

## Report Outlines 'Lost Decade' For NY Workers

Michael Virtanen, Associated Press

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — A new report on New York's economy calls the last 10 years a "lost decade" for typical workers, with median wages dropping almost 7 percent for men and about 1 percent for women.

The Fiscal Policy Institute said the recovery from the Great Recession shows more underemployment despite the state restoring overall jobs lost in the downturn.

The institute, a nonpartisan think tank associated with the state's largest labor unions, said most growth has come in lower-paying businesses like retail and restaurants, while a decline in middle-wage jobs continues, partly from government cuts. The report was based mainly on federal and state labor data.

"These trends are similar for workers nationally," it said. "There have been some years of gains, but median real wages dropped sharply in 2012, bringing them to about \$16 an hour for the median female New York worker and about \$19 an hour for the median male New York worker\_well under \$40,000 a year for a full-time, year-round employee."

The report showed increases in employment since 2008 among low-wage industries, defined as those paying less than \$45,000 a year. Home health care, for example, added nearly 42,000 jobs with average pay in 2012 of nearly \$28,000.

Construction, considered middle wage, lost more than 42,000 jobs, down almost 12 percent, and paid about \$62,000 last year.

"Nationally, profits and other business income have increased by 50 percent since the recession low-point, while total employee compensation has grown by only 12 percent," the report said.

The report also noted geographic differences, with many of the recent jobs added in New York City, now accounting for nearly 4 million of the state's total of 8.9 million.

This July, 718,000 New York residents were unemployed. The state unemployment rate was 7.5 percent, approximately the national rate, with the rate about 1 percent higher in New York City. Including "discouraged workers" no longer looking for jobs and involuntary part-timers, the report put the state's underemployment rate at 13.7 percent.

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