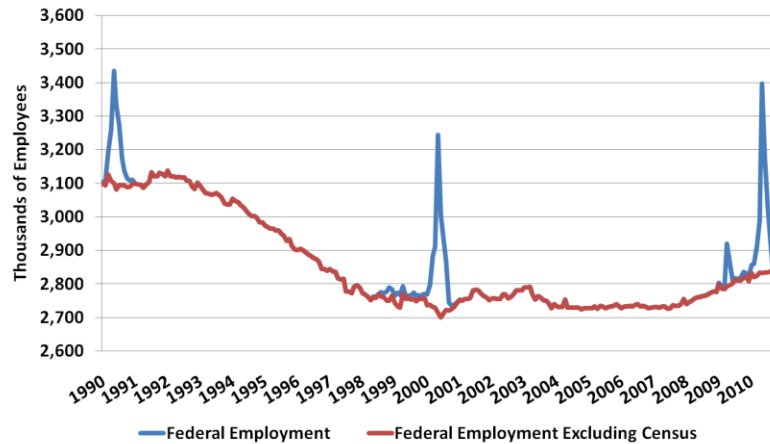




**Even Accounting for Census,
Federal Employment Grows During Recession**



Source: Current Employment Survey, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Produced by: Veronique de Rugy, Mercatus Center at George Mason University

This week, Veronique de Rugy examines fluctuations in federal employment. Using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, this chart shows the level of total federal employment since 1990 in blue, and the level of non-census federal employment in red. From examining the above chart, two things are obvious: first, the 2010 census caused large fluctuations in the level of federal employment; second, federal employment has continued to increase throughout the recession, *even when controlling for the level of census employment*.

As of today, non-census federal employment has grown by 98,000 employees since the start of the recession.

During census periods federal employment fluctuates drastically, increasing during census administration and returning to previous levels at the conclusion of the census. These changes are represented above by blue peaks. Indeed, during the summer of 2010, seasonally adjusted federal employment reached 3.4 million employees, the highest level of federal employment since May 1990. However, at this census' conclusion, federal employment returned to a higher level than it had been before census hiring. In fact, at the end of the 2010 census, federal employment was even higher than it had been at the beginning of the recession.

Even controlling for the effects of census employment, federal employment has increased constantly throughout the recession and into today. To date, the private sector has lost 7.2 million jobs, or 6% of its January 2008 workforce. In the same time, the federal government has grown by 3.5%, gaining 98,000 jobs.

Veronique breaks down [the federal employment flux](#) at The Corner.

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