women are getting more education, but are not keeping up with their male or female U.S. counterparts.

## LABOR FORCE

- In 2008, roughly 62 percent of Utah women over the age of 16—were participants in the labor market. Nationally, 60 percent of women were in the labor force.
- In 1900, 13 percent of Utah women worked outside the home; in 1940, about a fourth; in 2008, almost 62 percent.
- The influx of women into the labor market has been relatively steady. Participation rates have increased by about 8 percentage points each decade.
- Women comprise about 44 percent of the Utah labor force.
- Utah women fell behind U.S. women in labor force participation until 1980. Since that point, Utah women have shown higher participation rates than the national average.
- Labor force participation is higher for Utah women partially because of the state's young labor force (younger women are more likely to work).
- Utah women aged 20 to 24 are most likely of any age group to work.
- Almost 59 percent of married Utah women work outside the home.
- Roughly 74 percent of Utah's mothers with school-age children work.
- About 59 percent of Utah's mothers of preschool-age children work.
- Utah women generally experience higher unemployment rates

than do Utah men. The exception is during recessionary periods when male jobless rates exceed those of females.

- Women make up the largest share of discouraged workers. Discouraged workers are those who have stopped looking for work because they believe they cannot find a job. They are not counted as part of the “unemployed.”

## EARNINGS

- A number of different data series make providing an ultimate figure for the gap between men's and women's earnings difficult.
- Data from the 2008 American Community Survey for Utah shows the median earnings for year-round, full-time male workers at \$45,000. The comparable figure for female workers measures \$31,200.
- On average, Utah women made 69 percent of annual male earnings. Nationally, the American Community Survey shows a male/female wage ratio of 78 percent.
- Utah had the fourth largest wage gap in the nation in 2008, bettering its 1990 performance when Utah showed the widest gap in the nation.
- Regardless of the data series used, the wage gap statewide and nationally has decreased since 1980.
- By age, the wage gap is smallest for women between 16 and 24.
- The largest wage gap occurs for Utah men and women with less than a high school education.
- The smallest wage gap occurs for Utah men and women with advanced degrees.
- White women and men show a much larger wage gap than those from minority ethnic or racial groups.
- Many of the occupations with the smallest wage gap are those which require math, science, or analytical skills or are jobs dominated by men.
- Occupational choice is the largest factor in the wage gap. Other demographic factors—less education, less occupational tenure, etc. also contribute to the difference in men's and women's earnings.
- No study has explained away the wage gap using the differing demographic characteristics of men and women suggesting that institutional discrimination does exist.
- In 2008, according to the American Community Survey, 30 percent of Utah female-headed families with children had incomes below the poverty line. In comparison, only 6 percent of married couple families with children and 13 percent for single male-headed families were in poverty.



## Data Resources:

- U.S. Census Bureau: [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
- Women-Owned Businesses: <http://www.census.gov/csd/sbo/women2002.htm>
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics: [www.bls.gov](http://www.bls.gov)
- Education Statistics: <http://nces.ed.gov/>
- Department of Labor's Women's Bureau: <http://www.dol.gov/wb/>
- Institute for Women's Policy Research: <http://www.iwpr.org/>
- Bureau of Labor Statistics 2005 Earnings: <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpswom2008.pdf>