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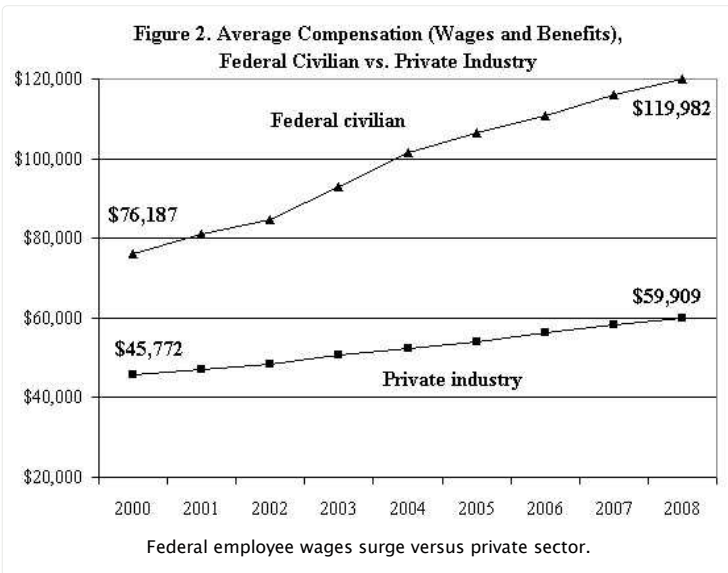
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With Benefits, Average Federal Worker Salaries Double Private Sector Wage

Posted by [John Romano](#) in [Finance](#) on December 11, 2009

WASHINGTON, D.C. ([YBH.ME](#)) - The internet news machine is abuzz this morning over a [USA TODAY](#) article in which it is revealed that federal workers earn an average salary of \$71,206 vs. \$40,331 for private sector employees. While those numbers are striking, an even more disconnected figure is available.

According to the CATO Institute, when benefits are included, federal workers earn far more than those in the private sector and the disparity is growing.



The [CATO study](#), released in September, puts the average federal civilian salary with benefits at \$119,982 vs. \$59,909 for the private sector. Federal government employees now earn fully double that of their private sector countrymen. In 2004, the average federal employee made two-thirds more than a person employed in the private sector according to CATO. The rate of disparity is growing rapidly. Total federal employee compensation grew 57% from 2004-2008 and just 30.8% in the private sector over the same period.

Neither CATO or USA TODAY explored the non-financial compensation aspects of either group, such as job security, guaranteed wage increases, and pension security. Taking all three into account, federal government jobs would become even more valuable as the government doesn't often shrink while private sector jobs ebb and flow on a more consistent basis.

CATO figures used in their analysis are from The Bureau of Economic Analysis. The USA TODAY study analyzed data from the Office of Personnel Management's database. The different data sources and methodology account for slight differences in each report's base numbers.

[Federal, Government, Private sector, Salaries](#)

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