

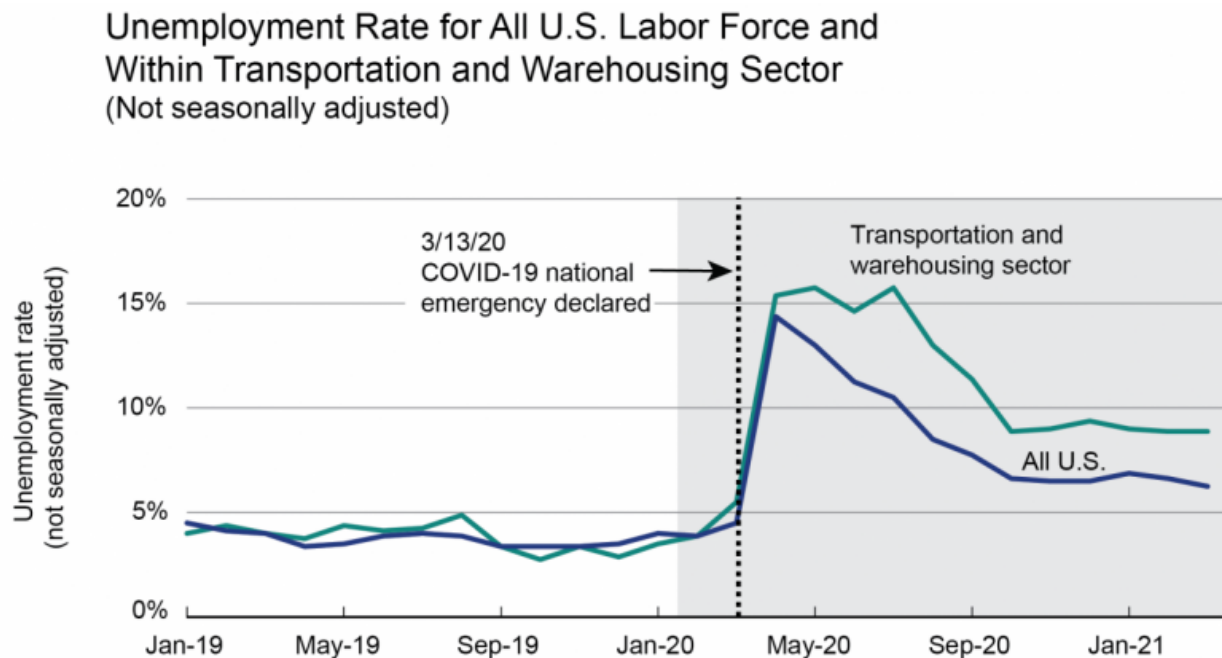
Data Spotlight

April 12, 2021

Transportation Jobs Recover Slowly after July 2020 Record High 15.7% Unemployment

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the unemployment rate in the transportation and warehousing sector rose above the total U.S. unemployment rate in March 2020. The sector saw a [peak unemployment rate of 15.7% in July 2020](#) – that was 5.2 percentage points above the overall U.S. unemployment rate at the time.

Note: The “warehousing” part of this sector includes industries and occupations involved in storing goods for eventual distribution and order fulfillment.



