

Insight



By The Numbers: 57.2% of Women Participate in the Labor Force

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While the president is signing two executive orders today to address so-called “equal pay” for women, delving into the numbers of how many women work shows a precipitous decline. This decline underscores the fact that women haven’t fared well under the Obama Administration.

Since Obama took office, the labor force participation rate for women has stayed below 60 percent, and actually declined. In January 2009, the labor force participation rate for women was 59.4 percent and declined to 57.2 percent in March 2014.

The chart below shows women’s labor force participation for the last ten years.

Last month’s figures from the Bureau of Labor Statistics showed that there were 4.8 million unemployed women. Keep in mind this is just women actively looking for work, not those who have given up entirely. For the month of March 2014 the unemployment rate for women was 6.6 percent.

These numbers shine a light on how women deserve better from the Obama Administration. It’s not surprising these facts are ignored and instead the administration resorts to signing more executive orders to address so-called “equal pay.” If women aren’t working, they can’t be paid any more.

The Bottom Line: The president is yet again advocating for baseless “solutions” to the problems that continue to plague the labor market and economic recovery 5 years later. The President should instead focus on encouraging a market for job creation and skills training through better growth policies that help jump-start the economy. An economy that’s growing, not executive orders, will help women climb the economic ladder.