

WISCONSIN JOB WATCH

April 2009 Data Update

APRIL 2009 DATA SHOW CONTINUED DECLINE IN WISCONSIN JOB PICTURE

Like most of the nation, Wisconsin has suffered sustained job loss and rising unemployment since the start of the current recession in December 2007. In April 2009, Wisconsin had 137,500 fewer jobs than when the recession started, with well over half of these jobs lost since the start of 2009. (Table 1, Figure 1)

While job numbers are falling, Wisconsin's unemployment rate is rising – and fast. Wisconsin's unemployment rate has almost doubled since the beginning of the recession, reaching a high of 8.6 percent in April 2009 (compared to 4.5 percent in December 2007). The majority of this spike in unemployment has occurred in the past six months. (Table 1, Figure 3 on back page)

WISCONSIN'S MANUFACTURING AND CONSTRUCTION SECTORS HIT PARTICULARLY HARD

Wisconsin has shed a particularly high number of manufacturing and construction jobs, which typically pay higher wages and offer better benefits. Wisconsin has 54,300 fewer manufacturing jobs now than when the recession started. This loss of manufacturing jobs accounts for 40 percent of total job loss in Wisconsin since December 2007, and represents an 11 percent loss within the manufacturing sector. While there are fewer construction jobs overall, this sector has seen its job numbers shrink even faster, with a decline of 17 percent (21,400 jobs) since the start of the recession. (Table 1, Figure 2)

Table 1
CHANGES IN UNEMPLOYMENT AND NUMBER OF JOBS IN WISCONSIN, DECEMBER 2007 TO APRIL 2009

	<i>December 2007</i>	<i>April 2009</i>	<i>Number Change</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>
Unemployment	4.5%	8.6%		4.1%
All jobs	2,889,000	2,751,500	-137,500	-4.8%
Manufacturing jobs	500,000	445,700	-54,300	-10.9%
Construction jobs	123,800	102,400	-21,400	-17.3%

Figure 1
TOTAL JOB LOSS IN WISCONSIN, DECEMBER 2007 TO APRIL 2009

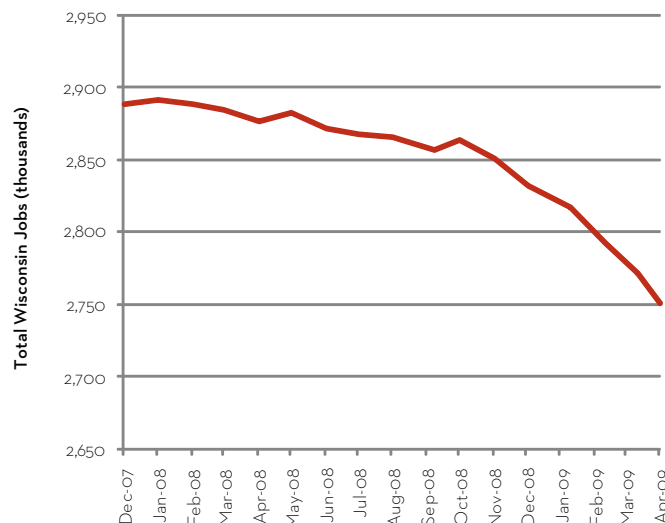
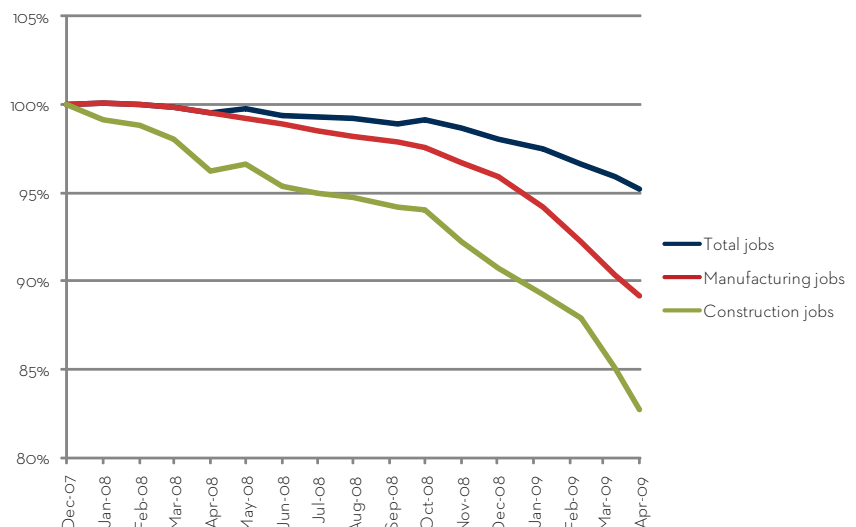


Figure 2
PERCENT CHANGE IN MANUFACTURING, CONSTRUCTION, AND TOTAL JOBS IN WISCONSIN, DECEMBER 2007 TO APRIL 2009



WISCONSIN FARING MUCH WORSE COMPARED TO RECENT RECESSIONS

Compared to the 1990 and 2001 recessions, Wisconsin has seen unemployment climb and jobs lost at a faster and more sustained rate. The past two recessions officially lasted eight months each, while the current recession is in its 16th month. While the jobs picture had already begun to stabilize by this point during the last two recessions, the most precipitous job loss and unemployment spikes in the current recession have occurred in the last six months. (Figures 3 and 4)