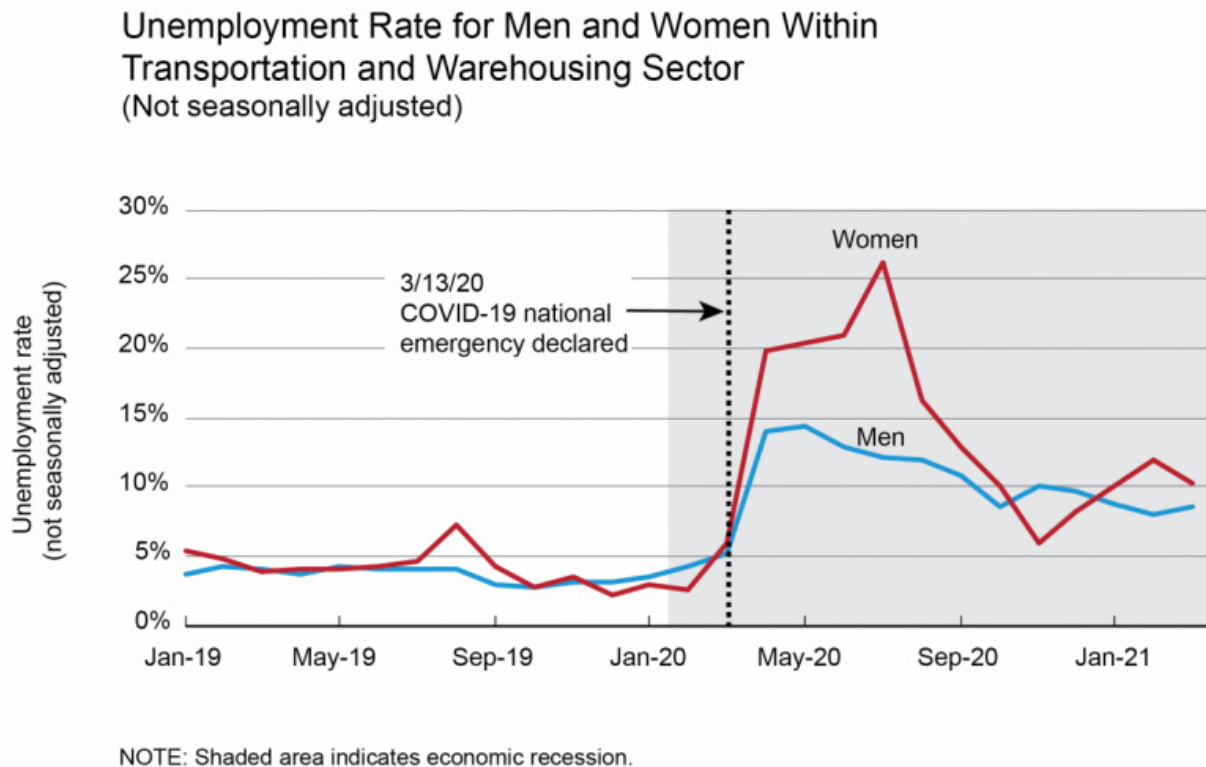
NOTE: Shaded area indicates economic recession.

RETURN TO “NORMAL” SLOWER FOR TRANSPORTATION EMPLOYMENT THAN OVERALL.

Following the July 2020 unemployment peak, the percentage point difference between transportation and overall unemployment declined. However, since October 2020, the differential between the unemployment rate in transportation and the overall U.S. unemployment rate has remained at about 2.5 percentage points. As of March 2021, the unemployment rate in transportation and warehousing (8.9%) was [2.7 percentage points above](#) the U.S. unemployment rate of 6.2%.

