

## MRINetwork Analysis of Today's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Report

The full report can be seen here: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.htm>.

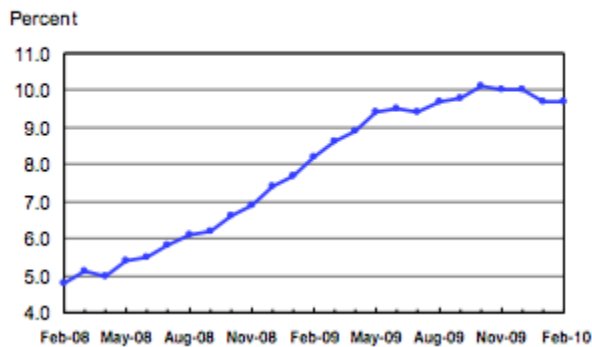
Last month, the U.S. Census Department began hiring the first of 1.2 million census takers. Just 15,000 of these jobs were added in February—which was offset by job losses in the postal service—but these job gains should give a significant boost to payroll figures over the next few months. Census jobs, while decent paying—often in the range of \$20 per hour—are temporary and most of the survey work will be completed by mid to late summer.

The temporary census workers are not included in the 48,000 new temporary help service jobs added during February. Since the number of temporary workers bottomed out in September, 284,000 positions have been added.

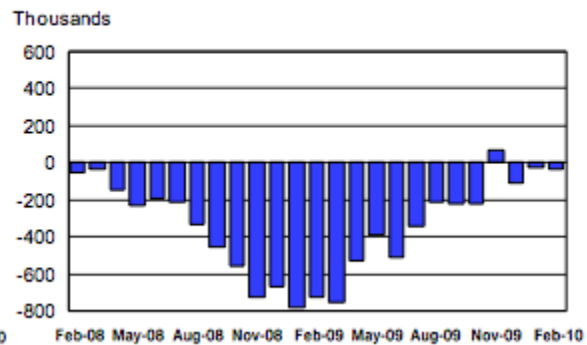
BLS ANALYSIS

MARCH | 2010

**Chart 1. Unemployment rate, seasonally adjusted, February 2008 – February 2010**



**Chart 2. Nonfarm payroll employment over-the-month change, seasonally adjusted, February 2008 – February 2010**



Across industries, the level of total employment was surprisingly stable in most sectors, but with notable exceptions. Construction lost 64,000 positions, transportation and warehousing lost 12,000 positions, the information industry lost 18,000 positions (mostly from publishing, and motion picture and sound recording) and insurance shed 7,600 positions. The losses were offset by the gains in temporary help services and 32,000 health and education jobs. Manufacturing added a statistically insignificant 1,000 jobs. However, with the addition of 11,000 positions in January, it marks the sector's first back-to-back gains since 2004.

The management, professional and related occupation unemployment rate fell from 5.0 to 4.8 percent, but remains above the 4.6 average rate of 2009 and the 2.1 percent average rate in 2007. The unemployment rate for those with a Bachelor's degree or higher rose to 5.0 percent from 4.9 percent.

In general, today's report shows employment to be mostly flat. If not for the losses in construction, though, 28,000 positions would have actually been added to the workforce in February. While construction's losses cannot be ignored, the sector has been disproportionately impacted by the crash in real estate. On the whole, the rest of the economy is showing signs of slight employment growth.