Figure 3
WISCONSIN UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN 1990 AND 2001 RECESSIONS, AND IN CURRENT RECESSION

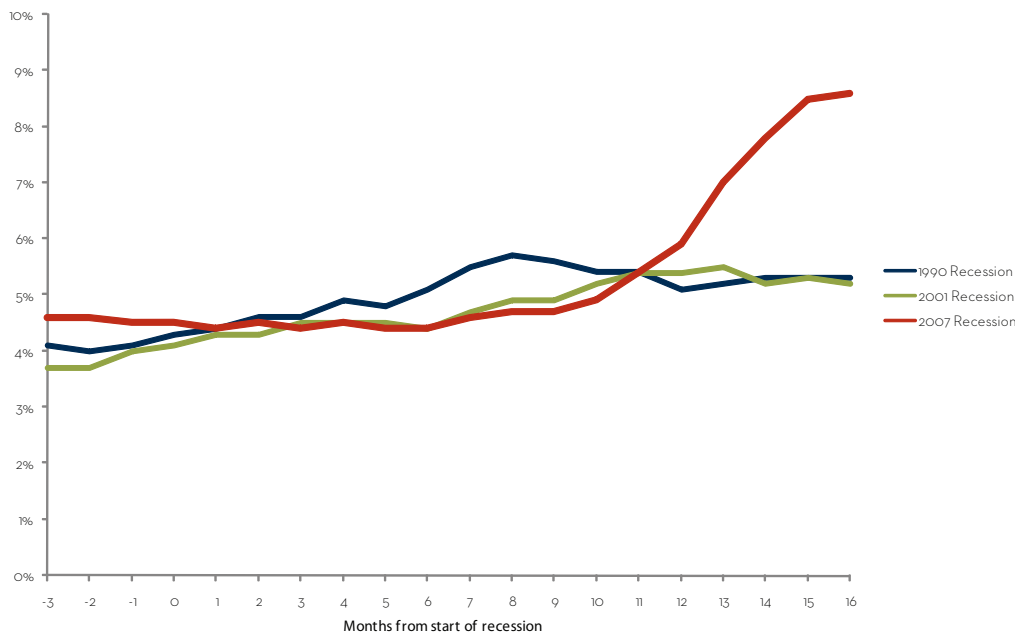
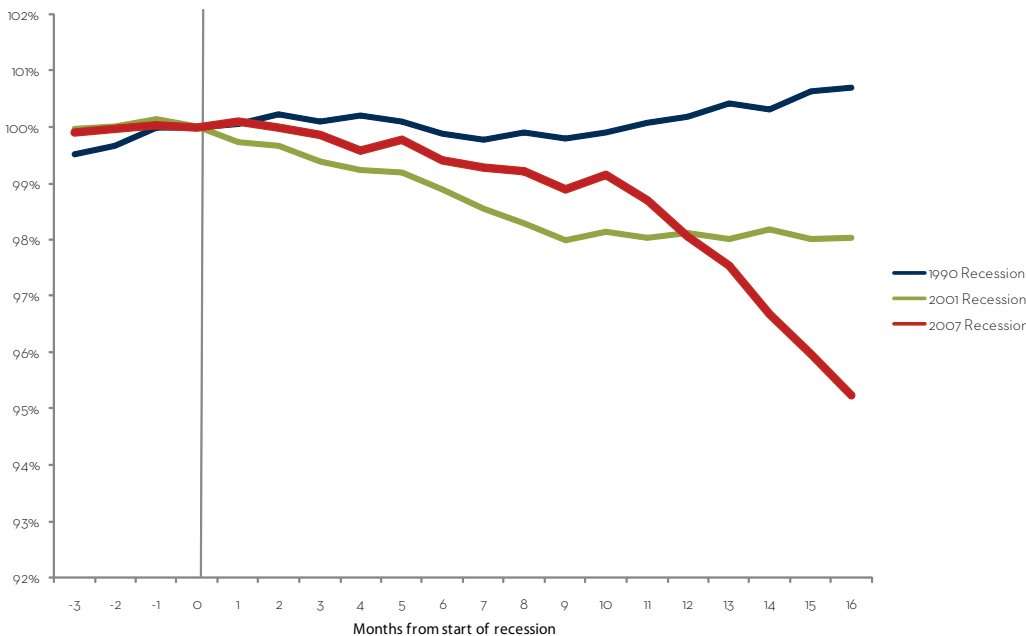


Figure 4
PERCENT CHANGE IN WISCONSIN JOBS IN 1990 AND 2001 RECESSIONS, AND IN CURRENT RECESSION



Wisconsin Job Watch, a monthly publication of the Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS), provides a snapshot of Wisconsin's job picture and reports on key recession trends. The numbers provided in this report are based on seasonally-adjusted Bureau of Labor Statistics data compiled by the Economic Policy Institute (www.epi.org).

The Center on Wisconsin Strategy (COWS) is a policy center and field laboratory for high road economic development – a competitive market economy of shared prosperity, environmental sustainability, and capable democratic government. Housed at University of Wisconsin-Madison, COWS has been supporting progressive policy innovation since 1991. For more information, visit www.cows.org.

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