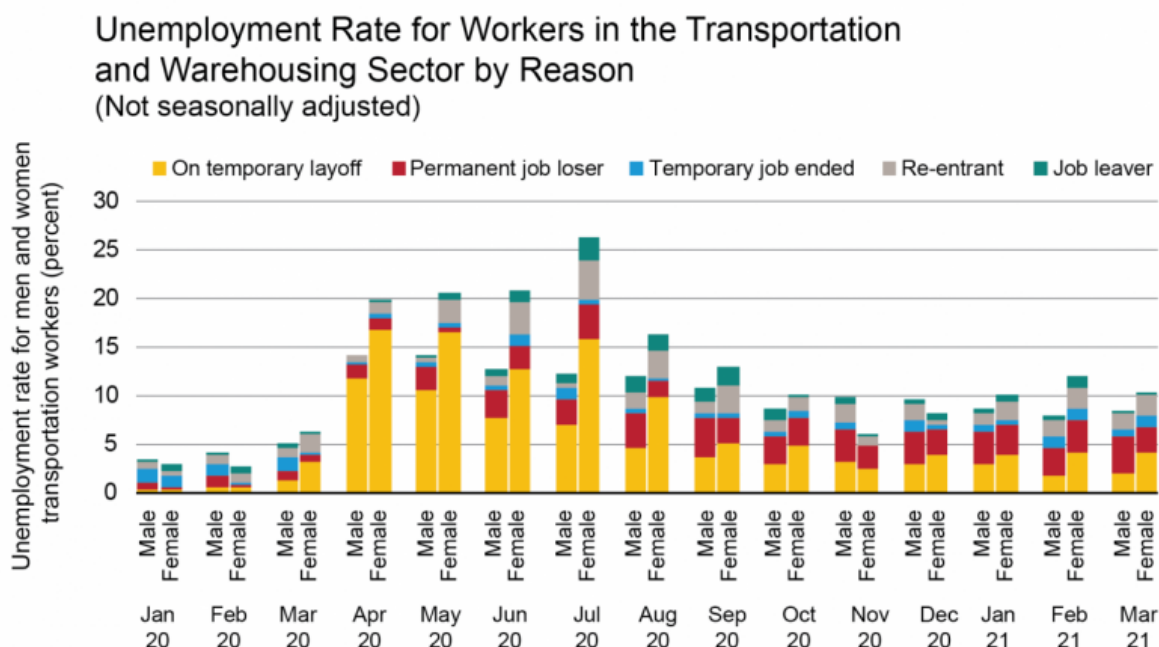
WOMEN IN TRANSPORTATION AND WAREHOUSING ARE FEELING THE UNEMPLOYMENT IMPACT OF COVID-19 MORE THAN MEN.

Women in the transportation and warehousing sector have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 job loss, experiencing [higher unemployment rates than men in 11 of the 13 months since March 2020](#).



The unemployment rate for women in transportation reached a record high (26.2%) and its greatest difference from men (14.0 percentage points larger) in July 2020. Following that month, the disparity in unemployment rates fell with the unemployment rate for women in transportation and warehousing dipping below that of men in November and December 2020. The unemployment rate for women in transportation once again exceeded that of men in January 2021. As of March 2021, 10.2% of women in transportation and warehousing are unemployed compared to 8.5% of men.

