

Macro Roundup Article

Headline: [Post-Pandemic Recovery for America's Prime Age Labor Force: A Tale of Two Sexes](#)

Article Link: <https://www.aei.org/foreign-and-defense-policy/post-pandemic-recovery-for-american-prime-age-labor-force-a-tale-of-two-sexes/>

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Tweet: Nicholas Eberstadt notes that the labor force participation rate for prime-age women is up 5pp since the pandemic to an all-time high, while the rate for prime-age men was up by 1pp to a level that matches the trough of the 1983 recession. @AEIecon

Summary: Figure 4, scales labor force participation rates for prime-age men and prime-age women against their 2019 pre-pandemic levels. In the decade from late 2013 to late 2023, female workforce participation rates witnessed a roaring comeback: pushing well above the pre-pandemic ceiling from significantly depressed pre-Trump levels. For prime-age men, the snap-back might be described as tepid: barely recovering to 2019 levels. If we scale 2019 at 100, prime-age female LFPRs were five points higher at the end of 2023 than a decade earlier—while prime-male rates were up by barely a point. Work rates for prime-age men today—after an economic recovery, during an economic expansion, and in the midst of a labor shortage—are barely as high as they were at the bottom of the trough after the severe Reagan-era recession. Yes: that 1983 floor for prime male work rates in the wake of what had been the worst postwar downturn to date is now, forty years later, the new normal for “full or near-full employment” for American men. Related: Men's Falling Labor Force Participation Across Generations and Wage Inequality and the Rise in Labor Force Exit: The Case of US Prime-Age Men and Bringing Home the Bacon: Have Trends in Men's Pay Weakened the Traditional Family?

Primary Topic: Family/Marriage

Topics: Database, Family/Marriage, Op-Ed/Blog Post, Unemployment/Participation, Weekly, Workforce

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