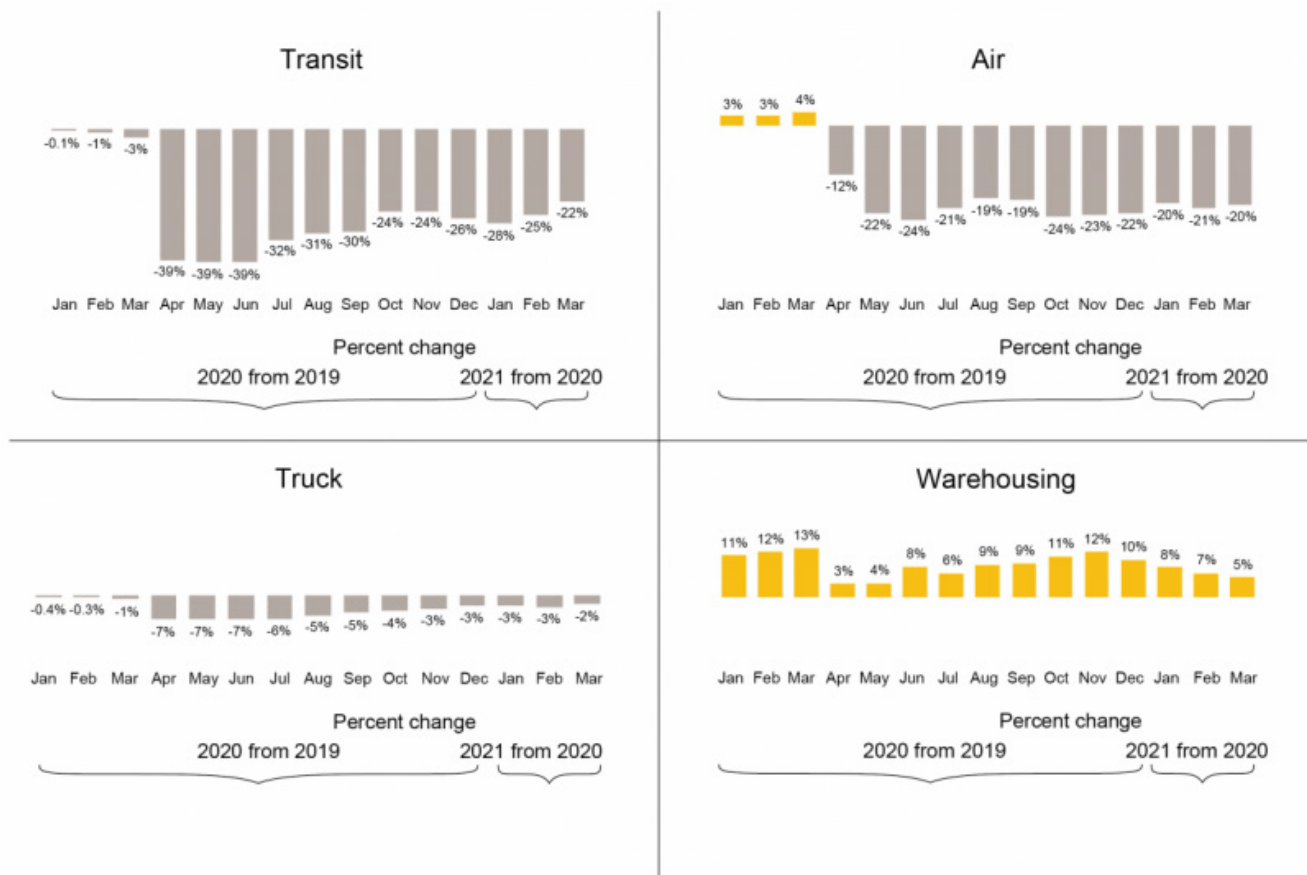
IN JULY 2020, WOMEN IN TRANSPORTATION EXPERIENCED A LAYOFF RATE MORE THAN DOUBLE THAT OF MEN.



Higher unemployment rates among women in the transportation and warehousing sector are due to disproportionate layoffs, unemployment among re-entrants, and, in some months, women who left their jobs. In July 2020, 15.9% of women in the transportation workforce experienced unemployment due to a layoff compared to 6.9% of men. Re-entrants are individuals previously employed but out of the labor force prior to beginning their current job search, during which they are unable to find a job. Of the women re-entering the transportation workforce, 4.2% could not find a job in July 2020 compared to just 0.7% of men. Additionally, 2.3% of women in the transportation workforce experienced unemployment after leaving their job compared to 0.7% of men in July 2020.

TRANSIT AND AIR TRAVEL WORKERS FACE MORE DIFFICULT RECOVERY THAN TRUCKING, AND WAREHOUSING EMPLOYMENT CONTINUES TO GROW.

Year-Over-Year Change in Employment Among Largest Three Transportation Modes and Warehousing
(seasonally adjusted)



The air industry experienced its largest year-over-year employment decline (24.0%) in June 2020. [Employment in trucking fared better than passenger transportation modes](#), with the largest year-over-year decline (6.6%) occurring in May 2020. These employment changes reflect [BTS observations](#) that freight-related activity has bounced back considerably while passenger travel remains low. Employment in warehousing grew year-over-year throughout 2020, primarily due to the pandemic-related increase in online shopping.

For more information, see BTS' interactive visualizations showing [employment in transportation \(including by mode and gender\)](#); [transportation employment by race and ethnicity](#); and [unemployment rates by transportation occupation](#).

Source: BTS analysis of [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#) data.